



Democratisation of Islamic Education: The Face of Islamic School Democracy

Agus Khunaifi^{1*}, Ruruh Sarasati²

^{1,2}Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The characteristics of democratization in Islamic schools generally begin with a dialogue between democracy and Islamic teachings. The acceptance of democracy in Hj Isriati's institution is understood as a concept that is in line with Islamic teachings (humanistic model). The acceptance of democracy in Al-Azhar school can be classified into integralistic democratization. Democratization in Islamic schools in Semarang city in managerial aspects is generally based on competitive and professional aspects. This is because Islamic schools are private schools whose funding sources are mostly from the stickholder community itself, which demands high competition and professionalism in order to exist in the community. Democratisation in the aspect of learning in Islamic schools is generally based on Islamic characteristics in particular and becomes the most prominent feature in democratisation in the aspect of learning.

KEYWORDS

Democracy, democratisation, Islamic institution, Education, school



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*Corresponding author: Agus Khunaifi ✉ Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, Indonesia

Introduction

The reforms brought about fundamental changes in education policy, one of which was the birth of policies that supported the democratization of Education. The democratization of education policy supports the creation of democratic values in Education. One of the fundamental democratization policies is the provision of leeway to the community in the provision of Education as stipulated. In particular, the government policy that regulates this regulation is Law No. 2003 No. 20 Article 55 paragraph 1. The regulation allows the organization of community-based Education in formal and non-formal Education in accordance with the peculiarities of religion, social environment, and culture for the benefit of the community.

After the birth of this democratization regulation of education management, there was a shift in the dominance of management. The government no longer dominates the management of educational institutions but has been balanced with the community. The balance of public and private institutions can be seen by comparing the number of public and private schools at the national level. According to data from the Indonesian Statistics Agency, in 2020/2021, the number of kindergarten schools is 438,428, with a ratio of 171,587 public schools (42.70%) and 266 private schools. 841 (57.30), the number of primary schools is 148743 with a ratio of public schools 131058 (88.11%) while private 17685 (21.89%), junior high schools are 13865 with a ratio of 40597 with a ratio of public schools 23670 (58.30%) while private 16927 (41.70%), senior high schools are 13865 with a ratio of public schools 6899 (49.76%) while private 6966 (50.24%). Based on this data, it can be understood that public and private schools are comparable; even at the kindergarten and senior high school levels, there are more private schools. Thus, after the reformation, there has been a shift in the dominance of the management of educational institutions from public to private.

The shift in the dominance of education management from public to private is more pronounced in schools with Islamic characteristics. This is because the policy of democratization of education management is understood as a form of support for Muslims after being marginalized for so long in the national education system. The establishment of many formal and non-formal educational institutions manifests the democratization euphoria of Muslims. Currently, the types of formal educational institutions with Islamic characteristics that have developed in the community are Roudlotul Athfal (RA), Bustanul Athfal (BA), Islamic Kindergarten (TKI), Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Islamic Elementary School (SDI), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), Junior High School (SMPI), Madrasah Aliyah (MA), Islamic Vocational High School (SMKI), Islamic High School and (SMAI).

The increase in the number of Islamic schools in Indonesia today must be balanced with programs that align with government programs, one of which is the democratization of Education. This is because Islamic schools have strong Islamic

characteristics. Islamic educational institutions are currently highlighted as educational institutions that function as incubators of radicalism and extremism in the name of religion (Afrianty 2012). This phenomenon began to strengthen after the opening of political space in the reform era in 1998. After the reformation, religious groups gained more freedom to express their religiosity. One of the strongest demands was implementing Islamic law in several provinces and districts across Indonesia. By 2009, 151 Islamic local regulations had been implemented at the district and provincial levels. Thus, Indonesia currently needs educational institutions that are able to create tolerant and democratic character values for the next generation to strengthen national resilience.

One of the efforts to realize educational institutions that support national resilience is the democratization of Education. Educational democracy can be achieved through three aspects of Education: regulation, professionalism, and management (Ilyasin and Zamroni 2017; Zamroni 2019; Sj, Maarif, and Zamroni 2021). The regulatory aspect focuses on curriculum reform related to the formulation of educational objectives, the application of competency-based curriculum, shifting the paradigm of teacher work from responsibility towards accountability, and the implementation of evaluation with essays and portfolios. The professional aspect aims to develop teachers' rights and authority in their educational duties. This can be achieved through developing awareness of teachers' political rights and providing opportunities for teachers to develop themselves.

