

Cultural Contestation and Acculturation in Islamic Education at an Indonesian School in Den-Haag, the Netherlands

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Abstract

The establishment of Indonesian schools abroad is a mandate that must be fulfilled by Indonesian representatives abroad, including Sekolah Indonesia Den-Haag, the Netherlands. Indonesian schools have the responsibility of organising education with the distinctive character of Indonesian society with great challenges in the form of differences in culture, character, and values. This research aims to explain how the process of Islamic education at the Indonesian School in the Netherlands amidst these cultural and value differences. This research is a field research with a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and then analysed using interactive analysis. The results showed de facto cultural differences between the people of Indonesia and The Netherlands such as eating habits and religion. The cultural contestation that occurs in Indonesian schools in The Netherlands found a "win win solution", namely cultural acculturation where different cultures blend together without leaving their distinctive characteristics. Islamic education is implemented by teaching Islamic values and Indonesian wisdom such as moderation, tolerance, courtesy, and brotherhood. The cultivation of these values is done through habituation and social religious activities in school activities. Islamic education at Sekolah Indonesia Den-Haag is able to preserve Islamic and Indonesian values while respecting the culture of the people of Den-Haag.

Keywords: Islamic Education; Cultural Contestation, Value Cultivation; Sekolah Indonesia Den-Haag

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Introduction

The Netherlands is one of the countries in Western Europe that has a large Muslim population. This large Muslim population can be an advantage, but on the other hand it can cause problems for the Dutch government and the Muslim population itself. The mosque is the largest Islamic organization in the Netherlands. Mosques in the Netherlands not only function as places of worship but also as places to gather and strengthen ties between Muslims. For the Dutch government, the Muslim population is good capital to increase human resources as a workforce to fill job fields. On the other, Muslims need to maintain and pass on cultural values and Islamic teachings to their children.¹

The desire to educate children in the spirit of Islam to guard against certain temptations from Western society has led to the creation of various Islamic schools and the emergence of several Islamic domes in these schools.² This Islamic teachings influence the lifestyle of Muslims in the Netherlands. There are two realms of Islamic teachings in question that occur in society, namely moderate Islamic teachings and fundamental Islamic teachings. Moderate Islamic teachings are Islamic teachings that can adapt to surrounding conditions and do not close themselves off to changes that occur, and then they do not bind their adherents too tightly with strict rules and allow their adherents to live by complying with the minimum provisions as Muslims such as worship, fasting and don't eat pork. Meanwhile, fundamentalist Islamic teachings have stronger rules that force its adherents to fully comply with Islamic rules, including wearing clothing that is only permitted by the Islamic religion.³ Efforts to instill Islamic teachings can be carried out and pursued through the educational process.

Education is an important aspect of efforts to build human civilization. In the context of a nation's life, education has an important and strategic role to ensure the continuity and development of the nation's life.⁴ In the 1945 Constitution article 31 paragraph 1 which states "every citizen has the right to education".⁵ So, in essence, education is a basic right for every citizen to be able

¹ Muslih, *Pendidikan Islam di Negeri Belanda, Sejarah, Tantangan dan Prospek*, (Semarang: Southeast Asian Publishing, 2019), 2-4.

² Ministerie Van Binnenlandse Zaken, *De politieke Islam in Nederland, Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst, Leidschendam, 1998*, 11.

³ Dick Douwes, dkk, *Nederlandse Moslims, Van Migrant tot Burger*, (Salome: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 47-48.

⁴ Saifullah Idris, dan Z. A. Tabrani, "Realitas Konsep Pendidikan Humanisme dalam Konteks Pendidikan Islam." *Jurnal Edukasi: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling* 3.1 (2017), 97.

