

Choirul Mahfud, *Understanding Political Reform and Islamic Education*

Understanding Political Reform and Islamic Education Position in Indonesia

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Abstract: The political conditions in Indonesia which underwent a reformation in 1998 had an influence on position and the existence of Islamic education in Indonesia post-New order. In this era, the position of Islamic education is as a subsystem of national education. It cannot be separated from the changes in the education system regulation in this country, namely the National Education System regulation No. 2 1989 changed to Law of *Sisdiknas* No. 20 / 2003. These changes have a major impact on the progress and existence of Islamic education in Indonesia. This can be seen from the aspect of the authority of Islamic education which can actually be said to be the same as the policies in the previous legislation, namely in the education system, at least, there are still two ministries that manage educational institutions, namely the Ministry of Education and Culture (*Kemdikbud*) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (*Kemenag*). Both institutions also organize education to tertiary level. In addition, there are basic, secondary, and tertiary education in the Ministry of Education and Culture, as well as the primary, intermediate, and tertiary education institutions administered by the *Kemenag*. This research intends to discuss the implications of political reform on the position of Islamic education in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Political Reform, Political Education and Islamic Education*

Introduction

From Aceh to Papua, it can be said that the implementation of education in Indonesia is not separated from the political policy from the old order era to the reform era.. The position and existence of Islamic education are still strong because the rules provide legal guarantees. This can be seen from the implementation of education starting from elementary, secondary, upper to tertiary level in full to two ministries, namely the Ministry of Education and Culture (*Kemdikbud*) and the Ministry of Religion Affairs (*Kemenag*). However, the government also gives the Education Management Authority to the Ministry directly related to the department/field. However, this only applies at the tertiary or college level, not at the elementary, secondary and high school level. While the position of Islamic education managed by the Ministry of Religion Affairs can be said to be quite strategic with the general education position managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Juridically, the position of Islamic education is guaranteed and protected by the 1945 Constitution which is the main source of law in Indonesia. The National Education System Law Number 20 Year 2003 is the implementation of the mandate of the 1945 Constitution in Chapter XIII on Education and Culture Article 13 which mandates that: The government strives for and organizes a national education system, which increases faith and piety and noble character in the context of educating the life of the nation, which is regulated by law. The position of Islamic Education in the

National Education System is revealed in Law Number 20 the Year 2003 concerning the National Education System, in Chapter VI Path, Levels and Types of Education in Part Nine of Religious Education Article 30 the contents are: Religious education is carried out by the government and/or community groups of religious adherents, following statutory regulations. The function of religious education is to prepare students to become members of the community who understand and practice the values of their religious teachings and / or become religious scholars. Religious education can be carried out in formal, informal and non-formal education channels. Religious education is in the form of diniyah education, pesantren, and other similar forms. Provisions regarding religious education as referred to in paragraphs 1,2,3 and 4 are further regulated by Government regulations.

In another article in Law on National Education System No. 20/2003 is mentioned, especially in articles 17 and 18. Article 17 paragraph (2), for example, explains: "Primary education is formed in elementary schools (SD) and madrasahs ibtdaiyah (MI) or other forms of equivalent and junior high schools (SMP) and madrasahs tsanawiyah (MTs), or other equivalent forms. " Whereas in Article 18 paragraph (3): "Secondary education is in the form of high school (SMA), madrasah aliyah (MA), vocational high school (SMK), and vocational aliyah madrasah (MAK), or other forms of equal."

In broad aspects, it is also necessary to understand that the scope of Islamic Education as described in Law Number 20 Year 2003 concerning the National Education System and Government Regulation Number 55 Year 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Education, Islamic education can be classified into three types: Religious education, carried out in the form of Islamic religious education in education units at all levels and lines of education; Islamic education in general characterized by Islam in early childhood education units, basic education, secondary education, and higher education in the formal and non-formal channels; Islamic religious education in various units of diniyah education and Islamic boarding schools which are held on formal and non/ formal lines.

When examined, legally, the political policies of Islamic education in Indonesia in the Post New Order as stipulated in several statutory mandates emphasize that the position and existence of Islamic education in Indonesia already has a strong legal and is equal to the existence and position of other national education.

Discussion

The political condition often influences to the condition of education in a country. Political reform in Indonesia in 1998 also had a large impact on all aspects of national life, including in the aspect of Islamic education. Political reform is not only a matter of freedom of opinion and expression, but it is also related to the demands of the people who long for a better change in all aspects of national and state life. Therefore, some understand political reform in Indonesia as if there were none or no end.

A. Bakir Ihsan in the book "*Political Ethics and Logic*" states that reforms become spaces of expression of aspirations that tend to be endless.¹ Every aspiration is voiced to be appreciated, although sometimes it goes beyond the rules that should be obeyed. As a result, the actualization of aspirations often leads to anarchy and threatens the substance of democracy. Democracy ensures rules for an order. Rules are not just a series of procedures, but a culture (value) that is structured. Therefore, the true rules are intertwined with citizens' compliance. These are the ethics and logic that need to be the basis of politics in the reform era.

