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ISLAMIC EDUCATION POLITICS ; THE EXISTENCE OF FORMAL, INFORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

The politics of Islamic education is the process of policy-making, regulation, and management of Islamic education carried out by the state, society, and educational institutions in order to achieve national educational goals and Islamic values. Islamic education in Indonesia develops through three main channels: formal, informal, and non-formal education. These three channels play a strategic role in shaping the character, morals, spirituality, and intellectual abilities of students. This study aims to analyze the existence of formal, informal, and non-formal education from the perspective of the politics of Islamic education. The research method used is library research with a qualitative descriptive approach. The results show that government policy has provided strong recognition of Islamic education through various regulations, including the integration of madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools into the national education system. Furthermore, informal education within the family and non-formal education developing in society remain important instruments in the process of character formation and internalization of Islamic values. Therefore, synergy between these three educational channels is a key factor in realizing the goals of comprehensive Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education is a crucial instrument in human resource development based on Islamic values. Throughout its history, Islamic education has served not only as a means of transferring knowledge but also as a medium for the formation of character, morals, spirituality, and culture in Muslim communities. Since the early arrival of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago, Islamic education has become an integral part of

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community life through various educational institutions that have evolved according to the needs of the times, from family education, prayer houses (surau), mosques, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), madrasahs, to Islamic universities (Fatoni, 2025).

In the context of a modern state, the implementation of education cannot be separated from educational policy. Educational policy is a series of policies, strategies, and decisions made by the government to regulate the direction, goals, and implementation of education within a country. Islamic educational policy specifically relates to how the state recognizes, protects, fosters, and develops Islamic educational institutions so they can contribute to national development without losing their Islamic identity (Rasyidi, n.d.).

In Indonesia, recognition of Islamic education has grown stronger following the enactment of various educational regulations, particularly Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Studies. These regulations affirm that religious education can be provided through formal, non-formal, and informal channels. Thus, the state grants equal legitimacy to the existence of various forms of Islamic education developing in society (Udin, 2024).

Formal education in the Islamic education system is realized through madrasas, Islamic schools, and Islamic religious colleges, which have a structured curriculum and clear levels of education. The presence of these institutions demonstrates the integration of Islamic education with the national education system. Madrasas, once viewed as traditional educational institutions, have now become a vital part of the national education system, with status equal to that of public schools. Increasingly accommodating government policies toward Islamic education have provided significant opportunities for developing the quality of formal Islamic education in Indonesia (Fatoni, 2025).

In addition to formal education, informal education also plays a crucial role in Islamic education. Informal education takes place within the family, which serves as the primary educational institution for children. From an Islamic perspective, families are responsible for instilling values of faith, worship, and morals from an early age. The success of both formal and non-formal education is fundamentally influenced by the quality of education provided within the family. Therefore, informal education serves as a primary foundation for shaping students' personalities and characters before they enter formal or non-formal educational institutions (Mildawati & Tangngareng, 2023).

Meanwhile, non-formal Islamic education has developed through various community institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), Quranic study centers (TPA), religious study groups (Majelis Taklim), Islamic madrasah diniyah (Islamic religious schools), and various other da'wah activities. These institutions serve as a complement, supplement, or even substitute for formal education in providing educational services to the community. The existence of non-formal Islamic education has grown and developed alongside Indonesian society for centuries, thus possessing very strong social and cultural roots. Its existence serves not only as an educational institution but also as a center for da'wah and community empowerment (Sa'diah, 2021).

The development of Islamic education in Indonesia demonstrates a dynamic transformation from traditional educational patterns to a more modern and integrated system. However, the challenges of globalization, the development of information technology, social change, and the demands for improving the quality of education require educational policies that strengthen the synergy between formal, informal, and

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non-formal education. These three educational pathways cannot operate in isolation but must complement each other in shaping a generation of Muslims who are knowledgeable, virtuous, and able to compete in the global era (Fatoni, 2025).

Based on this description, a study of Islamic educational policy and the existence of formal, informal, and non-formal education is essential. This study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic educational policy plays a role in maintaining the sustainability and development of these three educational pathways within the Indonesian national education system.

