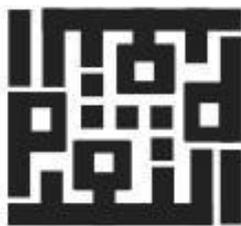


Education Development in Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama from Time to Time

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ABSTRACT

Islamic education in Indonesia has developed from time to time as well as the the development of Muhammadiyah and Nahdhatul Ulama (NU). This article aims to explore the history of the education development of Muhammadiyah and NU from time to time, referring to the historical literature sources using library research methods. The analysis results demonstrate that Muhammadiyah started its movement by focusing on tajdid, or Islamic renewal. In the 19th century, Ahmad Dahlan founded a secondary educational institution, the Muhammadiyah boarding school, to provide religious and other general knowledge. Afterward, when the dualism of the Islamic education system occurred in the 20th century, Muhammadiyah attempted to integrate the secular knowledge brought by the Dutch with religious knowledge. Furthermore, Nahdhatul Ulama, which took part in education, especially Islamic boarding schools, also confirmed that its focus is to educate human resources by aiding the establishment of Islamic boarding schools.

Introduction

The history records that Islam has provided a framework for developing the world's civilization and science. The scientific spirit formed by the Islamic world in the early dynasties and Middle Ages gave birth to many scientists from various branches of science. However, after the 13th century, when Baghdad was destroyed by Hulagu Khan, Islamic civilization began to lag, so the scientific progress that the Muslims had achieved previously was no longer visible. In Indonesia, the process of changing or reshaping Islamic thought occurred after communication was widely opened with

Middle Eastern countries, which were the center of Islamic development. This change process was inseparable from the struggle by the individuals and community groups who wanted to fight for the identity and principles of Islamic teachings again to maintain the national life (Yusra, 2018).

Pratama (2019) revealed that Islamic education has a basis in Islamic teachings reflected in the Qur'an, Hadith, and its set of cultures. In addition, along with the arrival of Islam, Islamic education aims to create individuals who are always devoted to Allah SWT to become true Muslims so they can achieve a happy life in this world and the hereafter.

Islamic education has its characteristics, which differs from the other general education. It emphasizes the search for knowledge and the development, mastery, and recognition of one's potential as his/her responsibility for Allah SWT and society (Pratama, 2019). Islam is a religion with the majority of its adherents in Indonesia. Several theories asserted that Islam entered Indonesia through various approaches and perspectives of life, which focused this persuasive approach far from being harsh or coercive. Here is Islam in Indonesia, which has not only become a religious doctrine but has also entered the cultural aspect of society.

The development of Islamic education in Indonesia is inseparable from the development of *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdhatul Ulama*, which play a significant role in it. The educational goals focus on the students' changes after experiencing the educational process. The changes refer to the personal and social development in their life. In educational studies, discussions about educational goals are part of systematic educational science. The problems appeared when the dualism of education between religious knowledge and secular science was applied at that time. This case encouraged Islamic education figures to integrate them into one institution, as K.H. Ahmad Dahlan and K.H. Hasyim Asyari established *Muhammadiyah* and NU schools. Studies related to the history of the development of *Muhammadiyah* and NU education from time to time belong to literature research (library research) by referring to several relevant historical literature sources such as journals, books, articles, and other sources. This article aims to explore the history of education that occurred within the *Muhammadiyah* and NU organizations from time to time until now. Furthermore, the authors expect that this article be used as a reading source to increase knowledge about the history of education within *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdhatul Ulama*.

Research Methods

This study employs qualitative or library research. The researchers explored data by

reading and reviewing several pertinent books, articles, and journals. Besides that, the researchers also collected primary and secondary library sources. The data classification was based on research formulas (Darmalaksana, 2020). The orientation of the qualitative method is to carry out some non-linear research steps. On the contrary, quantitative methods deal with linear steps, which refer to definite, fixed research steps with clear guidelines. Meanwhile, qualitative research methods allow the researchers to take non-linear and cyclical steps, and to make efforts to "return" to the previous steps they have taken in the research process (Somantri, 2005).

The following step was undertaking data analysis, which is defined as a method used to process or analyze the obtained data to conclude. After the data about the education development in *Muhammadiyah* and NU from time to time had been collected, the researchers analyzed and revealed it by applying the descriptive-analysis method. The term 'descriptive' refers to a method that involves the finding of correctly interpreted data, while "analysis" describes something carefully and purposefully. The analyzed data was then presented using a deductive method that departs from general theory to achieve conclusions that answer the research problem.