Meanwhile, the management aspect of Education is aimed at changing Education's decision-making and control centers. Reforming this aspect of management can be done in two ways. Firstly, by providing educational institutions with greater opportunities to make educational decisions. The form of this policy is to foster school-based management. Secondly, it provided extensive opportunities for community members to participate in providing Education. This policy can be realized through community-based Education.

In line with the above objectives, the most strategic way to "experience democracy" is through what is referred to as democracy education (Azra 2015, 2017). Democracy education can be understood as the socialization, dissemination, and actualization of democratic concepts, systems, values, culture, and practices through Education. Furthermore, Azra (Halim 2021) asserts, in many ways, democracy education is synonymous with "civic education", although civic Education is broader in scope than democracy education. Clearly, both seek to foster civic culture and civility in the educational environment, which, in turn, will be an important contribution to the development of genuine and authentic democracy in the Indonesian nation-state. In line with Azra's opinion, Syafii Maarif argues that the process of creating a democratic mentality and culture can be done through Education. In this regard, the

realization of a democratic education system is a necessity that must be addressed positively by all components involved in the education process.

Democratization of Education means the process towards democracy in Education. Democratization of Education can be done in two ways: "educational democracy" and "democratic education". Educational democracy, as mentioned at the beginning of this paper, can be realized by applying the concept of community-based Education in a national education organization. Educational democracy is more political, concerning government policy in Education at the national level. If democracy begins to be applied in education, then education will not become a tool for rulers. People or communities are given full rights to participate in determining national education policy. All parties interested in Education are expected to participate in determining education policy.

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Based on the background of the problem above, the author is interested in answering how the democratization of Education in schools with Islamic characteristics in Semarang. The research location is focused on private schools based on Islam in the city of Semarang. Semarang was chosen because it is one of the major cities in Central Java that has a high dynamic of Islamic Education. The high dynamics of Islamic Education in Semarang can be seen from the high public interest in schools with Islamic characteristics. Among the institutions that are quite popular in Semarang are SD Nurus Sunnah, Al-Azhar 25, Kuttab Al-Fatih, SD Firdaus Pleburan, SD Darul Qur'an, SD Islam Hidayatulloh, SD Islam Bandungan, Sekolah Alam Ar Ridho, SD Isriati Baiturrahman, and SD Nasima.

Method

The method used in this research is qualitative. Data were obtained through interviews, participatory observation, and document study. Interviews were conducted with key informants: the principal, teachers, parents, students, and the user community. To ensure the validity of the data, triangulation was conducted. Triangulation was conducted through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on sources and

methods. Triangulation was done by comparing the results of interviews between one source and another. Triangulation was also carried out by comparing interview data with observation data and document study results. Data was analyzed by processing it into units (unitizing). Content analysis was used to analyze data in book and journal documents. In contrast, domain analysis was conducted to describe the field's research object. Furthermore, the data was categorized and interpreted.

Research on ideology in Education has previously been conducted by Toto Suharto (2018) in a journal entitled *Transnational Islamic Education in Indonesia: Ideological Perspective*, which discusses the transnational Islamic movement through Education, which has become a global phenomenon. The research has similarities with this research, which is about the transnational Islamic movement through the educational aspect. The difference between this research and Suharto's research is about different perspectives. Suharto's research uses a global ideological perspective, while this research uses a national perspective.

Second, regarding Islamic educational institutions with transnational ideology, Abd Rahman Assegaf's case study at the Islamic Centre Bin Baz (ICBB) Yogyakarta Educational Institution (2017). In his findings, the upbringing of Education and da'wah carried out at the ICBB institution is understood to maintain identity in the form of a way of life, clothing, eating, and drinking amid the inevitability of globalization, which includes economics, religion, and culture, politics, science, health, and Education. Educational activities tend to be adaptive to government regulations and do not involve themselves with practical political interests. This research differs in subject coverage from Abd Rahman's research. In that study, the research was conducted through a case study at one institution, while in this study, the study was conducted at a more general educational institution.