⁵ Emmanuel Sujatmoko, Hak warga negara dalam memperoleh pendidikan, *Jurnal Konstitusi* 7.1 (2016), 185.

to enjoy. Not only those in Indonesia, but also Indonesian citizens who are abroad. The establishment of the Indonesian School Abroad (SILN) was the answer to the educational problems of Indonesian citizens (WNI) who were abroad. SILN is also a manifestation of the Indonesian government's responsibility in providing educational services to Indonesian citizens who are abroad, especially in areas that have a significant number of Indonesian citizens and most of them have difficulty getting education from the local government for various reasons. Until now there are 14 SILN spread throughout the world, namely; Bangkok, Belgrade, Davao, Jeddah, Cairo, Kota Kinabalu, Kuala Lumpur, Mecca, Moscow, Netherland (Wassener), Riyadh, Singapore, Tokyo and Yangon.⁶

One of the SILN used as a research material is the Den-Hagg Indonesian School in the Netherlands. This school was founded and organized for the children of Indonesian citizens and is open to Indonesian people who want their children to receive an education with the Indonesian curriculum. Den-Hagg Indonesian School, abbreviated as SIDH, was be held in order to provide access and educational services that are quality, competitive, relevant and of international standard. But it still maintains Indonesian personality and culture. This is stated in one of the missions of the Den-Haag Indonesian School which reads: "Carrying out activities that support the realization of a cultural and religious life."

This is related to the aim of Islamic education in schools to develop the potential of students to become human beings with good personalities who have affective cognitive abilities and are able to practice and apply Islamic teachings in their lives.⁷ Islamic education forms people who have faith and are devoted to God Almighty, as well as to form people who have noble character and are competent in human relations. furthermore, it is to develop participants' ability to understand, appreciate and practice Islamic values.⁸ Of course, there will be many problems faced in terms of implementing Islamic education. And too, there may be similarities or differences in implementation in a country.

This is due to differences in culture, politics, society, economics and educational institution backgrounds, as well as schools of thought that may be

⁶ Tjatur Prasetyawati, dkk, *Profil Singkat Sekolah Indonesia Luar Negeri*, (Jakarta: Biro Perencanaan dan Kerjasama Luar Negeri Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2014).

⁷ Hambali Alman Nasution, "Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Curriculum", *Belajea: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6.1 (2021), 6.

⁸ Kurnali Sobandi, "The Implementation of Development of School Culture-Based Religious Education", *Ta'dib: Journal of Islamic Education* 21. 2 (2016), 177.

adhered to by Muslims and educational institutions will certainly be differentiated from each other.⁹ Instilling Islamic educational values is not only related to understanding but also to actions based on knowledge and morality.¹⁰ Success in building Islamic educational values must be carried out continuously and followed by example or model.¹¹

Muslims living in the Netherlands tend to maintain their lifestyle with Islamic norms and values. Because in a society that no longer has inspiration and rules of faith. Therefore, their presence in Europe is necessary to call on Muslims to redefine their religion in that society. Furthermore, Muslims need to maintain and pass on cultural values and Islamic teachings to their children. Efforts to change cultural and cultural values and religious heritage can be carried out through the educational process, either informally through education in the family, non-formal education at the mosque, and formal education at school. Currently, in terms of formal education, the Muslim population in the Netherlands can choose schools for their children that offer Islamic religious education.¹²

There is this research which examines the challenges of implementing Islamic education at the Dutch Deen-Hagg Indonesian School. In research by Ahmad Luthfi Haqqi Nazil et al 2020 which answered the problems of learning Islamic religious education and the implementation of Islamic religious education learning at the Dutch Deen-Hagg Indonesian School. Furthermore, the results of research by Karnali Sobandi 2016 stated that the development of school culture-based religious education in public schools is an alternative solution to problems. Implementation of development through the learning process, assessment of learning outcomes, and school and class assessment indicators. Meanwhile, in my research, it was revealed that Islam in Den-Haag, Netherlands is surrounded by a culture that is very different from Indonesia. So, a model was found to be used in instilling Islamic educational values at the Deen Hagg Indonesian School as a cultural acculturation by means of patterns of habituation and discipline in religious activities.

⁹ Saiful Akhyar Lubis, "Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia (The Existence and Implementation until 20th century)", *Journal Analytica Islamica* 2. 2 (2013), 217.