Results and Discussion

This study relates to the development of the educational institutions in *Muhammadiyah* and NU, which are inextricable from the history, development, and renewal of educational institutions (schools) in Indonesia. The explanation is discussed as follows:

Background of the Establishment of Muhammadiyah

Before discussing the background of *Muhammadiyah*, it is better to notice the meaning of *Muhammadiyah* itself. Viewed from its literal meaning, *Muhammadiyah* comes from the Arabic language. It is rooted in the word "Mohammed," which refers to the

name of the last Prophet and Messenger of Allah SWT. Muhammad itself means “the praiseworthy one”. Then, it gets additional *ya’ nisbah* that functions to classify, particularize, or follow the prophet (Fachruddin, 2005). Meanwhile, the term “*Muhammadiyah*” means an Islamic movement or organization that was founded on 8 Dzulhijjah 1330 Hijriyyah, coinciding with November 18, 1912, by Muhammad Darwis, well-known as K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, in Kauman Yogyakarta. *Muhammadiyah* also turned into an organization that focused on Islamic preaching according to the Al-Quran and As-sunnah and several Islamic principles such as *amar ma’ruf- nahi munkar, tajdid*, and Islamic faith/*aqidah* (PP *Muhammadiyah*, 2005).

At that time, *Muhammadiyah* responded to several advice from Muhammad Sangidu, who was Ahmad Dahlan’s best friend, relative, and student. Muhammad Sangidu was also a reformation figure and a *Ketib Anom/Penghulu*’s Deputy Head of Yogyakarta Palace (Darban, 2000). Ahmad Dahlan named this organization “*Muhammadiyah*” as he expected that these residents would be able to follow the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Besides, this Islamic movement also functions as a means and forum to achieve its goals, as written in the will of Ahmad Dahlan, dedicated to this organization. The will says, “Live *Muhammadiyah* and do not seek a living in *Muhammadiyah* (Sampoerno, 2001). It means that people must possess a particular life ethos in *Muhammadiyah* so they will not take advantage of *Muhammadiyah* for personal interests. In other words, to give (something to *Muhammadiyah*) is better than to receive (anything from *Muhammadiyah*). The goal also declares to create militant cadres with an ideology of *amar ma’ruf-nahi munkar* (directing the good thing and staying away from His prohibitions).

Furthermore, the objectives of *Muhammadiyah* are “to uphold the religion of Islam to create a truly Islamic society”. This society is expected to be monotheistic, exemplary, solid, caring, and aware of its

mandate and responsibility from Allah on earth to promote prosperity, security, and comfort. Society is also invited to admit mistakes and avoid sin to gain happiness in the afterlife¹.

This is a short biography of the founding father of *Muhammadiyah*, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan (1869 - 1923). He was born in Yogyakarta in 1869. His first name was Muhammad Darwis, a son of KH Abubakar bin K. Sulaiman. His father was a preacher at the central mosque of the Yogyakarta Sultanate, and his mother was the daughter of Haji Ibrahim. After completing his primary education at the *Madrasah*, he went to Mecca in 1890 to study and interact with Islamic reformer thought leaders for one year. In 1903, after returning from the Hajj, he went back to Mecca again. He remained there for two years. He met and studied with Sheikh Ahmad Khatib, the teacher of NU’s founding father, K.H. Hasyim Asy’ari. After returning from Mecca for the first time in 1888, he changed his name to Ahmad Dahlan. He started social activities by opening study classes, such as *pondok* (traditional boarding school), to accommodate students who wanted to study general sciences. In 1912, Ahmad Dahlan established *Muhammadiyah* in Kauman village, Yogyakarta. Then, he married Siti Walidah. After his father passed away, he replaced his father’s position as *khatib* (preacher) at the Kauman Central Mosque in Yogyakarta until he earned the *khatib amin* (precious preacher) title. He continued to preach everywhere, so people knew him as K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. These are the establishment background of *Muhammadiyah* as follows:

a) **Subjective Factors**

This factor is related to Ahmad Dahlan’s personality. He had particular characteristics, such as being a Muslim scholar and intellectual person who was relatively intelligent in his time and having high social sensitivity and concern. One of which was that he wanted to unite the Muslim community to have adequate education so that Muslims were more ready to face challenges. He is a practical, not theoretical *ulama* (scholar). It can be

seen from one of his activities when he was reciting *tafsir* (interpretation) using the thematic method. He started it with verses that are easy to understand and put into practice. The thoughts of Islamic reformers influenced him because they contributed to raising the glory of Islam and Muslim society, especially from the Middle Eastern countries. Several figures contributed to his thoughts on Islam, including Taqiyyudin ibn Taymiyah, Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, and Muhammad Abduh.