As is known, the term reform is derived from English, namely reform, which means to repair or renew. While reformation means a change towards improving something new.² This change can include everything, in the form of systems, mechanisms, rules, policies, behaviors, habits, ways, or practices that have so far been deemed not good and changed to good.³ In the context of Islamic education, Islamic education reform has a goal so that Islamic education can run better, effectively and efficiently to achieve the educational goals that are aspired. For that reason, usually, two things need to be done in reform: First, identify the various problems that hinder the implementation of education; Second, formulating strategic and practical reforms so that they can be implemented in the field.

Education is the keyword to improve the welfare and dignity of the nation. It is not wrong to say that education is a basic pillar in nation-building. Reform in the field of Islamic education is an important agenda for realizing better quality education services. According to Muchlas Samani, efforts to improve the quality of education must start from the key actor, namely the teacher. The results of the study of Fasli Jalal and Bahrudin Musthafa concluded that the teacher was the most decisive key factor in the success of education. Whatever reforms are carried out in education, without qualified teachers, improving the quality of education will not achieve maximum results. In line with the above thought, Mochtar Buchori in his book "*Anticipatory Education*", called the change of education as an effort of reform as well as transformation.⁴

According to him, education reform is changes that need to be made in our schools without changing the foundation and structure of the current system, while the transformation of education is fundamental and profound changes in our education system, changes that touch the joints (foundations), structure, and mode of operation in our schools. Changes like this will change the face and character of our school. The transformation of education requires a long time and is the cumulative result of the steps of education reform carried out.

¹ A. Bakir Ihsan, *Political Ethics and Logic: Critical Discourse on Political Ethics, Power and Democracy* (Bandung: Rosda Karya, 2009). Also read, HAR Tilaar, *Some Agenda for National Education Reform in the 21st Century Perspective* (Magelang: Tera Indonesia, 1998).

² See John M. Echols and Hassan Shadily, *English-Indonesian Dictionary* (Jakarta: PT. Gramedia, 2000).

³ Drafting Team of Language Center Dictionary, *Big Indonesian Dictionary* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2002).

⁴ Read Mochtar Buchori, *Anticipatory Education* (Kanisius, Yogyakarta, 2001).

In the era of globalization and the rapid development of information technology, we inevitably have to make fundamental changes so that our young generation gets an education that is relevant to this progress so that they can live well in the global community. According to the results of a study of our education by the Ministry of National Education, Bappenas and the World Bank reported by Jalal and Supriadi⁵, there are three basic references in the development of our education in the reform era to answer the challenges of globalization, namely philosophical references, references to cultural values, and references to strategic environment. This philosophical reference is based on the abstraction of legal references and empirical studies of present conditions and the idealization of the future.

At the operational level, education must instill the importance of hard work, sportsmanship, readiness to compete, and at the same time work together and self-discipline. Strategic environmental references include the national environment and the global environment. The national environment is characterized by two very substantial things, namely the ongoing multidimensional crisis and the demands for reform in all fields. This strategic reference means that our education must be able to answer the challenges of reform and bring the country out of various crises.

The rapid global development requires education to apply a variety of very basic principles, such as setting quality standards, so that they can compete with the global world and the use of various ways of learning by utilizing a variety of learning resources. In this context, education is the key to national change and development. As revealed by HAR Tilaar⁶ that education is an essential activity in every community life. Therefore, education needs to continue to be a concern for anyone, anytime and anywhere.

Islamic Education and State Responsibility

The responsibility of the state in educational services, including Islamic education, for the community, cannot be underestimated. In the "hands" of the country's leaders, education can run on the right track, it can also walk on the wrong bend. Therefore, education needs to be carried out with a conscious and well-planned, not vice versa carried out as is or even as desired according to the tastes of leaders to cause the effects of broken education.⁷

In this context, Mochtar Buchori reminded that education should be carried out properly and be anticipatory.⁸ That is anyone who organizes education needs to pay

⁵ Fasli Jalal & Supriya D. (Ed), *Education Reform in the Context of Regional Autonomy* (Yogyakarta: MONE-Bappenas and ideology Karya Nusa, 2001).

⁶ HAR Tilaar, *Power and Education: National Education Management in the Vortex of Power* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2009), 50.

⁷ The issue and discourse of educational disrepair have been revealed at length by Darmaningtyas as an illustration and portrait of education that has lost its soul as a bridge of social transformation, due to unclear policies and the chaos of malpractice committed by the authorities and education practitioners in the field. More can be read in Darmaningtyas. *Damaged Education* (Yogyakarta: LkiS Pelangi Aksara, 2005).

