Indonesian Schools: Shaping the Future of Islam and Democracy in a Democratic Muslim Country

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This paper examines the role of schools in slowly Islamizing Indonesian society and politics. Why is this Islamization happening and what does it portend for the future of democracy in Indonesia? The research is mostly qualitative and done through field experience, interviews, and data collection. It is concluded that radical madrasahs are not the main generators of Islamization, but instead the widespread prevalence of moderate Islamic schools are Islamizing Indonesian society and politics. The government began the "mainstreaming" of Islamic elementary and secondary schools, most of which are private, in 1975. This has continued and grown, making them popular options for education today. The government has more recently been increasing the role of state run Islamic universities by expanding their degree offerings to include many non-Islamic disciplines. The use of Islamic schools to educate Indonesians is due to the lack of development of secular public schools and high informal fees charged for the public schools. By making Islamic schools an attractive option that prepares students for success, society has been Islamized slowly as the number of alumni increases and as these alumni play leadership roles in society, business, and government. This Islamization is not of a radical nature, but it is resulting in more Islamic focused public discourse and governing policy, and low levels of tolerance for other faiths and variant Muslim practices. The recent addition of civic education in Islamic schools, which has been exalted by Westerns, is taught with specific Islamic interpretations that change the meaning of concepts, particularly pluralism. The resulting consequence is that while Islam and democracy's compatibility are stressed in Islamic civic education, tolerance for pluralism is truncated. Islamic schools are homogenizing Islam in Indonesia and shaping the public discourse and democracy in ways that are infused with modernist Islamic values.

Keywords: Islam, schools, Indonesia, democracy, civic education, politics, pluralism, tolerance, modernist Muslim, madrasah, pesantren, ulama, universities

Schools are a product of social and political decisions, but they also create and shape the future generation of leaders and therefore largely shape future social and political decisions. Schools in all countries therefore are of prime importance when studying politics, culture, and society. Frequently, social scientists neglect the study of a country's education system as being the product of and generator of society and politics. However, if one looks at what is happening in a country's schools, the future can be seen. Think how your education influenced you. You are a product of that education. Your worldview and decision making is shaped by what you learned in school.

Indonesia's schools are of particular interest due to Indonesia being the world's most populous Muslim majority country and it is a relatively new democracy having begun the transition in 1998 with violent protests bringing down Suharto, the dictator for over three decades. The first free elections were held in 1999 and changes to the Constitution and election methods have continued to the present with yet another change in late 2014 that ended the direct election of governors and mayors.[1] Many analysts assess the role of Islam in Indonesia's democracy and politics through

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[1] They are now to be elected through the local legislative assemblies.

examining elite negotiations, the historical and cultural existence of Islam in Indonesia, or the ties of Indonesian Muslims to the Middle East. While these are important determinants of Islam's role in Indonesian social and political life, schools, being primary socializing agents, should be a part of the analysis of Islam and politics in Indonesia. In schools, the effects of historical and cultural manifestations of Islam, ties to the Middle East, and elite negotiations can be seen, as well as offering insight into the future direction of Islam and politics. Students in both public and private schools will be shaped by the curriculum that has evolved through compromise, negotiation, political decisions, and ideologies from around the world. These students will in turn be the leaders of tomorrow. Therefore, examining schools can provide a glimpse into both the past and future of a country's politics, discourse, and role of ideologies, including religion.

This article discusses the history and current situation of schools in Indonesia with emphasis on Islamic schools; however, as will be shown, Islamic and public general education (secular) schools are closely inter-twined. The types of schools available from elementary to higher education, their curriculum, and oversight by the state will be detailed, along with an examination of the cost of schools, which helps explain choices parents make when deciding which schools their children will attend. Religious and civic instruction will be highlighted with a view toward explaining why religious and civic education exists in the forms it does in Indonesia and how this instruction may portend the future direction of Indonesia's religious and civic engagement in democratic governance. In sum, it is argued that Indonesia is experiencing a slow Islamization of its society and politics, not through radical Islamic schools, but instead due to the popularity and mainstreaming of moderate Islamic schools and due to the mandated instruction of religion in "secular" schools. Students are able to cross-over between Islamic and secular schools with relative ease and most all students are exposed to rather extensive instruction in religion through whichever school they attend. State run and private Islamic universities present an affordable and attainable option for students seeking degrees in higher education that prepare them for advancement in society in fields such as medicine, law, business, science, and education making Islamic schools an attractive option for many Indonesians.