Third, Wajdi's research on the Turkish Islamic network's revivalist Islamic movement is growing rapidly in Indonesia (2020). The movement is not political but focuses on Islamic personal formation through Fethullah Gulen, Suleymanics, and Jamaah Nur movements. The difference between this research and Wajdi's research is that Wajdi's research was only conducted on the Turkish Islamic movement. Thus, this research complements previous studies by focusing on democratization in Islamic Education.

Results and Discussions

Democratisation in Hj. Isriati Educational Institution

Hj. Isriati's educational institution was established and started its operations on 16 July 1985. The name Hj. Isriati was taken from the name of the late Hajjah Isriati, wife of Lieutenant General (Ret.) H. Moenadi, former Governor of Central Java from 1966-1974. She was the one who had the idea of establishing an Islamic

education institution within the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in Semarang. There are two branches in Kalipancur and the Islamic center mosque area. The Islamic center mosque is quite important in the Central Java region. It is the center of Hajj pilgrimage activities in the province. Socially, this position is advantageous for Hj. Isriati's institution, as the mosque is strategically located in an urban area around government offices and shopping centers. In addition, this mosque is widely known by the urban community of Semarang and its surroundings.

The development pattern of Hj. Isriati's institution is unique. The uniqueness of its development is motivated by utilizing the city mosque for Islamic educational institutions. This pattern has been done since the time of the Prophet—however, Hj. Isriati's institution uses the local government mosque as the basis for its development. Thus, the development of this institution uses the same model centered on a strategic mosque. To date, the Hj. Isriati school has experienced three phases of development, namely the first period of the establishment (1985-1987), the second self-discovery (1987-2000), the third development of the quality of Education (2000-2008), the fourth stabilization to international standards, the fifth increase in international achievement (2017-2020) and the fifth period that is still ongoing, namely becoming a digital school with superior character and a culture of achievement. Democratic discourse is understood and practiced uniquely in educational institutions, especially in the Hj. Isriati Semarang educational institution.

The discourse of democracy is understood and practiced uniquely in educational institutions, especially in Hj. Isriati Semarang. In general, the academic community in the field accepts democracy as part of historical demands; democratic values and Islamic values are not contradictory. Democratic values such as freedom, equality, and pluralism are *sunatullah*, which exist in Islamic teachings. The Foundation used in accepting democracy is the Islamic concept of *rahmatan lilalamin* (blessing for the world). This concept is written in the vision of SD Hj. Isriati Baiturrahman 2 Semarang, namely Realising Learners who are Khairu Umah, Excellent in Science, Technology, Arts (IPTEKS), Faith and Taqwa (IMTAQ) and Rahmatal Lil Alamin.

Democracy is also contained in the general learning objectives set at SD Hj. Isriati Baiturrahman 2 Semarang, namely preparing superior Islamic generations in the future to adapt globally, which is useful for family, religion, nation, and state. The value of democracy is also contained in the institution's targets, namely a) being able to create an educational community (school, students, and community) that is

conducive to supporting the implementation of Education at school, b) the educational community has a superior spirit in the implementation of Education, c) the implementation of Islamic Education.

The development of democratic values at SD Hj Isriati Baiturrahman 2 Semarang is done culturally through formal and non-formal activities. This happens because, conceptually, Islam and democracy are understood as two things that are not contradictory. The values of democracy, which include freedom, equality, and pluralism, run naturally.

The value of freedom is developed in the policies, activities, and programs implemented. The value of freedom is understood as responsible freedom to self-actualize by both educators and learners. Nevertheless, freedom is directed to improve competence continuously. This is stated in the motto that is used as the Foundation of the entire academic community, namely, "Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people, so that they change the conditions that exist in themselves" (QS.Arra'du: 11). The motto implies that human freedom is understood as a freedom that is in line with the views of Thomas Hobbes and Jhon Lock, which means the absence of external obstacles to human movement. This freedom is believed to be a right that every human being must have. This belief is based on the argument that people who are left free can stand on their own feet. Suppose other people do not interfere in his affairs and do not force him to do things he does not want. In that case, he will live his own life, seek income, and become independent—responsibility and a wider opportunity to actualize themselves for the better.