⁸ Mochtar Buchori, *Anticipatory Education* (Kanisius: Yogyakarta, 2001).

attention and prepare students to navigate life in the future. With the term anticipatory, Buchori also intends to remind that in organizing educational services, you should look far ahead, thinking about what your children and grandchildren will face in the future. So, in designing educational changes, it is not appropriate to only think about the needs of the present generation. Not only that, according to Buchori, education must also equip young people to be able to overcome life's ascent. For this reason, education needs to help students to be able to glorify their lives (ennobling life).

Here education is challenged not only to help students so that their lives are successful but even more so that their lives are meaningful. Education must be able to provide wisdom. Wisdom is shown in our expertise to choose from. This kind of wisdom is demanded, considering we have switched from the industrialization era to the information age. In this era, it was not enough to prepare students to make a living. Amidst technological advances and the rapid flow of information, they are challenged to be able to choose, which will help them to glorify their lives, which will destroy their lives. Anita Lie also explained that the responsibility and role of government in the field of education are very large. If the State's responsibility in the field of education is not good and not optimal, it can further strengthen student segregation based on socio-economic status. Anita Lie gave an example, students from poor families who received government subsidies would not be able to bear the lack of funds so they would be forced to search and be concentrated in minimalist (read: poor) schools, where operational costs per child were not (far) exceeds the specified unit cost. Meanwhile, students from the middle and upper classes are free to choose schools with adequate facilities and infrastructure.

Education is the right of every citizen. This was confirmed in article 31 of the 1945 Constitution that "Every citizen has the right to education". Even in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, it has been stated that the purpose of the Indonesian people is to educate the nation's life. In this context, it can be understood that education is both the responsibility and the obligation of the state to fulfill the rights of its citizens.

In a global context, the Dakar Convention states, all countries are required to provide free quality basic education to all citizens. Referring to Article 31 of the 1945 Amendment, SPN Law No. 20/2003, and the Dakar Convention, the government is obliged to provide free quality education to every citizen. In detail, Article 49 of the SPN Law No 20/2003 states, "Education funds other than teacher salaries and official education costs are allocated a minimum of 20 percent of the State Budget (APBN) in the education sector and a minimum of 20 percent of the Regional Budget Revenue and Expenditure (APBD)".⁹

The mention of religious education is intended so that religion can be taught more broadly than just subjects / religious courses. Religious Education thus must at least be in the form of subjects/courses in Religious Education to avoid the possibility of eliminating religious education in an educational unit because it has been integrated

⁹ See Article 49 of the National Education System Law No. 20/2003.

taught. These provisions are mainly in the administration of formal education and equality education. Besides, Law Number 20 the Year 2003 concerning the National Education System in Article 12 paragraph (1) letter a mandate that every student in each education unit is entitled to receive religious education following his religion and taught by religious educators. This provision has at least 3 (three) objectives, namely first, to maintain the integrity and purity of religious teachings; secondly, the existence of religious teachers who are of the same religion and meet the eligibility requirements of teaching will be able to maintain religious harmony for students of different religions but learn in the same educational unit; third, religious education taught by educators of the same religion shows professionalism in organizing the learning process of religious education.

Religious education is generally organized by the community as an embodiment of education from, by, and for the community. Long before Indonesia's independence, religious universities had already developed. In addition to being a cultural root of the nation, religion is an integral part of education. Religious education also developed due to religious education subjects/courses which were considered to face various limitations. Some societies overcome this by adding religious education in homes, houses of worship, or in associations which later develop into formal, non-formal or informal religious education units or programs.

Historically, the existence of community-based religious education has been very important in efforts to develop learning societies, moreover because it is sourced from the aspirations of the community which also reflects the actual needs of the community for this type of educational service. In reality, there are large resource gaps between religious education units. As a component of the National Education System, religious education needs to be allowed to develop, foster and improve its quality by all components of the nation, including the Government and regional governments.

According to Andi Saputra in the article "Islamic Religious Education" explained that one of the very important and fundamental efforts of the government in efforts to advance public welfare and educate the nation's life as mandated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution is to strive for the implementation of a truly national education system. With this law, according to Andi, the National Education System is implemented universally, holistically, and integrated. A universe in the sense of being open to all people and applies in all regions of the country, comprehensive in the sense of covering all paths, levels and types of education and integrated in the sense of interrelationship between national education with all national development efforts.

Andi stated that with its comprehensive nature, as stated above, all forms of educational activities in Indonesia are covered by the National Education System, including education in madrassas and Islamic boarding schools held or fostered by the Ministry of Religion and so far better known as religious education institutions and religious. With the inclusion of madrassas and Islamic boarding schools in the unity of the National Education System, it is necessary to make adjustments in the

administration and fostering of madrassas and Islamic boarding schools following the provisions and ideas contained in the National Education System Law.

Conclusion

Political reform from era to era always has a great impact on the change and sustainability of Islamic education in Indonesia. These changes can lead to a more positive direction, but some lead to negative things. In this context, the stakeholders of Islamic education are now beginning to realize the importance of taking a role in changing political reform, because it is allegedly always bringing changes to Islamic education. These political reforms also bring continuity of Islamic education from time to time.

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