¹⁰ Ike Apriliani, Trivena Justitia, "The Implementation of Islamic Education in A Muslim Minority Area", *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4. 2 (2021), 157

¹¹ Erni Munaswiti, "Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia: Comparison of Islamic Education Learning Management Implementation." *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8. 1 (2019), 4.

¹² Muslih, *Pendidikan Islam di Negeri Belanda, Sejarah, Tantangan dan Prospek*, 4-5.

Method

In this research, researchers used field research using qualitative research methods. The qualitative method is a way to obtain data that is factual and contains meaning that is appropriate to what is happening in the field. Therefore, it places more emphasis on the meaning contained.¹³ With this qualitative research, the author can easily reveal systematically and factually the implementation of Islamic education at the Deen-Hagg Indonesian School.

Data collection was carried out using interview techniques, field note observation and documentation. Observations were carried out by paying attention to all conditions and activities in the school related to the implementation of Islamic education at the Deen-Hagg Indonesian School which were recorded in the teacher's notes and media. As well as interviews conducted with several teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education teachers.

Result and Discussion

Islamic and Cultural Acculturation in the Netherlands

Islamic education is education whose entire components or aspects are based on Islamic teachings. Vision, mission, goals, learning process, educators, students, relationship between educators and students, curriculum, teaching materials, infrastructure, management, environment and other educational aspects or components based on Islamic teachings. That is what is called Islamic Education.¹⁴

The aim of Islamic education is not limited to filling students' minds with knowledge and subject matter. However, the aim of Islamic education is to cleanse the souls and fill them with good morals and values so that they can become habits in everyday life. It can be concluded that students are expected to become human beings with noble character and can appreciate the cultural diversity around them.¹⁵

Acculturation is a form of cultural mixing that occurs in society a part from diffusion and assimilation. Acculturation includes various changes in culture caused by influence from other cultures which ultimately results in more and more similarities to that culture. The influence can be reciprocal or the influence is stronger than just one party. On that show when a human group with a particular culture is confronted with elements from a different foreign

¹³ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan*, (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2017), 15.

¹⁴ Abuddin Nata, *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*, 30.

¹⁵ Rustam Ibrahim, "Pendidikan multikultural: pengertian, prinsip, dan relevansinya dengan tujuan pendidikan Islam." *Addin 7.1* (2015), 130.

culture in such a way that the elements of the foreign culture are gradually accepted and processed within the culture without causing the loss of its own cultural personality. (Koentjaraningrat, 1965, 149).¹⁶

Culture or cultururation comes from the Sanskrit language, namely *Budabayah*, the plural form of the word *buddhi* (sense) which means things related to the human mind and reason. In English, culture which means to cultivate or do. Culture is a comprehensive lifestyle, culture is complex, abstract and broad. Many cultural aspects also determine communicative behavior. Social and cultural elements are widespread and cover many human social activities. Culture is formed from many complex elements, including religious and political systems, customs, language, household tools or equipment, clothing, food, buildings and works of art. Therefore, culture is also a way of life that develops and is shared by a group of people and tends to be passed down from generation to generation.¹⁷

Everything that is completely a cultural product is very contextual. Therefore, cultural products cannot be separated from the space and time that always surround that culture. So that cultural products can give birth to the formation of identities related to socio-cultural culture which can change according to developments in the environment and the times.¹⁸ Culture is an important source of values in social life. Culture is inspired by values and ideas that originate from beliefs, religious values and spiritual ethics which influence social and cultural life behavior and religious values that live in society.¹⁹

Dutch culture was a period that created a complex social life structure. Social status is an important measuring tool for society which encourages important changes in the social structure. Basically, relations within the scope of Indonesian society are patterned in a class system that exists in a social structure which is marked by the existence of limited relations between groups, namely the very simple lifestyle of Indonesian society. The Netherlands, which is part of Europe, is known as a high class group that always limits contact with lower social class groups. The Dutch people have many uniqueness and characteristics that can be seen in their daily lives. This uniqueness can be seen from the glamorous and luxurious daily lifestyle, the way of socializing, the way of dressing, the way of eating, the place of residence, the way of respecting time

¹⁶ Adam Zaki Gultom, "Kebudayaan Indis sebagai Warisan Budaya Era Kolonial", *Warisan: Journal of History and Cultural Heritage*, 1.1, 2020, 21.