The value of equality arises from the belief that everyone has the same position before others. Equality is a universal trait of humans who are free to choose in this condition, i.e., no human being has more rights than another. Social experts generally agree in discussing equality by distinguishing between natural and conventional inequality. On the one hand, natural inequalities are unchangeable differences in age, sex, strength, skin color, etc. In contrast, conventional inequalities refer to differences in income, status, power, and so on that are likely to change. From these two inequalities, experts agree to accept natural inequalities and reject conventional inequalities.

The value of pluralism is a value that often appears in activities, policies, and learning at school. This value is based on religious teachings, especially Q.S. Al-Hujurat verse 11. This verse explains the reality of human differences created in nations and tribes to get to know each other. Pluralism is generally defined as plural

discourse. In political science, pluralism is interpreted into two definitions, namely first, a theory that opposes the monolithic power of the state and even advocates to increase the delegation and autonomy of the main organizations that represent one's involvement in society and believe that power should be shared among existing political parties—secondly, the certainty of differences in the life of a society and nation that demands tolerance.

The focus of democratization in Islamic schools is related to maintaining their existence and ability to compete. This is because the trust of the stakeholders' community strongly influences the existence of these types of schools. The managers know that the user community is mostly very rational. Competitive conditions also color the academic climate in the field. According to the principal, competition among Islamic schools with Islamic characteristics in urban Muslim communities is undeniable. This is because the number of Islamic educational institutions in Semarang city is very high. This high level of competition can be seen from the many types of educational institutions competing, including public schools that are much cheaper, Islamic schools that are low-cost, and one-level schools that are high-cost. Thus, the competitive characteristics of this type of educational institution are very high. The competitive nature of these educational institutions demands excellent quality from the entire academic community.

By focusing on moral orientation as the principle of Education, al Abrasyi (Juwariyah, 2009) proposed principles related to democratization, the development of freedom and independence of thought, and fair treatment of students. Furthermore, Education must also pay attention to its social dimension: 1) Equality of learning opportunities for women and men, 2) Special attention to underprivileged groups.

One of the characteristics highlighted in Hj Isriati's educational institutions is the effort to realize an ideal society with Islamic characteristics and qualities that can compete, professionalize, and excel. Conceptually, these efforts are made by integrating two characteristics, namely Islam and professionalism. The effort can be seen from its vision: To realize the school's vision above, then SD Hj. Isriati Baiturrahman 2 Semarang has the following mission: 1) Implementing Islamic nuanced Education in everyday life. 2) Fostering the spirit of self-improvement according to the demands of today's Education. 3) Familiarising the application of learning technology, 4) Cultivating the improvement of science and high-level thinking skills, 5) Fostering creativity and innovativeness. 6) Achieving the best

graduation standards and national-level achievements. 7) Students are able to read and write the Qur'an and memorize Juz 30 (Juz 'amma). 8) Establishing dignified, broad, and proactive community relations for the benefit of Education. 9) Fostering the character of social sensitivity, tolerance, and protecting the environment.

Leadership policies are an important component in understanding the democratization of an educational institution. This is because the leadership policy has become a common guideline in technically running the program in the field. Thus, the democratization process of an institution can be understood from the policies of its leaders.

The policies of institutional leaders in the field are generally based on government policies. In other words, school policies are integrated with government policies. This is because educational institutions are one of the derivatives of government policy itself. The hierarchy of government policies on Education starts from the 1945 Constitution, laws, government regulations, presidential decrees, presidential instructions, ministerial decrees, provincial regulations, district and city regulations, then translated and implemented by school principals to directly touch the needs of education stakeholders, especially students. Thus, every policy must always be related to the welfare and intelligence of the community. To achieve quality improvement, a school principal must inform, implement and evaluate education policy as a professional officer. School policy is a derivative of government policy in the field of Education. Thus, school policies are formally integrated with government policies.

The leadership policies at this institution are based on the awareness of being a school whose market segment is the upper middle class. In other words, this awareness is the basis for many school policies. The most visible educational policy in Hj, Isriati's urban Islamic educational institution, is related to the effort to establish a quality educational institution. The establishment of a quality private educational institution requires its complex approach. The most similar approach in policy in this model institution based on education planning theory is the cost and benefit or cost-effectiveness approach rather than social demand. This is because the establishment of quality private schools must automatically consider the costs that must be incurred with the sources of funds owned.