This mainstreaming of Islamic based education is not based on radical interpretations of Islam or the attempt of a fundamentalist group to take over the state, but has had the effect, and will likely continue to push toward a greater acceptance of society and governance being based on Islamic tenets and values. The precise form taken of this greater inclusion of Islamic values in the social and political discourse and governing policies issued through Indonesian democracy can be better understood through examining the country's schools. This examination yields the conclusion that while Islam is more prominently evident in Indonesian society and governance now that it is a democracy, it is not in the form of a predetermined prescriptive Islam that rigidly constrains decisions; rather, most students are taught to contextualize Islam and use itjihad (critical thinking to make Islam relevant to time and place). This shaping of Islam and politics is taking place within the context of modernist Islam gaining ascendancy and Islam being slowly homogenized, even if this homogenization is of a contextualized variety. Applying Islam to Indonesian society and governance is continually being negotiated among leaders, groups, governing agencies, and society itself within the context of democratic governance. Schools are sometimes a battleground for this negotiating because they shape the future, but thus far the process of negotiating the role of Islam in society and politics has been mostly peaceful. It is argue in this paper that Islam is slowly becoming more prominent and homogenous in Indonesia largely through the influence of schools and decision makers who are a product of these schools, and that there are problems with tolerance of variants of Islam and non-Islamic faiths, but it is also argued that Islam in Indonesia has shown itself to be generally compatible with democratic governance and is continually evolving as a product of social and political discourse and decisions and in turn is continually shaping that discourse and decision making. A closer exploration of how schools are involved in

shaping the evolving role of Islam in society and politics is offered below.

Current Context: Why Examine Islam's Role in Society and Politics in Indonesia?

The bombing of tourist venues in Bali in 2002 in which over 200 people died led to the acknowledgement that some madrasahs in Indonesia may be instilling radical Islamic worldviews in its students that led to the terror attacks. The bombers were found to have been under the guidance of former students of a private madrasah in Solo, Central Java, called Al-Mukmin, or more commonly called, Ngruki. Ngruki Madrasah has about 2000 students and teaches a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam based on Salafi doctrine. This Madrasah was founded by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir who is also a co-founder of a fundamentalist Islamic organization called Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).[2] Abu Bakar Ba'asyir also founded a political organization, called Mujahidin Council of Indonesia (MMI) that acts as an umbrella association for numerous small radical groups across Indonesia.

Radical Islamic groups have seen many of their leaders arrested as the Indonesian police' counter-terrorism unit, Densus 88, has been successful in arresting militants suspected of participating in or planning terrorist acts.[3] However, the linkage between Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's Madrasah in Solo and the Bali bombings prompted concerns that Indonesia may be headed toward greater Islamic radicalization.   There was fear that radical madrasahs were spreading fundamentalist and

militant interpretations of Islam, similar to how madrasahs in Pakistan spread such ideologies and contributed to the violence and strength of radical Islamic groups in that country. Fortunately for Indonesia, this does not seem to be the case. Although there is a network of about a hundred madrasahs run by various fundamentalist Islamic groups and individuals, and these schools teach anti-pluralist, anti-western, and anti-democratic viewpoints and advocate Indonesia becoming a fundamentalist Islamic state, these are the exception, not the norm.[4]

Further fueling the fear that Indonesia is headed in a radical Islamic direction is the fact that there remains much, some argue increasing, intolerance for plurality and acts of communal violence. These acts include the burning of homes, places of worship, and violent protests.[5] In addition, the Ministry of Home Affairs has allowed several local areas to ban the Islamic sect, Ahmadiyah, which is viewed by mainstream Muslims as aberrant and heretical. The Religious Affairs Minister and high ranking generals in the army have called the Ahmadi sect heretics that should be criminalized.[6] The highest council of Islamic scholars/leaders in Indonesia, called Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), issued a fatwah in 2005 stating Ahmadiyah and a network of liberal Muslims called JIL (Liberal Islamic Network) were heretics and therefore dangerous to society. The MUI also issued a fatwah that same year stating liberalism, pluralism, and secularism were Western values and antithetical to traditions of Islamic thought.[7]

The MUI is affiliated with the government and was created by President Suharto in 1971 with the purpose of gaining government oversight of Islamic leaders and to provide religious legitimacy for Suharto's policies. MUI's purpose was to issue fatwahs (judicial opinions) about matters involving Islamic jurisprudence and to oversee halal certification.

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[2] JI is a spin off organization of the illegal Darul Islam (DI) that was founded in the 1940s with the goals of separatist rebellions against colonial rule and the creation of an Islamic state. JI was founded in 1993 and also works with Al-Qaeda for training and financing. Many of its leaders are children of DI leaders. It came to consist of a powerful web of personal contacts across Indonesia. Other militant groups associated with Darul Islam that operate inside Indonesia include Laskar Jihad, Madelia Mujahidin Indonesia, Laskar Jundulloh, the Banten group, and Angkatan Mujahidin Islam Nusantara (AMIN).
[3] International Crisis Group (May 3, 2007).

[4] Hefner, Robert (2009).
[5] Human Rights Watch (March 15, 2011) and (June 16, 2011). International Crisis Group (November 24, 2010).
[6] Freedman, Amy and Robert Tiburzi (2012).
[7] Gillespie, Piers (2007).