¹⁷ Anik Susanti, "Akulturasi Budaya Belanda Dan Jawa, (Kajian Historis pada Kasus Kuliner Sup dan Bistik Jawa Tahun 1900–1942)." *Avatara* 1.3, 2013, 451.

¹⁸ Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (London: Sage Publication, 2005), 222.

¹⁹ Abudin Nata, *Sosiologi Pendidikan Islam*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo, 2014), 372.

and having high work discipline, as well as modern education which accelerates the absorption process.²⁰

The Concept of Islamic Education in Indonesian Schools in Den-Haag

In educational literature, Islam great attention to all cultures and traditions that apply to mankind in every condition and time, whether they are general in nature or only apply in one community.²¹ Therefore, Islamic education is very important to obtain, especially for those who live in countries with social cultures that are very different from the original culture of the country, which is a problem. There is a need to strengthen Islamic education in developing students.

The Indonesian School Den-Haag (SIDH) is a school founded and organized for children of Indonesian citizens in places where there is an Indonesian Representative, and is open to Indonesian people who want their children and daughters to receive an education using the Indonesian curriculum. SIDH was founded on June 15 1965 and inaugurated by the Head of the Indonesian Representative when the Dutch government was Ambassador Soedjarwo Tjondronegoro. SIDH is held in order to provide access and educational services that are quality, competitive, relevant and of international standard, but still have an Indonesian personality and culture. For this reason, all activities and culture that exist in Indonesia are implemented there. One of them is the habits in implementing Islamic education.²²

There are several Islamic educations that are always applied together in daily life at SIDH, including Dhuhur prayers in congregation regularly, Friday prayers in congregation even local residents who are joining in. Keeping food halal is also a focus of learning as the Netherlands is a secular country. The teacher provides material on how to worship which is carried out on an emergency basis. For example, on the highway, in public places, in buildings where there are no prayer rooms, even when praying on public transportation.

SIDH also instils the values of Islamic teachings in order to form good student characters. Some of these values are honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and politeness. The Dutch consider everyone to be the same. Apart from that, there are many other values of Islamic education that are always applied,

²⁰ Anik Susanti, "Akulturasi Budaya Belanda Dan Jawa, (Kajian Historis pada Kasus Kuliner Sup dan Bistik Jawa Tahun 1900–1942), 450-453.

²¹ Rustam Ibrahim, "Pendidikan multikultural: pengertian, prinsip, dan relevansinya dengan tujuan pendidikan Islam." 147.

²² Tjatur Prasetyawati, dkk, *Profil Singkat Sekolah Indonesia Luar Negeri*, 381-382.

especially those that focus on the character of students. Because there are very few students who are consistent in implementing Islamic character education.²³

Challenges of Education Implementation in Indonesian Schools in Den-Haag, the Netherland

The Netherlands is one of the countries in Western Europe that has a large Muslim population. Most of them are Moroccans, Turks, Surinamese and other ethnic groups. In recent years, Islamic primary schools have become the subject of debate among politicians and academics in the Netherlands. There are those who argue that Islamic education adopted by Muslims does not have a good effect on the state and society in the Netherlands. Because they are members of society with their own culture which can hinder the process of integration into the daily life of Dutch society. A part from this, there are also those who think positively about the existence of Islamic education in the Netherlands.²⁴

Den-Haag is one of the cities in the Netherlands that has schools under the auspices of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, namely the Indonesian School Den Haag (SIDH) where both teachers and students are Indonesian citizens who live or reside in the Netherlands. This school has the same curriculum as the curriculum in Indonesia. Islamic education is a subject that is highly emphasized to shape students' character values in living side by side with diverse circumstances and society in the Netherlands. Regarding the form of Islamic education in the Netherlands, it occurs in three different forms: 1) Mosque education, 2) Islamic Religious Education in public schools, and 3) Private Islamic School.²⁵

Implementing Islamic education in a country with a multicultural population is not an easy matter and has many challenges. The Netherlands is a secular country, secularism is often equated with something evil or negative, namely greedy, materialistic and un-Islamic. It does not only occur among Muslims, but secularism is a threat to all religions. Secularism is a discourse that diverts people's attention from religious life to material life.²⁶ A secular state is also described as a state that prevents religion from controlling government or political power.