According to education planning theory, the social needs approach model is unlikely to be used in quality private education institutions in urban areas. This is because the social needs approach only focuses on meeting the needs or demands of

all individuals for basic education services, providing learning services to free the school-age population from illiteracy, and providing education services to free people from fear of colonialism, ignorance, and poverty. In other words, the social needs approach is more appropriate for educational institutions in underdeveloped communities. This approach will get maximum results if it is developed in a community environment where few educational institutions are available. The target of this approach is the achievement of equitable Education for the community at large.

On the other hand, this approach model is generally used to fulfill the community's needs in quantity rather than quality, so it is unlikely to be accepted in middle-class urban communities. In addition, this approach does not provide a comprehensive answer to achieving educational goals because it emphasizes fulfilling social needs. In contrast, other aspects or areas of life are less considered.

An approach that is quite likely to be used in Islamic educational institutions is the labor approach. Educational planning using this approach prioritizes the relationship between the output (graduates) of educational services in each educational unit and the demands or absorption of labor needs in the community. The advantage of the employment approach is that the learning process or educational services in educational units have a high correlation aspect with the demands of the world of work needed by the community and requires a close relationship between educational institutions and the world of business and industry, this is certainly very positive to minimize the gap between the world of Education and the world of industry-business. It has a limited role in educational planning because this approach has ignored the role of public secondary schools.

The next approach is cost-effectiveness. This approach is orientated towards the concept of investment in human capital and is often called the profit and loss approach. The approach is based on the assumption that the quality of education services will produce good output and will directly contribute to the economic growth of society; a person's contribution to national income is proportional to their level of Education, and education planning must be truly oriented towards efforts to improve the quality of human resources (mastery of science and technology). With the availability of quality human resources, community income is expected to increase, and education programs with high economic value will occupy a large financing priority.

The advantages of the cost-effectiveness approach (Hummel-Rossi and Ashdown, 2002) include the following: the education plan will have functional aspects and economic benefits so that forms of education services that are considered less productive can be eliminated through the investment efficiency approach. This approach always chooses alternatives that generate more benefits than costs. Secondly, the weaknesses of the cost-effectiveness approach include the difficulty in determining the exact costs and benefits of education services, especially when measuring benefits for a future period; it is very difficult to measure or calculate the benefits generated by a person in employment associated with previous education services; this approach ignores the relationship between a person's income and internal individual factors (e.g. motivation, conscientious discipline, social class, individual life orientation, and the like), and only looks at the relationship between education level and income.

Another approach used is the integrative approach or systemic approach. In this approach, educational planning is prepared based on the integration of orientation and interests towards individual development and social (group) development, which includes determining and formulating the goals to be achieved, researching the problems or work to be done, collecting the necessary data or information, determining the stages or series of actions, formulating how the problem will be solved, determining who will do it and what affects the implementation, and determining how to make changes in the preparation of the plan (White, Heidemann, and Smith, 2013; Leal Filho, Shiel, and Paço, 2016). The integrative approach also combines fulfilling labor needs (pragmatic) with preparing academic quality development (romantic).

In addition to the two characteristics of the approach above, the integrative approach also incorporates economic considerations (profit and loss) and other more partial (sectoral) considerations. The most key things to support the implementation of education programs in integrative education planning are: (a) continue to encourage the development of the quality of human resources of school members, (b) continue to improve the quality of education unit management based on the principles of MPMBS, and (c) continue to improve the quality of community participation (PSM) to achieve educational goals.

Curriculum management is carried out using four approaches: the academic subject approach, the humanistic approach, the technological approach, and the social reconstruction approach. These approaches align with the curriculum

development theory (Fauzi, 2020). The first curriculum development model used in this school is the academic subject approach, which begins with determining what subjects must be studied by students in (preparation for) the development of their knowledge. The school also uses humanistic development, emphasizing student participation in learning and interaction, interpretation, and integration of thought and action. This approach also emphasizes the relevance of materials to students' needs and interests.