REVIEW LIBRARY

Islamic Education Politics

Islamic education policy is a series of policies, strategies, and decisions related to the implementation of Islamic education within a country. Educational policy is not only related to power but also encompasses the process of policy formulation, resource management, curriculum development, and recognition of Islamic educational institutions. In the Indonesian context, Islamic education policy evolves in line with the dynamics of the relationship between the state and Muslims within the national education system. Government policy on Islamic education aims to provide space for the Muslim community to obtain educational services that align with religious teachings while supporting national education goals.

According to Hadi (2016), Islamic education policy is a state policy aimed at accommodating the interests of Muslims in education by strengthening Islamic educational institutions and improving the quality of Muslim human resources. Meanwhile, Rasyidi explains that religious education can be provided through formal, non-formal, and informal channels, as regulated in Indonesia's national education system.

From a national education perspective, Islamic education policy is a crucial instrument in realizing equitable, inclusive education, and oriented toward developing individuals who are faithful, pious, knowledgeable, and have noble morals. Therefore, the existence of Islamic education policy serves as the primary foundation for the existence of formal, informal, and non-formal education in Indonesia.

The Concept of Islamic Education

Islamic education is the process of fostering and developing all human potential based on the values of the Qur'an and Hadith to form people who are faithful, devout, have noble character, and are able to carry out their duties as caliphs on earth. Islamic education not only emphasizes intellectual aspects, but also spiritual, moral, social and emotional aspects of students.

Islamic education aims to create a balance between this world and the afterlife. Therefore, the process of Islamic education takes place not only in formal institutions but also within the family and community. The history of Islamic education shows that education has developed through various forms, both informal, non-formal, and formal, which complement each other in shaping a well-rounded Muslim personality.

According to Fatoni (2025), the development of Islamic education in Indonesia has undergone a transformation from informal education in mosques and prayer rooms to formal educational institutions such as madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and modern Islamic schools. This development has been influenced by historical, social, cultural, and government policy factors.

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Formal Education in Islamic Perspective

Formal education is a structured and tiered educational pathway consisting of primary, secondary, and higher education. In the context of Islamic education, formal education is realized through madrasas, Islamic schools, formal Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic religious universities.

Formal education has a systematic curriculum, professional teaching staff, and a measurable evaluation system. The existence of madrasahs as formal educational institutions demonstrates the integration of general knowledge and Islamic studies. Formal Islamic education plays a role in producing a generation with both academic competence and a strong understanding of religion.

According to Siregar et al. (2023), formal education in Islamic education serves as the primary means of developing knowledge and shaping students' character through a planned and continuous learning process. The existence of formal Islamic institutions also serves as evidence that Islamic education has gained legitimacy within the national education system.

Informal Education in Islamic Perspective

Informal education is education that occurs within the family environment and in everyday life. This education is the first and most important education a child receives from birth. In Islam, families have a significant responsibility in instilling values of faith, worship, morals, and ethics in children.

Informal education serves as a foundation for character formation due to the ongoing interaction between parents and children. Family education is a crucial factor influencing the success of both formal and non-formal education. Therefore, Islam places parents as the primary educators responsible for a child's spiritual and moral development.

Darlis (2017) explains that informal education is closely related to formal and non-formal education because all three complement and enrich the educational process for students. Informal education forms the basis for personality formation, which is then developed through formal and non-formal education.

Non-formal Education from an Islamic Perspective

Non-formal education is an educational pathway that takes place outside the formal education system and serves as a complement, supplement, or substitute for formal education. Non-formal Islamic education develops through various institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), Islamic schools (madrasah diniyah), Quranic study groups (TPA), Islamic study groups (Majelis Taklim), Islamic outreach institutions, and various community religious activities.

The existence of non-formal education in Islam has existed since the early development of Islamic civilization. Various forms of community education, such as halaqah (Islamic religious gatherings), majlis ilmu (knowledge assemblies), and kuttab (Islamic boarding schools), demonstrate that non-formal education plays a vital role in the dissemination of Islamic knowledge and values.

Sa'diah (2021) stated that non-formal Islamic educational institutions have a strong position in the National Education System and have developed alongside society for centuries. In addition to functioning as educational institutions, non-formal education also serves as a means of preaching and community empowerment.