b) Objective Factors

This factor describes the realities of life that affect the Indonesian people and the nation. The factors are divided into two categories: internal and external. From an internal perspective, these include: a) the condition of Muslims who experience deviations in the experience of Islamic teachings (the Al-Qur'an and Hadith), b) colonialism resulted in Muslims experiencing backwardness such as ignorance and poverty, c) the condition of Islamic educational institutions was not optimal and not oriented towards the future in solving some problems and challenges faced by the Indonesian people and the nation at that time.

From an external perspective, these include a) the condition of the Indonesian people that were colonized by the Netherlands, which affected the people become stupid, poor, and losing dynamism; b) the Dutch colonizers carried a mission to spread the ideology of Christianization among Indonesian people, c) generally, at that time, there was a trend of Islamic revival spread by Islamic figures in various Islamic countries in the world and d) the increasing enthusiasm of Indonesian Muslims to be free from colonialism². From all these factors, *Muhammadiyah* planned a struggle agenda that was in line with the idea of Islamic modernization with purification (returning

to the Qur'an and Sunnah), criticizing *taqlid* to reopen the mind of *ijtihad*, modernizing education, and mobilizing social activism.

Education Renewal in Muhammadiyah from time to time

Muhammadiyah is renewing Islamic education by modernizing the education system, which is adapted to the demands and changes of the times. This modernization is not by renewing the Qur'an and Hadith but by interpreting Islamic teachings, which are updated following the demands and needs of current developments. At the end of the 19th century in Indonesia, the development of educational patterns was still the colonial and traditional Islamic education systems, which were commonly known as *pondok pesantren*.³ As the middle and high-level educational institutions, for beginners, Islamic education is taught in "langgar", a small mosque. In *Pondok Pesantren*, the students are taught by *Kyai*, who has full responsibility.

According to Mukhlis Sabir, the teaching method used in *pondok pesantren* is that a student faces the *Kyai* with a *kitab* (yellow book). The student imitates the *Kyai*'s words (*sorongan*), and the *Kyai* reads, interprets, and explains the meaning of the book's text in front of the students (*bandongan/ weton*), lecturing or contextual learning and memorizing. The branches of knowledge used are limited to religious knowledge such as *hadith*, *fiqh*, *tauhid* (monotheism), *tasawuf* (Sufism), *mantiq* (logic), *falaq* (astronomy), Arabic language including *nahwu-shorrof* (grammar), and *balaghah* (poetic language) (Syamsuddin, 1990).

On the other hand, the Dutch began establishing secular schools to fulfill the colonial government's needs, such as private Catholic and Christian schools where Catholic or Protestant religion was taught. However, in Dutch schools, the religion Islam was not taught (Yusuf et al., 1989). At the beginning of the 20th century, there was a dualism of

different education systems, which created problems that had to be faced to reform Islamic education. But K.H. Ahmad Dahlan did not give up. He tried to renew the education system by transforming both systems, integrating modern science curriculum into the traditional education system, which is oriented towards Islamic teachings.

In the period between 1908 and 1909, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan founded the first school called *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* for the elementary school level at his living room measuring 2.5x6 meters, equipped with various teaching and learning facilities such as benches, blackboards, wood chairs, and a classic system. In 1920, he founded a secondary education institution, *Pondok Muhammadiyah*, to replace the *Qismul Arqo* education system. The purpose of this establishment was to provide lessons in religious and general sciences. In subsequent developments, in 1924, the *Pondok Muhammadiyah* changed its name to *Kweekschool Muhammadiyah*, divided into two parts. Firstly, it is currently known as *Madrasah Muallimat Muhammadiyah* and *Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah*. Secondly, *HIS meet the Quran* which changed its name to *HIS Muhammadiyah* (Hamdan, 2009). Based on the period of history, *Muhammadiyah* experienced the identification of fundamental changes regarding its educational journey. It can be divided into four periods as follows:

Pioneering Period (1900 - 1923)

In the first period, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan reformed the education system. He was looking for alternative ways to solve the problem of underdevelopment among the natives by pioneering and opening *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Diniyah Islamiyah* and renewing the “*langar*” to improve their lives. Then, the Dutch colonial, through their ethical and political mission to spread Western education, resulted in the dualism of secular and religious education systems. Fortunately, the *Santri* (traditional students in *pondok pesantren*) still rejected it. Ahmad Dahlan dealt with this situation by establishing a modern religious

school as the integration of secular/ general science and religion.