The Netherlands is not an Islamic country, so its food cannot be guaranteed to be halal. So SIDH provides knowledge to choose halal food or drinks. The

²³ Hasil Wawancara bersama Ibu Safreni seorang Guru di Sekolah Indonesia Deen Hagg Belanda.

²⁴ Muslih, *Pendidikan Islam di Negeri...*, 15-16.

²⁵ Muslih, *Pendidikan Islam di Negeri...*, 32.

²⁶ Amin Mudzakkir, "Sekularisme dan Identitas Muslim Eropa." *Jurnal Kajian Wilayah* 4.1, 2016, 93.

teacher together with the students remind each other to prevent eating haram food. Another challenge is the majority of Dutch citizens are atheists, so there are very few places of worship, especially mosques. In one city there is only one mosque. So for religious activities such as carrying out Friday prayers, you have to create a planned activity every week by using an empty room only for group Friday prayers. Therefore, Muslims in the Netherlands must be taught how to worship in an emergency. The understanding of fiqh must also be contextualised so that they can worship with peace of mind.

The difference between the culture and character of Dutch and Indonesian society is huge. The Netherlands has a culture of hedonism, parties and beer will be more to their liking than books and reading. Pop culture and hedonism are the ideologies of Dutch society. Free sex and drugs have become an art and dynamic in their own right for the young Dutch generation.²⁷ Dutch citizens have a psychological condition that is easily stressed, so the death rate in the Netherlands due to suicide is very high.

Due to this negative culture, the role of Islamic religious education in schools is very important to prepare Muslim Indonesian children to be able to live side by side with Dutch society well and without causing conflict, and not to fall into their negative culture. For parents, Islamic education can function as the best way to transfer religious values to children. SIDH has rules that are in accordance with sharia and can be applied to social life in the Netherlands, such as modest dress. Therefore, SIDH places limits on direct contact between male and female students to prevent promiscuity.

Dutch society is an individualistic people. They are used to doing things themselves without involving other people. This will form a society that does not work together. This character is incompatible with Indonesians who are known to be friendly, helpful and live in mutual cooperation. SIDH provides teachings that guide students to continue working together and helping each other. The values of diversity are compulsory material to be taught and the cultivation of its values can be done through habituation.²⁸

Conclusion

The implementation of Islamic education at the Indonesian School Den-Haag (SIDH) in the Netherlands has its own challenges due to differences in culture, community character, and traditions that develop in the Netherlands.

²⁷ Fidiyanto, *Menjadi Indonesia di Negeri Belanda*, (Yogyakarta: Garudhawaca, 2015, 107-108.

²⁸ Lina Hasnawati and Arif Nadliroh, "Diversity and Pesantren Values as the Basis of Education in Malaysia and Indonesia," *Dawuh Guru: Jurnal Pendidikan MI/SD* 3, no. 1 (2023): 1–12.

The Netherlands is a secular, free, and individualistic country with a high suicide rate. The contestation between cultures eventually gave birth to cultural acculturation, both Dutch and Indonesian. The negotiation between local values and culture is carried out while maintaining religious principles as the main foundation, namely faith, morals and sharia. Students at SIDH are equipped with Islamic values and Pancasila through habituation and discipline in religious activities. The lack of mosques in the Netherlands is anticipated with material on worship in emergencies and a contextual understanding of fiqh. In addition, SIDH students are also given the understanding to maintain and guarantee the halalness of the food to be consumed.

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