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Furthermore, non-formal education contributes to expanding access to Islamic education for communities unable to access formal education optimally. Therefore, non-formal education is a crucial part of developing a sustainable Islamic society.

The Relationship between Formal, Informal, and Nonformal Education in Islamic Education

Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System emphasizes that formal, informal, and non-formal education are complementary and enriching educational pathways. From an Islamic educational perspective, these three pathways are inseparable, as each has a distinct function and role in the process of shaping the Muslim personality.

Informal education serves as a foundation for character and moral development, formal education plays a role in developing academic and professional competencies, while non-formal education strengthens religious values and social skills. The synergy of these three educational pathways will produce students with a balance of intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual intelligence.

Based on this theoretical study, it can be understood that the existence of formal, informal, and non-formal education is an integral part of Islamic education policy in Indonesia. All three have mutually supportive roles in achieving the goals of Islamic education, namely, developing individuals who are faithful, pious, knowledgeable, and have noble morals.

METHOD STUDY

Research Approaches and Types

This research uses an approach qualitative by type of research Library research . Library research is a research method conducted by collecting, reading, reviewing, and analyzing various literature sources relevant to the research topic. Research data is obtained from various written sources such as books, scientific journals, research articles, laws and regulations, official government documents, and other academic sources related to Islamic education policy and the existence of formal, informal, and non-formal education in Indonesia.

A qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to understand and describe the phenomenon of Islamic educational politics in depth, based on various theories and previous research findings. According to Sugiyono (2023), qualitative research is a research method used to examine the natural conditions of objects, with the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Meanwhile, a literature review allows researchers to obtain comprehensive information regarding the concepts, policies, and developments in Islamic education that have been studied by previous researchers.

Data source

The data sources in this study consist of secondary data obtained from various scientific literature relevant to the research focus. Secondary data was chosen because this study did not involve field data collection but instead focused on document analysis and theoretical studies.

The data sources used include:

1. Scientific books which discusses Islamic education politics, the national education system, and Islamic education in Indonesia.

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2. National and international scientific journals which discusses formal, informal, and non-formal education from an Islamic educational perspective.
3. Legislation , in particular Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Education.
4. Scientific articles and official documents published by educational institutions, ministries, or academic institutions that are relevant to the research theme.

Data collection technique

Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation And Literature review . Documentation was conducted by collecting various documents related to Islamic educational policy and the implementation of formal, informal, and non-formal education. Furthermore, the literature review was conducted by reading, understanding, and identifying key concepts contained in various reference sources.

Data collection stages include:

1. Identify literature sources relevant to the research topic.
2. Collection of related documents, journals, books and regulations.
3. Literature selection based on the relevance and credibility of the sources.
4. Grouping data according to research focus.
5. Recording important information that supports research analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study uses the qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three main stages, namely:

1. Data Reduction

   At this stage, researchers selected, focused, simplified, and categorized data obtained from various literature sources. Data irrelevant to the research focus was discarded, while data related to Islamic education policy and formal, informal, and non-formal education was retained for further analysis.

2. Data Presentation (Data Display)

   The reduced data is then presented in a systematic descriptive manner. The data is presented by grouping information based on research themes, such as the political concept of Islamic education, the existence of formal education, the existence of informal education, and the existence of non-formal education.

3. Conclusion Drawing

   The final stage is drawing conclusions based on the data analysis. Conclusions are drawn by identifying patterns, relationships, and meanings emerging from various literature sources, thus providing a comprehensive picture of the existence of formal, informal, and non-formal education from the perspective of Islamic educational politics in Indonesia.

Data Validity

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses techniques Source triangulation . Source triangulation is performed by comparing information obtained from various references, such as books, scientific journals, previous research results, and government regulations. This technique aims to increase data validity, thereby increasing the credibility of research results.

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Research Analysis Framework

This study analyzes Islamic education politics as the main variable that influences the existence and development of three educational paths in the national education system, namely:

a. Formal education (madrasas, Islamic schools, Islamic universities);
b. Informal Education (education in the family);
c. Non-formal education (Islamic boarding schools, Islamic study groups, TPA, and Islamic schools).