Since Suharto's fall, however, the MUI has become more conservative has been issuing fatwahs in numerous areas of life that were previously not within their purview, including smoking, using hair dye, and saving the environment. The elected governing officials have thus far done little to oppose illiberal fatwahs from the MUI, such as the one against Ahmadis and liberalism, secularism, and pluralism.

Similarly, groups that are legal and operate within the law, but spread fundamentalist views of Islam's role in society and politics, including Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and Front Pembala Islam (FPI – The Islamic Defenders Front), are allowed to operate with a concerning extent of impunity from government prosecution. FPI has come to act as a morals police thrashing clubs that serve alcohol and warning women to cover more. The police at times have arrested some members of FPI, including its leader, Habib Rizieq in 2008 and imprisoned him for a year and a half for the FPI attacking and killing protestors with whom they disagreed, but the group is still allowed to operate largely unchallenged and officials seem afraid to oppose it too strongly.

Another example of why some people fear Indonesia is becoming a breeding ground for radical Islamic groups is that while the number of radical madrasahs is low in Indonesia compared to many other Muslim majority countries, fundamentalist organizations have been found recruiting within secular schools, both secondary level and at institutions of higher education. Militant Islamic cells were found in a high school in Klaten, Central Java and the liberal oriented UIN and IAIN (state run Islamic universities).[8] The public flagship university, Universitas Indonesia, has witnessed the presence of large and active fundamentalist, although not necessarily militant, Islamic groups since the early 1990s. Hard-line Islamic groups also use social media to get their message out to the Indonesian public. Indonesia has one of the highest rates of social media use in the world; thus, this is an effective medium to reach people, perhaps more so than through radical madrasahs.

Relatedly, with decentralization and the devolution of political authority to the provinces and districts, more than 50 local districts have implemented aspects of Sharia, particularly notable are Aceh, West Sumatra and West Java. This may appease fundamentalist groups and prevent them from attempting to capture the national government, or it may inspire them and allow their views to grow more accepted and viewed as inevitable. While this is being done within the framework of democratic institutions, there are questions being raised about the intolerance of plurality that is accompanying these changes. This paper argues that even though radical madrasahs are the exception in Indonesia and the police have been successfully closing jungle training camps and society does not largely accept terrorist acts as legitimate, there is a "slow creep" of Islamization infusing Indonesian society and politics.

A look at election results for parliament in April 2014 are interesting for showing that Islamic parties are not fading, but are gaining votes with 32% of the vote going to parties with a declared Muslim identity. The parties are not radical and must officially accept the democratic framework and secular state within which they operate or they are not allowed to participate in elections. However, these parties use the democratic process to push policies in a more Islamic direction. Their main obstacle is that they are not united among themselves and represent various factions within the Muslim community. Old divisions between traditional, rural based ulama and modernist Muslims prevent this unity.[9] Several leaders, such as those in the MUI, are attempting to remedy this

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[8] Freedman, Amy and Robert Tiburzi (2012).

[9] The PKB party that largely represents the traditional, rural based ulama is mistrustful of the modernist groups due to historical experiences dating back to the 1920s but continuing until now. The PKB accuses modernist groups of attempting to eradicate the power of traditional ulama in the country and spread fundamental modernist practices across the country. The PKB received 9% of the vote in parliamentary elections making it the biggest vote getter of the Islamic parties; however, the other three parties each received approximately 7% each and are all considered modernist in orientation making their total votes much higher than PKBs (Gwenael Njoto-Feillard. May 9, 2014).

division that prevents the Islamic political parties from currently being a powerful bloc within Parliament. Their success over time will likely be influenced by the greater homogenization of Islam within Indonesia that is occurring partly through the educational system.

Another characteristic of the 2014 elections showing the appeal of an Islamic message to voters is that one of the candidates for the presidency, former General Prabowo Subianto, who barely lost the election, had statements in his party, Gerindra's, official manifesto that risked endangering the secular foundation of the state, such as declaring a vital task of the state was to "guarantee the purity of religious teachings that are recognized by the State [and guard them] from deviations and contempt from other religious teachings."[10] Prabowo was known in the 1990s to have close ties to very conservative Islamic groups that want to see Indonesia become an Islamic state.[11] While he may have been and continues to use such groups for his own political ambition, he tapped into the conservative Islamic groups for support in his attempt to become President. He also garnered support from factions in the military that share the worldview of conservative Islam and goals of Islamizing Indonesia further. Although Prabowo was also supported by groups in society seeking rents through his ascendency, or seeking a return to a more orderly military style government, his near success in capturing the presidency in 2014 shows the appeal of an Islamic message among Indonesian society and the strength of a network of leaders in society, governance, and the military that are willing to see a greater Islamization of the country. If he were to win the presidency next time, Indonesia would surely become an even less tolerant society of pluralism and may even head down a path of ending democracy.