Another approach used in curriculum management is the technological approach. Technology can be hardware or software and can also be in the form of instructional system development procedures, programmed lessons, and modules (Abdul Mujid, 2006: 148). The last approach is a social reconstruction approach that stems from societal problems. This curriculum emphasized the existence of science and technology and worked cooperatively to form a better society. Thus, this curriculum approach emphasizes learning content while emphasizing the educational process and learning experience.

School democratization can also be seen in extracurricular activities, which are one of the important programs in shaping students' personalities. Extracurricular activities function as a vehicle for developing students' talents and interests outside of class hours. Extracurricular, according to Asmani (Asmani 2014), is an educational activity outside of subject hours and counseling services to assist the development of students according to their needs, potential, talents, and interests through activities specifically organized by educators and education personnel who have the ability and authority at school. In addition, extracurricular activities can lead students to have lasting and universal characteristics such as honesty, discipline, respect for pluralism, empathy, and sympathy (Fares et al., 2016). All of these aspects will greatly support students' future success.

The existence of extracurricular activities at Hj. Isriati's educational institution is one of the means of forming hypothetical citizens. Students are expected to become good citizens who must be educated to become mature citizens aware of their rights and obligations (Yamanto, Budimansyah, and Bestari, 2015; Dahliyana et al., 2021)—the co-curricular activities at Hj. Isriati Islamic educational institution include individual and extracurricular activities following Permendikbud no 62 of 2014 concerning Extracurricular Primary and Secondary Education.

The extracurricular activities carried out aim to deepen and expand students' knowledge in the sense of enriching, sharpening, and improving students' knowledge

related to subjects following the existing curricular program, completing efforts to foster, strengthen, and form students' personality values. This kind of activity can be attempted through PPBN, marching, activities related to efforts to strengthen devotion to God Almighty, leadership training, and so on, and fostering and improving talents, interests, and skills. This activity includes independence, confidence, and creativity (Wahjosumidjo, 2011).

The process of extracurricular activities begins with the preparation of signs about the mechanism of the self-development program through extracurricular activities prepared by the deputy principal of the student affairs section. And the signs consist of the diversity of potential, needs, talents, interests, and interests of students and educational units (Anjar Kusuma, 2015). The core of extracurricular activities is adjusted to the activities and then discussed with the general chairman, and all instructors in certain extracurricular activities, in this case, are students. In contrast, the process of extracurricular activities refers to the planning made within a certain time. It is impossible to sometimes deviate from what has been listed in the planning. Then, the teaching method uses various methods or methods for certain materials the coaches and trainers usually lecture and document for activities such as marching, photography with demonstrations, and simulations. The strategies used to be more appropriate for students include (1) modeling, (2) engaging, and (3) integrating (Pavlenko et al. 2019). Meanwhile, the assessment has generally been agreed upon and uniformed, and students can be said to participate well in extracurricular activities.

Democratization in learning is the next important part of educational institutions. This is because the academic aspect provides wider opportunities for students to be actively involved in constructing democratic knowledge and understanding. To encourage the creation of a democratic education model, there are several things: First, avoid indoctrination. Let students be active in doing things, asking questions, being critical of what they learn, and expressing alternative views that differ from those of their teachers. Second, Avoid the notion that there is only one correct value. Teachers do not think that what they say is the most correct. What should be developed is to provide ample opportunities for alternative and creative ideas to solve a problem. Third, give children the freedom to speak. Students must be accustomed to speaking. Students are accustomed to the context of conveying ideas, and building and confirming an understanding must be given the widest possible space. Fourth, Give "Opportunities" for students to make mistakes. Mistakes are an

important part of understanding. Teachers and students explore together where mistakes occur and help put them in the right framework. Fifth, scientific thinking and critical thinking should be developed. With this, students are directed not to always agree with what they have received but to understand and understand why it should be so. Sixth, give students ample opportunities to dream and fantasize. Dreaming and fantasizing give students time to imagine something they want. So that students can find inspiration to realize their curiosity.