These three educational pathways are analyzed based on the Islamic education policies in force in Indonesia to see their existence, function, and contribution in achieving the goals of Islamic education and national education goals.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research result

Based on a literature review of various scientific sources, it was found that Islamic education policy in Indonesia plays a significant role in maintaining the existence and development of Islamic education through formal, informal, and non-formal channels. The existence of these three educational channels is inseparable from various government policies that provide legal recognition and protection for the implementation of Islamic education within the national education system.

Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System explains that education is provided through formal, non-formal, and informal channels that complement and enrich each other. This provision serves as the legal basis for the existence of Islamic education, which has developed in various educational institutions in Indonesia (Law No. 20 of 2003).

The study also shows that formal Islamic education has experienced rapid development through madrasas, integrated Islamic schools, and Islamic religious colleges. Informal education remains the primary foundation for character development in students through family education, while non-formal education has developed through Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), Islamic madrasas (madrasah diniyah), Al-Qur'an education centers (TPA), and religious study groups (Majelis Taklim) spread across Indonesia (Mildawati & Tangngareng, 2023).

Thus, the policy of Islamic education in Indonesia has contributed to the sustainability and strengthening of these three educational pathways so that they are able to support the achievement of national educational goals as well as Islamic educational goals.

Discussion

Islamic Education Politics in the National Education System

Islamic education policy is part of the national education policy that regulates the implementation of Islamic education at various levels and educational pathways. From a public policy perspective, Islamic education policy serves as a state instrument to accommodate the needs of the Muslim community for educational services based on Islamic values.

From independence to the reform era, Islamic education policy has undergone significant development. In the early years of independence, Islamic education still faced various challenges, particularly regarding the recognition of Islamic educational

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institutions within the national education system. However, through various government regulations, Islamic education's position has strengthened and it has achieved equal standing with general education.

The enactment of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System marked a significant milestone in the development of Islamic education, recognizing religious education as part of the national education system. Furthermore, Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Studies further clarified the position of Islamic educational institutions within the national education system.

According to Rasyidi (2020), the policy of Islamic education in Indonesia demonstrates a harmonious relationship between the state and Islamic educational institutions, aimed at improving the quality of education and strengthening national character through religious values. This policy demonstrates that Islamic education is no longer positioned as an alternative form of education, but rather as an integral part of national educational development.

The Existence of Formal Education from the Perspective of Islamic Educational Politics

Formal education is an educational pathway with a clear structure and levels, from elementary school to higher education. In the context of Islamic education, formal education is realized through madrasas, Islamic schools, and Islamic religious universities.

The study results show that the existence of formal Islamic education has grown stronger following the introduction of various government policies recognizing the equality of madrasahs with public schools. These policies allow madrasah graduates equal rights in continuing their education and entering the workforce.

Madrasahs function not only as religious educational institutions but also as general educational institutions that integrate knowledge and Islamic values. This integration is a hallmark of formal Islamic education, as it produces students with both academic competence and religious character.

In addition to madrasas, the development of Islamic religious higher education institutions such as State Islamic Universities (UIN), State Islamic Institutes (IAIN), and State Islamic Colleges (STAIN) also demonstrates the government's growing attention to Islamic education. The transformation of IAINs into UINs in various regions demonstrates that Islamic higher education continues to adapt to developments in science and technology.

According to Siregar et al. (2023), formal Islamic education plays a significant role in producing human resources who not only master scientific knowledge but also possess morals and ethics consistent with Islamic teachings. Therefore, formal education is a key pillar in the development of Islamic education in Indonesia.

The Existence of Informal Education from the Perspective of Islamic Educational Politics

Informal education is education that takes place within the family environment and in everyday life. In Islam, the family is the primary educational institution responsible for shaping a child's personality.

Research results show that informal education plays a crucial role in the success of both formal and non-formal education. Islamic values such as faith, morality, honesty, discipline, and responsibility are first taught within the family environment.

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Islamic educational policy emphasizes the importance of family education as the foundation for developing national character. Although it lacks a curriculum structure like formal education, informal education has a significant impact on student development.

From an Islamic perspective, parents have an obligation to educate their children to become a faithful and pious generation. As explained in Surah At-Tahrim, verse 6 of the Quran, Muslims are commanded to protect themselves and their families from various forms of deviation that could harm their lives in this world and the hereafter.