The winner of the July 2014 presidential election was a populist and moderate Muslim, Joko Widodo (Jokowi), who was the governor of Jakarta and former mayor of Solo, Central Java. He ran for president as a candidate of the PDI-P Party, which historically was the nationalist and secular party of Indonesia's first president,

Sukarno, and is now led by his daughter, Megawati Sukarnoputri. Jokowi has a history of being tolerant to pluralism and a defender of social justice; however, the close race indicated that a very different candidate has the potential to be elected next time. Prabowo carried the baggage of having been exiled from the country in 1998 due to allegations of human rights abuses as head of the Indonesian Special Forces during the protests that ousted Suharto, his ex-father-in-law, from power. Thus, while he had the support of many of Suharto's former allies, he also was vilified for his past. Thus, his Islamic leaning and connections were not the main trait characterizing him, but his political rebirth partly through the use of Islam shows it is possible to use Islamic discourse and networks to propel oneself to power, which is cause for concern in a country that is showing signs of becoming more Islamic oriented.

The strength of Islam as a political factor and the growing acts of intolerance in society, along with the Indonesian leadership's tacit approval for intolerance is troubling and causing observers to ask why this is happening. The above described intolerance is co-occurring with surveys showing Indonesians support democratic participation, human rights, and interfaith tolerance, further complexifying analysis of Islam in Indonesia.[12] Other surveys, however, show increasing support for Islamic law, groups enforcing a strict version of Islamic practice, and practice of personal piety that is stronger than in several other Muslim majority countries.[13] Similarly, Bagir and Cholil (2008) analyzed anti-pluralism discourse in Indonesia and found a recurring theme that criticized the westernization of Islam and a stance that pluralism would lead to relativism and weaken people's commitment to Islam.

How does one make sense of the conflicting evidence regarding Islam's role in Indonesian society and politics with evidence on the one hand of radical elements, intolerance, and the growing importance of Islam in politics with evidence on the other hand that points to most

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[10] Gwenael Njoto-Feillard (May 9, 2014).
[11] Gwenael Njoto-Feillard (May 9, 2014).

[12] Mujani, Saiful (2007) and Esposito, John L. and Dalia Mogahed. (2007).
[13] Pew Global Attitude Project (May 17, 2011) and Hassan, Riaz (July 2007).

Islamic schools and the largest mass based Muslim organizations in Indonesia being relatively moderate and the public's support for democracy? The answer lies in acknowledging that support for political participation and democracy does not necessarily mean a lessening role for religion in politics and greater toleration. These western ideals typically go together, but in non-western countries, democracy may manifest differently. A look at schools in Indonesia, particularly civic and religious education, is instructive for understanding how Islam is evolving and influencing this young democracy.

Indonesia's Educational System
Secular Public General Education schools

The Indonesian educational system consists of public and private schools organized into elementary (grades 1-6), junior secondary (grades 7-9), and senior secondary school (grades 10-12). The public general education (secular) schools are overseen by the Department of Education; whereas, the religious schools are overseen by the Department of Religion. President Suharto mandated in 1973 that education would become compulsory through completion of elementary school (grades 1-6). This mandate was phased in and completed in 1984. In 1994, President Suharto decreed that education would become compulsory through grade nine. While full compliance has not yet been achieved and enrollment drops significantly in the junior secondary schools, the government is still attempting to increase enrollments, most recently through President Jokowi's "Smart Card" program begun in late 2014 to help poor families pay for their children's education.

Under Suharto's "New Order" that lasted from 1967-1998, schools became part of the "franchise" structure of administration where people paid to receive a position in a government affiliated agency, such as the police, license issuing agency, or school administration. In exchange, the government official had access to rents collected during the course of the job. This meant that public general education schools began to charge more fees to attend school, including, for example, fees for exams,

photocopying, uniforms, books, extracurricular activities, building construction and maintenance, an enrollment fee, and tuition for operating costs. Teachers sometimes asked for "donations" for students to receive their grades or demanded students needed private tutoring in order to pass. A portion of these rents were then passed up to the principle in order for the teachers to keep their jobs.[14] These fees were unofficial. The government maintained that public education was free but began in the late 1990s to address the issue of unofficial school fees and recognize their existence. The schools claim that they do not receive enough money from the government to run the schools and therefore must charge the informal fees to operate; however, there is significant evidence of money being siphoned off at all levels and it not reaching the schools.

In response to the economic and political crisis of the late 1990s, the government decentralized the schools in 1999 to the district level in terms of budget and administration.[15] In 2000-2002, the national legislature amended the Constitution to state that all Indonesians had the right to an education and required citizens to pursue a basic education and for the government to fund it, specifically mandating that central and regional governments spend 20% of their budgets on education. In 2003 these changes were reinforced by a law on the National Education System stating that central and regional governments will guarantee the implementation of compulsory education at least at the basic education level without charging any fees and that teacher salaries were not a part of the 20% to be spent on education.[16] However, the Constitutional Court said that the 2003 law keeping teacher salaries out of the 20% violated the constitutional provision that had not stated this specifically. Further eroding government

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[14] Rosser, Andrew and Anuradha Joshi (February 2013).