Democratization of Education at Al Azhar School 29 Semarang

Al-Azhar is one of the most influential schools in Semarang. The people of Semarang, both academics and the general public, have widely recognized the existence of this school. Historically, the rapidly growing urban middle-class Islamic Education Institution was first recognized with the establishment of LPI Al-Azhar Jakarta. Al-Azhar Institute of Education was founded by the prominent Muslim figure Muhammad Buya Hamka. The name of the oldest Islamic college, Al-Azhar, in Egypt inspired this institution. The inspiration for Al-Azhar is very reasonable because Egypt was the center of Education and science during the heyday of Islam. The naming of Al-Azhar inspired the successor of Islamic Education in Indonesia. The motive for the establishment of this institution is based on the concern of Muslim leaders about the quality of Islamic Education Institutions that are inferior to non-Muslim Education Institutions. This motivation became the main Foundation for establishing the al-Azhar Institute to realize quality Islamic Education. This superior and quality Islamic Education Institution inspired similar institutions in other cities, such as Insan Cendikia in Tangerang Madania in Parung.

YPI Al-Azhar is an official institution engaged in da'wah, Education, and social affairs, with Notary Deed Raden Kadiman, 7 April 1952, number 25, domiciled at Jl. Sisingamangaraja, Kebayoran Baru, South Jakarta. The name "Al-Azhar" was given by the Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Prof Mahmoud Syaltout, as the name of the Kebayoran Baru Grand Mosque during his visit to Indonesia as a state guest in 1960. In 1963, the Board of YPI Al-Azhar established the Islamic Afternoon School. 1964, kindergarten and primary school followed; in 1971, junior high school was established, and in 1976, senior high school. In line with the founders' ideals, in 2000, Al-Azhar University Indonesia (UAI) was established. On 10 June 1975, Education was separated from the management of Al-Azhar Mosque and managed specifically by the Education Section of YPI Al-Azhar. In 1981, YPI established the Directorate of Education as the daily executor of the policy line of YPI Al-Azhar's Education Section. The name "Al-Azhar" was patented as the name of the Foundation and its institutions through a notarial deed of Ny.Poerbaningsih Adi Warsita, 31 March 1986, number 62.

Conceptually, the existence of the al-Azhar Islamic education institution is needed by the wider community because the existence of YPI al-Azhar is based on the reality of the problems faced by the world of Education in Indonesia today. The education problem in Indonesia is generally related to three matters mapped out by the government. The three cases include 1) the lack of equitable distribution of educational opportunities so that most people feel that they only get limited educational opportunities at the primary school level, 2) the low level of relevance of Education to the needs of the world of work which is not only influenced by limited employment opportunities but there is a considerable difference between the results of education and work needs. 3) The low quality of Education. Indicators of the low quality of Education can be seen in the level of student achievement. Such as reading skills and science and math lessons. The Third International Mathematics and Science Study Repeat (TIMSS-R) study in 1999 states that among 38 countries, the achievement of Indonesian junior high school students is ranked 32 for science and 34 for mathematics. Thus, YPI al-Azhar's expertise aligns with the nation's need for quality institutions.

Currently, the development of al-Azhar institutions is generally in line with the government's efforts to unravel the problems of national Education. The efforts include: 1) striving for the expansion and equitable distribution of opportunities to obtain high-quality Education for all Indonesian people and towards creating high-quality Indonesian human beings with a significant increase in the education budget. 2) Improving the academic and professional abilities and improving the welfare of education personnel so that educators can function optimally, especially in improving character and character education to restore the authority of institutions and education personnel. 3) Reforming the education system, including curriculum reform, in the form of curriculum diversification to serve the diversity of learners, preparing a curriculum that applies nationally and locally according to local interests, and professionally diversifying the types of Education. 4) Empowering educational institutions, both school and out-of-school, as centers for the acculturation of values, attitudes, and abilities and increasing family and community participation supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure. 5) Renew and strengthen the national education system based on decentralization, scientific autonomy, and management principles. 6) Improve the quality of educational institutions organized by the community and the government to establish an effective and efficient education system in the face of developments in science, technology, and the arts. 7) Developing the quality of human resources as early as possible in a direct, integrated, and comprehensive manner through various proactive and reactive efforts by all components of the nation so that the younger generation can develop optimally accompanied by the right to support and protection following their potential. 8) Improve the mastery, development, and utilization of science and technology,

including the nation's technology in the business world, especially small, medium, and cooperative enterprises, to improve the competitiveness of products based on local resources.