Pioneering period (1923 - 1966)

The war of independence and socio-political upheaval made education policies unwell-structured, having no attention from the government and society. Moreover, the issue of educational dualism was still spreading. However, the refusal of Western education began to decrease, and the development of Islamic education through integrating the secular education system into Islamic educational institutions. The professionals and *kyai* were working together to develop a new education system as Ahmad Dahlan did.

Institutional period (1966 - 1998)

The stable political situation made the economic development process systematic, the direction of education was centralized, and public and private schools were the same quality. Development and expansion of all *Muhammadiyah* schools in Indonesia have been institutionalized legally. The modern religious school has been formulated into a religion-plus government school. As a result, *Muhammadiyah* schools can be an alternative education with the offer of religion-plus schools accessible to all Indonesian people who have not received it yet.

Time of transformation (1998–present)

The direction of education policy has a decentralized populist style with the issue of free school campaigns, which makes government schools accommodate many students. This is a challenge for *Muhammadiyah* schools, hoping to get a lot of students who are not accommodated in state schools. The impact of overloaded capacity in state schools causes a decline in admission in private schools, especially at the secondary education level in urban areas. Then, action was taken to overcome this situation by transforming *Muhammadiyah* schools into progressive schools promising a brighter future by rediscovering *Muhammadiyah* values. Young *Muhammadiyah* activists and

organization professionals supported this action. Thus, during these four periods, the educational footprint in *Muhammadiyah* lasted for more than a century (110 years precisely).

Based on the Basic Education Data of *Muhammadiyah* (*Dapodikmu*) and Primary and Secondary Education Council (*dikdasmen*) of PP. *Muhammadiyah*, there are 3,334 schools. It comprises 1,094 Elementary Schools, 1,128 Junior High Schools, 558 Senior High Schools, and 554 Vocational High Schools. Besides that, *Muhammadiyah* has charity efforts in education. One of them is *Muhammadiyah* University. According to the latest *Muhammadiyah* Data Center, there are 167 universities consisting of 65 universities, 18 institutes, 69 colleges, 3 polytechnics, 3 academies, and 8 Aisyiyah colleges. In 2019, 6 universities were accredited A, including UMM, UMS, UMY, UAD, and UHAMKA which stand in the top 100 best universities in Indonesia.

Education History of Nahdhatul Ulama

According to the history of *Nahdhatul Ulama*, NU was founded by ulama scholars in 1926 in Surabaya. Kyai Hasyim Asy'ari was anxious after Kyai Wahab asked for his suggestions and advice to establish an organization for *Ahlussunah wal Jamaah Ulama*. That is the pioneer situation at the first time. Lastly, an organization named Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was finally born through the tough struggle with the symbol of the earth, nine stars, and the rope tied loosely. It is hoped that as long as the rope binds the earth is strong, NU will not disappear until the world's end. After NU was officially established, many *madrasah* (religion-based school) were established alongside Islamic boarding school (*pondok pesantren*) that have long existed in Indonesia. In the following time, *pondok pesantren* has complexity in learning. The Second Congress (*muktamar*) in 1927 discussed the issue of improving teaching methods in *pondok pesantren* and *madrasah*. Furthermore, at the third Congress in 1928 in Surabaya, their development and expansion were discussed.

The first leader was K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, the grand leader (*rais akbar*). NU formed an educational institution which was founded under the name LP. Ma'arif NU, whose function is to implement NU policies in the field of education and teaching, both formal and non-formal (except *pondok pesantren*). Then, NU formed the RMI (Rabithah Ma'ahid Al-Islamiah) to implement NU policies in developing the *pondok pesantren* education system. According to K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, education is a human who aims to get closer to Allah SWT and obtain happiness in this world and the hereafter. Learning methods must be adapted and consider the educational environment. In *pondok pesantren*, the conventional methods are the *sorogan* (reading comprehensively in front of teacher), *bandongan* (stadium general) system as the main activities.