[15] There was less money in the budget of the central government due to the collapse of the Rupiah in 1997 and the IMF was encouraging decentralization and privatization of all government services as a condition of its crisis loans.

[16] Rosser, Andrew and Anuradha Joshi (February 2013).

expenditures on schools is that many district governments include non-educational expenses in their calculations.

A 2005 mandate to increase teacher salaries and require all new teachers have a bachelor degree is supposed to improve teacher quality and ensure a minimum living wage for teachers, but this cuts into the already sparse budgets of schools despite President Yudhoyono increasing the proportion of the budget spent on education in 2004. In 2005 President Yudhoyono again increased school budgets through providing funds directly to schools on a per pupil basis for books, operating costs, supplies, etc. Schools were supposed to reduce their fees in response and in 2008 he instructed district governments to ensure there was free basic education. Later in 2008, in response to continued resistance at the district level, the Yudhoyono administration decided that free basic education could only be guaranteed to poor families. The government therefore issued a regulation granting permission to "international standard" schools (SBI) and schools trying to develop a "basis of local superiority" to continue charging fees, which in effect meant that middle and upper class children attending these schools would pay a fee, while poor children attending the lower quality public schools would attend for free.[17] It was in fact many middle and upper class families that did not want fees to end because they feared the quality of their schools would lower over time and they were cheaper than the expensive secular elite private schools.[18]

While user fees have declined significantly in the post-Suharto era, they have not been eliminated and vary according to district and school.[19] The fees push many poor families into sending their children to private madrasahs that are funded by private organizations and thus cheaper. These madrasahs that service poor communities usually do not have much equipment, including chairs and desks, and do not provide as good of an education as the public secular schools and their fees typically rise in junior secondary school.

Indonesia scores very low in international educational measures of skills. They were ranked 64th out of 65 countries in math, reading, and science skills according to the 2012 Program for International Student Assessment. As of 2012, 51% of people aged 15-18 were enrolled in senior secondary schools.[20] The gross enrollment ration (GER) at the higher education level, which is the total enrollment as a percentage of the college-age population, is 25%, which is the lowest percentage of all BRIC nations, except India, which has a GER of 20%.[21] This GER is, however, more than double what it was in 2001, and the Indonesian government plans to keep expanding the number of students in higher education.

Newly elected President Jokowi (Joko Widodo) has instituted a "Smart Card" program for the country similar to the one he instituted as mayor of Jakarta. Children who are eligible based on financial need will be given a debit-card that can be used to pay for school related expenses. The government will put the money into their account monthly and the student can use the card to pay for school fees, books, supplies, transportation, and uniforms. The expenses will be monitored and the money will not go through numerous levels of administration as it has in the past; thus, reducing opportunities for corruption. This program coincides with cards issued for health care and social welfare. The national program was begun in November 2014 and could potentially help poor children attend school. The Smart Card will provide Rp 225,000 ($18) per semester for elementary students, Rp. 375,000 ($31) per semester for junior secondary students and Rp. 500,000 ($41) per semester for senior secondary students, including vocational studies.[22]

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[17] Rosser, Andrew and Anuradha Joshi (February 2013).

[18] Private madrasah, except the newer elite model, are cheaper than public schools; however, there still exists private elite schools that are more expensive that public schools.

[19] Rosser, Andrew and Anuradha Joshi (February 2013).

[20] Clark, Nick (April 4, 2014).

[21] Clark, Nick (April 4, 2014).

[22] Surya, Aditya. (November 21, 2014).

Islamic Schools

Indonesia's population is approximately 90% Muslim and Islamic identity is growing; however, Indonesia is not an Islamic state, nor is Islam the official religion of the state. The constitution states adherence to five principles, together called Pancasila. The first of these principles is "belief in one God" with six religions being recognized. These include Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Pancasila, including adherence to a religion is viewed as strengthening national identity, which was a concern for this diverse archipelago when achieving independence. The state therefore supports religion and the teaching of religion through the Department of Religion and Department of Education and has required by law the study of one's own religion in both public and private schools since 1960. The state also runs Islamic schools through the Department of Religion as well as overseeing the private religious schools. The state (under Suharto) established the MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia; Council of Islamic Scholars/Leaders) as discussed above to provide Islamic "opinions" about legislation, government policy, and issues affecting society and the practice of Islam. Therefore, even though the Indonesian state is not Islamic based, it has shown a history of supporting the cultivation of Islam and encouraging religious piety as part of the Indonesian national identity. While freedom of religion is protected by the constitution, as long as it is one of the six religions noted in Pancasila, there is not separation of Church and State in the same way that it exists in the United States. The Indonesian state is based on Pancasila and therefore is bound to support and uphold religion since the first principle of Pancasila is belief in God/religion.