According to Darlis (2017), informal education is the primary foundation for developing a child's character because it occurs continuously through interactions between parents and children in everyday life. Therefore, the success of both formal and non-formal education is greatly influenced by the quality of education provided within the family.

The Existence of Non-Formal Education from the Perspective of Islamic Educational Politics

Non-formal education is an educational pathway provided outside of formal education and serves as a complement, supplement, or substitute for formal education. In Islamic education, non-formal education develops through various institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), Islamic religious schools (madrasah diniyah), Quranic study groups (TPA), and community outreach institutions.

The study results show that non-formal education has made a significant contribution to expanding access to Islamic education for the community. Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are one form of non-formal education that has a long history in the development of Islamic education in Indonesia.

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) serve not only as religious educational institutions but also as centers for community development, preaching, and economic empowerment. Today, many Islamic boarding schools have developed modern educational systems that integrate the national curriculum with religious curricula.

In addition to Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), religious study groups (Majelis Taklim) and Quranic education centers (Ta'lim) also play a vital role in improving community religious literacy. These institutions provide opportunities for people to receive religious education without having to attend formal education.

Sa'diah (2021) explains that non-formal Islamic education holds a strategic position in community development because it can reach community groups not optimally served by formal education. Therefore, non-formal education is a crucial part of achieving equitable Islamic education in Indonesia.

Synergy of Formal, Informal, and Non-formal Education in the Development of Islamic Education

The study's findings indicate that formal, informal, and non-formal education have a complementary relationship in achieving the goals of Islamic education. The three form an integrated educational system that builds the quality of Muslim human resources.

Informal education serves as a foundation for character formation and religious values from an early age. Formal education plays a role in developing students' knowledge, skills, and academic competencies. Meanwhile, non-formal education strengthens religious understanding and develops social skills.

The synergy of these three educational pathways is crucial in facing the challenges of globalization, the development of information technology, and increasingly complex

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social change. Islamic education cannot rely solely on a single educational pathway; it requires strong collaboration between families, schools, and the community.

With this synergy, Islamic education can produce a generation with a balance of intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social intelligence. It is hoped that this generation will be able to contribute to national development while preserving Islamic values amidst changing times and limited resources.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion regarding The Politics of Islamic Education: The Existence of Formal, Informal, and Non-formal Education in Indonesia , it can be concluded that the politics of Islamic education has a very important role in determining the direction, policies, and development of Islamic education in the national education system. Through various regulations that have been established by the government, such as Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Education, Islamic education has gained strong legitimacy and recognition in the implementation of education in Indonesia.

The existence of formal education in Islamic education is evident in the development of madrasas, Islamic schools, and Islamic religious universities, which have become an integral part of the national education system. Formal education plays a role in developing students' academic competence while instilling Islamic values, thus producing knowledgeable, morally upright, and competitive human resources in the global era.

On the other hand, informal education within the family environment remains the primary foundation for developing students' character, morals, and personality. The family plays a strategic role as the primary educational institution responsible for instilling the values of faith, piety, and noble morals from an early age. The success of both formal and non-formal education is fundamentally influenced by the quality of education provided within the family.

Meanwhile, non-formal education through Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), Islamic religious schools (madrasah diniyah), Quranic study centers (TPA), religious study groups (Majelis Taklim), and various other community educational institutions has significantly contributed to expanding access to Islamic education. Non-formal education serves as a complement and reinforcement to formal education and is an effective means of increasing religious understanding and community empowerment.

The research also shows that formal, informal, and non-formal education are complementary and inseparable. These three components form an integrated Islamic education system that develops the intellectual, spiritual, social, and moral potential of students. Synergy between families, schools, and communities is a key factor in realizing the goals of holistic and sustainable Islamic education.

Therefore, a strong commitment from the government, educational institutions, families, and communities is needed to continuously strengthen these three educational pathways through policies that support improving the quality of Islamic education, equalizing access to education, strengthening human resources, and developing curricula that are relevant to current needs without neglecting Islamic values. Thus, Islamic educational policy can be a strategic instrument in creating a generation of Muslims who

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are faithful, pious, have noble morals, are knowledgeable, and are able to contribute to national development.

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