NU plays a role in the field of education, especially the existence of *pondok pesantren*. In its articles of organization and also in the *Nahdlatul Ulama* statement, which states that the fieldwork of NU is to educate human resources by helping build *pondok pesantren*. Moreover, the struggling sector of *Nahdlatul Ulama* includes three things: education, *da'wah*, and social affairs. *Nahdlatul Ulama*, in the field of education, also takes part in developing schools/ *madrasah*; the elementary school (MI/SD), junior high school (MTS/SMP), senior/ vocational high school (MA/SMK), and higher education (university). Shortly, *Nahdlatul Ulama* has an educational goal to get closer to Allah SWT and gain happiness in this world and the hereafter. NU plays a role and educates human resources by helping build *pondok pesantren*, elementary schools (MI), junior high school (MTS/SMP), senior/ vocational high school (MA/SMK), and higher education (university) in Indonesia.

According to the history, *Nahdlatul Ulama* has an institution that manages the field of education. It is the *Ma'arif* educational institution, which is usually called *LP Ma'arif NU*. The establishment of LP Ma'arif NU began with a meeting of K.H. Abdul Wahid Hasyim, K.H. Mahfudz Siddiq, and K.H. Abdullah Ubaid in September 1929 at the

HBNO office (now changed to PBNU). This meeting was ahead of the 4th *Muktamar Nahdhatul Ulama* in Semarang. This meeting was held on the orders of K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari as Rois Akbar as his response to the request of K.H. Abdul Wahab Hasbullah to form an institution to handle the education sector under *Nahdlatul Ulama*. Finally, at the fourth *muktamar* in Semarang (September 18 to 20, 1929), on the second day, the *muktamar* decided to establish a Ma'arif educational institution to realize the adequate education within the environment of *Nahdlatul Ulama*.

According to the LP Ma'arif data in 2010, 12,000 *madrasah* (primary and secondary schools) spread throughout the province with the most significant majority in the East Java. According to interview results of NU Online with the vice chairman of the central management of LP Ma'arif NU, Mahbib Khairan, with a total of 12,000 schools, NU intends to develop what so-called "SNP-Plus" which means having a national standard of education (SNP) and (plus) NU local wisdom standards, which include religious subjects and NU values such as tolerance, moderation, balance, and uprightness. This is SNP-plus, which is the specialty and quality standard of the LP Ma'arif NU. These cultural values were implemented in LP Ma'arif NU besides the *Aswaja* and *ke-NU-an* subjects.

Initially, Islamic education in Indonesia concentrated on hereafter affairs and put world affairs aside. As a result, Islamic education only provides a limited opportunity to develop a universal conscience and common sense to grow human intellectuality. But now, Islamic education in Indonesia has experienced developments and changes. Science and technology are increasingly developing. Open thinking and point of view are becoming more substantial in the future. The Islamic education system is about educating the moral and spiritual and giving a balanced portion to the mind, body, and skills to become a helpful human being. Islamic education in Indonesia uses classical methods where students are not allowed to respond critically to lessons. They only listen to the teacher in delivering materials. Paulo Freire considers this

educational model to be a shackled one, which means that students are passive objects of the teacher's actions. But now, the situation is quite different due to the development of science and technology and the emergence of many ideas that can change the education system. Currently, learning is considered adequate using problem-solving and critical thinking methods. In modern times, NU has many *pondok pesantren* and *madrasah* spread across the country. In addition, NU has public schools from kindergarten to college/ higher education. *Nahdlatul Ulama* also formed the Rabithah Ma'ahid Islamiyah (RMI) whose function is to develop *pondok pesantren*, and LP Ma'arif to implement NU policies in education, both formal and non-formal institutions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the education development of *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdlatul Ulama* from time to time cannot be separated from the modernization of education. Their development has tough struggles and very complex dynamics. The success of the educational development goals carried out by *Muhammadiyah* and Nahdhatul Ulama can be seen in many schools and colleges to educate and develop Islamic values for students. *Muhammadiyah*, initially founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, now has 3,334 educational institutions. Nahdhatul Ulama, initially established by K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, has 12,000 *pondok pesantren* and *madrasah*.

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