Islamic schools are over 90% private in Indonesia, although there are some state run Islamic schools (madrasahs) that were increased in the mid-1990s as part of Suharto's efforts to coopt and gain control over Islamic movements,

schools, and identity formation.[23] The private Islamic schools fall into two categories. The first is the pesantren, which are traditional boarding schools teaching classical Islamic traditions of knowledge and are found mostly in rural areas and frequently affiliated with one of the two Indonesian mass based Islamic organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama. There are over 10,000 pesantren and these are run by local ulama, who are frequently called "kyai" in Indonesia. Kyai often blend pre-Islamic elements into their role as head of a pesantren, such as performing spiritual healing, fortune telling, and magical potion giving for a fee. The second type of Islamic school in Indonesia is the madrasah, which is either run by an individual, small group, or the second mass based Islamic organization in Indonesia, called Muhammadiyah. Madrasahs in Indonesia are usually day schools without residential facilities and they tend to be more modern in teaching style and curriculum than pesantren, although they also teach a more modernist variant of Islam that is sometimes associated with fundamentalism and is frequently opposed to the more traditionalist, blended Islam taught in the pesantren. There are approximately 37,000 madrasahs in Indonesia and their popularity, particularly elite ones, are growing.[24] Elite private madrasahs, either run by Muhammadiyah or a smaller group or an individual, have become popular with the middle and upper classes in Indonesia. These elite madrasahs are quite expensive and have excellent facilities and instruction in the sciences, English, and the arts.

Indonesian Pesantren and "Traditional" Islam

Pesantren have existed in Indonesia at least from the 1600s, beginning in the coastal areas of the islands, Sumatra and Java, where Islam first

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[23] Of the madrasahs, state run madrasahs account for 6.4% at the elementary level, 10.6% at the junior secondary level, and 13% at the senior secondary level as of the mid-2000s, according to Azra, Azyumardi; Dina Afrianty; and Robert W. Hefner (2007).

[24] Azra, Azyumardi; Dina Afrianty; and Robert W. Hefner (2007).

spread to Indonesia. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, pesantren spread to the interior of Java as returning pilgrims from Mecca and Medina spread Islam to areas that were only nominally Muslim. The peace brought with colonialism allowed for this spread. Previously, the archipelago consisted of warring small kingdoms.[25] Pesantren blended pre-Islamic traditions with Islam and continue to do this to a large extent today. They therefore are said to represent the "traditional" variant of Islam in Indonesia as opposed to the modernist variant discussed below.

Pesantren curriculum consists of study of the Qur'an and hadith, jurisprudence (fiqu), Arabic, mysticism (tasawwuf), and Arab sciences (alat). A pesantren typically consists of a mosque, dormitories, the kyia's residence, and "classrooms," which typically have a concrete floor and no furniture. Children are divided by ages and sex and sit on the floor. Instruction is done by recitation. Prior to the mid-1970s, children usually began attendance around age eleven or twelve and lived at the Pesantren for three or four years. Some acquired enough reading and writing skills and Islamic knowledge to become a local mosque leader and teacher. Some pupils even went on to a pesantren that taught more advanced knowledge and continued their studies up to and occasionally including study at an Islamic university. No grades were given and pupils advanced at their own pace.

Pesantren were usually economically self-sufficient engaging in raising livestock, agriculture, and/or handicrafts. These were some of the skills children learned in addition to Islamic studies. In the 1920s, some pesantren began to include instruction in math and/or history due to the influence of Dutch colonial schools. By the 1950s, most pesantren taught some rudimentary general education curriculum; however it was usually rather limited due to the limitations of the kyai's knowledge, except in the larger pesantren. Nowadays, pesantren frequently allow a government school or madrasah to exist on or near its property in order to meet the requirement that the national curriculum be followed as is discussed below.

Indonesian Madrasahs and Modernist Islam

In the early 1900s, modernist Islamic schools, called madrasahs in Indonesia began to be founded by scholars returning from studies in the Middle East. The first ones were founded in West Sumatra and south-central Java. In Indonesia, the name "madrasah" was given to Islamic schools that taught general education studies, in addition to Islamic knowledge. The madrasahs were denounced by the traditional pesantren leaders as western and irreligious.[26] Although the model for the Indonesian madrasah education came partly from Dutch colonial and Christian missionary schools, the madrasahs were affiliated with "modernist" variants of Islamic practice that was popular in Egypt and the Middle East. In both Indonesia and the Middle East, it was recognized by a new generation of Muslim scholars and leaders that in order to not be dominated by the West, Muslims had to learn more than religious studies in schools. Religion could be infused throughout the curriculum, but students needed to learn science, math, and history, for instance, in order to create a strong Muslim society. Thus, ideas of religious revival became intertwined with modern education, and the building of madrasahs was part of the "modernist Muslim" movement that swept across the Muslim world in the 20th century and is still shaping Islamic identity and power.

Modernist Islam refers generally to a more Qur'anic based practice of Islam, which is sometimes more fundamentalist, but also can allow for contextual interpretation of the Qur'an. This is contrasted with the ulama based traditional practice of Islam where local religious leaders provide interpretation of Islamic precepts and instruct on how Islam should be practiced according to their knowledge of a particular "school" of Islam, which refers to a particular tradition of Islam that developed over centuries. The difference between modernist and traditional Islam is a bit similar to the difference between Protestantism (Bible based) and Catholicism (priest based)

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[25] Laffan (2003).