In the development of Education, this institution believes that a person must be able to develop four things, namely the ability to anticipate, meaning that Education tries to prepare students to be able to anticipate the rapid development of science and technology, the ability to understand and cope with situations (cope), meaning that it can develop the ability and attitude of students to handle and deal with new situations, the ability to accommodate, meaning that it can accommodate the rapid development of science and technology and all the changes it causes and the ability to reorient, meaning that perceptions and insights about the world need to be reoriented because of the development of science and technology and rapid social changes to gain broader insights.

Democratization in this institution can be seen from the vision of the institution, which is to become a leading and modern Islamic da'wah and education institution in enlightening and educating the nation's life to form an Indonesian society that is faithful, knowledgeable, charitable, and devoted towards *izzul Islam wal Muslimin*. Democratization in the management of the institution is also strengthened by the school's vision to create Muslim scholars who are pious and noble, physically and mentally healthy, intelligent, capable and skilled, confident, have a strong personality, have a warrior character, and also can develop themselves and their families and are responsible for the development of the people and nation.

The above visions are contained in the school mission, which is to implement an Islamic education system, develop the academic and non-academic potential of students, improve the quality of student graduates, improve the ability of teachers professionally, improve the quality of educational infrastructure, improve reliable school management, and foster *ukuwah Islamiyah* among the school community.

An important democratization process is related to classroom learning. Classroom learning is the vehicle that most allows the democratization process to be taught and implemented. The classroom is a miniature society ideally used to introduce and train students about democracy. The democratization that can be implemented includes choosing methods and materials that are in line with the values and spirit of democracy.

In Islamic education institutions, the methods used include the discussion method. According to the principal, the preferred learning method can activate students. According to him, the best concept of learning today is learning that provides opportunities for students to be more active in the learning process. One method that has been used is the discussion method. However, this discussion method is applied in already somewhat higher classes, namely grades five and six. According to the fifth and

sixth grades, students have begun to be able to compose sentences well and have the courage to express opinions and questions. The discussion method is a method that a teacher can use in class to solve a problem based on students' opinions.

Theoretically, this discussion method has advantages, including 1) the class atmosphere is more lively because students direct their attention or thoughts to the problem being discussed, 2) can increase individual personality achievements, such as tolerance, critical thinking, democracy, systematic, patience and so on, 3) students easily understand the conclusions of the discussion results, because they follow the thinking process before arriving at a conclusion, 4) students are trained to learn to obey the rules and regulations as in a deliberation, 5) helps students to make better decisions, 6) not trapped into individual thoughts that are sometimes wrong, full of prejudice and narrow. With discussion, one can consider the reasons/thoughts of others. The drawbacks of the discussion method include the following: 1) There may be students who do not participate actively, and 2) It is difficult to estimate the results achieved because the time used for discussion is quite long.

Conclusion

Democratization in educational institutions is necessary because modern society demands democratization. On the other hand, democratization in educational institutions is a vehicle for learning, practicing, and instilling the value of democracy, which is quite effective and efficient. The characteristics of democratization in Islamic schools generally begin with a dialogue between democracy and Islamic teachings. This dialogue begins the acceptance of democracy in Islamic educational institutions. The acceptance of democracy in Hj Isriati's institution is understood as a concept that aligns with Islamic teachings (humanistic model). The acceptance of democracy in Al-Azhar school can be classified as integralistic democratization. Democratization in Islamic schools in Semarang City in managerial aspects is generally based on competitive and professional aspects. This is because Islamic schools are private schools whose funding sources are mostly from the stakeholder community, which demands high competition and professionalism to exist in the community. Democratization in learning in Islamic schools is generally based on Islamic characteristics and has become the most prominent feature of democratization in learning. Democratization in learning can be grouped into two parts, namely democratic learning and democratization of learning. Democracy learning is specifically about introducing and teaching democratic values such as tolerance, cooperation, and so on. At the same time, the democratization of learning is an effort to conduct learning activities using methods and approaches that provide opportunities for students to apply democratic values such as freedom of opinion, respect for differences, etc.

The advice for institutional leaders is that the democratization process in the managerial aspect should continue to be developed so that management can satisfy all parties, including the academic community. For educators, democratization in the learning aspect should continue to be developed through learning activities more open to democratic values. Meanwhile, the community and student guardians are expected to always interact with the school or institution so that they can work together to realize quality Islamic Education

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