[26] Azra, Azyumardi, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner (2007).

Christianity. Modernists also apply the Qur'an to modern times, while maintaining their strict adherence to the Qur'an. Therefore, it becomes confusing to attempt to categorize the modernists and traditionalists according to one being modern and the other pre-modern. The distinction does not fall along those lines as modernists are frequently more ardent about following the Qur'an and hadith closely and living according to Muhammad's example than are traditionalist ulama. The difference is more about the "purity" of Islam with modernists claiming to be more pure and pointing to the institutionalization of ulama as interpreters of Islamic practice and the existence of different legal schools of thought as being "corruptors" of true Islam.

A "back to the Qur'an" approach is thus taken by modernist, but simultaneous with encouraging learning modern, non-Islamic knowledge and applying the Qur'an to time and place in order to make Islamic civilization strong again. The kyai (ulama) in Indonesia are viewed by many modernists as being backwards, teaching an impure Islam that is infused with pre-Islamic traditions, corrupt institutionally for using their positions to gain wealth, and uneducated in modern disciplines. In other words, modernist Muslims tend to view traditional ulama (kyai) as inept for moving Indonesian society forward. On the flip side, traditional ulama in Indonesia accuse the modernists of attempting to bring fundamental Islam to Indonesia and of trying to homogenize Islam artificially in Indonesia that would result in a loss of a precious Indonesian variant of Islam. Kyai call modernists arrogant and accuse them of wanting to move Indonesia backwards to the time of Muhammad.

Two mass based Muslim organizations were created in the early 1900s in Indonesia and represent the opposing viewpoints of modernist and traditional Islam described above. Muhammadiyah was created first and engaged in social welfare and educational activities as it strove to bring modernist Muslim ideas to Indonesia. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was created in response to Muhammadiyah. Although the traditional ulama were present in Indonesia first, they had not been organized but instead existed as independent kyai running pesantren. NU is therefore a network of pesantren leaders and people who support the traditional style of Islamic practices that frequently blends pre-Islamic traditions. The two organizations are sometimes rivals and antagonistic toward each other, but not to a large extent that one might assume. It is rather common in recent years for children to begin in a pesantren school, but move to a Muhammadiyah madrasah for practical reasons such as the availability of the school, and to become a member of Muhammadiyah blending the two traditions. NU and Muhammadiyah sometimes work together on political issues, but there does remain a fear within NU that Muhammadiyah seeks to eradicate it and all they stand for while Muhammadiyah members do express a demeaning attitude toward NU for not being purely Islamic enough.[27]

Girls are educated at both madrasahs and pesantren, although frequently in separate rooms. Indonesia is a leader in the Muslim world for its education of girls and acceptance of women in the workplace. Not that there is no gender discrimination nor push to keep women at home with the family raising children, but there is a widespread belief that women can and should be contributing members of society outside of the home. However, women more frequently now wear headscarves and Muslim attire, which is a visible result of the Islamization of Indonesian society and the growing influence of the modernist Muslims who encourage women to be contributing members of society but within a Muslim context, including appropriate dress. For instance, women are accepted as working, although not if it interferes with their family life, but they must cover appropriately and not walk alone in the evening or in unseemly places. They also should not be alone with men. Traditional Islam in Indonesia allows for pre-Islamic patterns of dress and one rarely sees women's heads covered in rural, traditional regions. The encouragement to be a modern Muslim woman, who is educated and even working, but follows the Qur'an is evidence for the direction Islam is taking in Indonesia. This is

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[27] These insights are from the author's several years of living in Indonesia studying these Islamic groups.

similar to how democratic participation is encouraged but within the context of a Muslim society as is discussed below.

Government-Islamic Schools' Relationship and the Growth of Islamic Schools as a Means to Educate Indonesians

In 1975 the "Agreement of Three Ministers" was signed by the Departments of Religion, Education, and Internal Affairs, and agreed to by many of the main Islamic leaders who negotiated on behalf of the schools, both traditional pesantren and modernist madrasahs. It stated that Islamic schools should follow the government general education curriculum for 70% of the instructional day and use government issued textbooks that were the same as those used in the public general education schools. The Islamic leaders agreed to this because they were afraid that if they did not, they would be incorporated into the public general education system and cease to exist as Islamic schools. In 1961, when Sukarno was still in power, the national parliament had passed a law stating that in eight years, religious schools would be transitioned to oversight by the Department of Education, which raised fears they would be secularized. Suharto came to power in 1967, but he and other nationalists saw the need to develop a stronger public education system. The Islamic leaders were therefore happy that the Agreement of Three Ministers allowed the Islamic schools to remain under the Department of Religion and to continue existing as private Islamic schools.

Even many of the traditional ulama were willing to participate in building the strength of the country through educating its people with a modern curriculum, as long as they were still allowed to teach Islam and be leaders for the community through running the pesantren. They saw that they could keep students in the pesantren if they cooperated with the government, which enabled the school to be certified and students to receive government recognized diplomas. Otherwise, pesantren and madrasahs may have seen declining enrollment and withered. However, pesantren needed help and government teachers to teach the national curriculum. Thus, many government schools opened on or near the property of numerous pesantren where students studied at both schools

and this pattern still exists today and allows national and religious goals to both be met and has kept the pesantren tradition alive. Madrasahs were mostly already teaching modern studies along with religion, so the acceptance of the 70/30% split in instructional material was not as big of a change for them as it was for pesantren. The Department of Religion also opened a few public madrasahs to serve as models of combining the national curriculum with Islamic teachings. These schools were expanded and increased in number during the 1990s, but are still far outnumbered by the private madrasahs and pesantren.

Under the Agreement of Three Ministers, graduates from Islamic schools could obtain a diploma that was considered equivalent to a public, general education diploma if the school had complied with providing 70% of instruction in the national general education curriculum. This paved the way for admittance to state run Islamic colleges and some public secular universities and was later expanded to make graduates eligible for admittance to all institutes of higher education. Therefore, while the Agreement of Three Ministers encouraged the teaching of the national curriculum, by making Islamic schools more mainstream, it increased their popularity and maintained their presence in society because students could attend an Islamic school and still learn general education and have their diploma viewed as being equal to one from a secular public general education school.

In 1989, the government enacted a new National Law on Education, which was later amended by the National Law on Education of 2004. This law identified private Islamic schools, both madrasahs and pesantren, as being a subset within the national educational system and therefore subject to following decrees and regulations issued by the Department of Education, including participating in the government's efforts to make education compulsory through the ninth grade. Even though the Islamic schools had to follow guidelines of the Department of Education, the Department of Religion was allowed to provide curricular material and texts that met the objectives of the Department of Education but also infused an Islamic perspective into the material. Therefore, the Departments of

Religion, Education, and the schools continued to work collaboratively and the Islamic schools continued to be a vital part of the Indonesian education system, even though most were privately run and pesantren were generally still very traditional with children sitting on the floor and instruction of Islamic studies being done through rote memorization and children working communally to keep the pesantren economically viable. The decision to keep ensuring Islamic schools were a vital part of the national effort to educate the next generation, helped to ensure Islamic schools and Islamic teachings would remain an integral part of Indonesian society.

In 1994, the Department of Education issued a "regulation on National Curricula," which included the decision to allow graduates from Islamic schools to be eligible for admittance to all public, secular universities, including the most prestigious universities in Indonesia. This made the Islamic schools even more popular since now students would not have their opportunities limited in regard to higher education if they graduated from an Islamic senior secondary school. Previously, some, but not all, secular public schools accepted students from Islamic schools. As of the mid-2000s, madrasah and pesantren graduates can also enroll in the military and police academies thus making education through Islamic schools a viable path for any career choice.[28] Frequently being cheaper than the secular public schools, parents often chose Islamic schools for their children's education.

The chart below shows what percentage of students attend what type of school in which grades, how many are female, and the growth rates.

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[28] Azra, Azyumardi, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner (2007).

2001-2 Enrollment Figures for Private Madrasahs, Public Schools, and Pesantren[29]

Level of School	Private Madrasah	Public General Education School	Pesantren
Elementary (Grades 1-6)	3,075,528 (50% female)	25,850,849 (49% female)	
Junior Secondary (Grades 7-9)	1,961,511 (51% female)	7,466,458 (44% female)	
Senior Secondary (Grades 10-12)	661,104 (55% female)	5,051,640 (47% female)	
All Grades Combined	*5,698,143*	*38,368,947*	*1,770,760[30]*

Source: Department of Religion 2003

Growth of Madrasahs and Public Schools' Enrollment Growth 1998-2001[31]

Level of School	Private Madrasah	Public General Education School
Elementary (Grades 1-6)	2.5%	-0.2%
Junior Secondary (Grades 7-9)	3.3%	0.1%
Senior Secondary (Grades 10-12)	9.4%	2.4%

Source: Department of Religion 3003

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[29] Adapted from information in Azra, Azyumardi; Dina Afrianty; and Robert W. Hefner (2007).

[30] This figure is from 1997 and is from Jabali and Jamhari (2002).

[31] Adapted from information in Azra, Azyumardi; Dina Afrianty; and Robert W. Hefner (2007). Figures for Pesantren growth were not available.

The above charts point to a couple of notable trends. One is that private madrasahs are increasing enrollment more than the secular, public general education schools, particularly at the senior secondary level (grades 10-12). The second trend that can be seen is that the enrollment at junior secondary level private madrasahs (grades 7-9) is a higher proportion of the number of students being educated. Over 20% of students are enrolled in private madrasah at this level. A third trend is that more girls attend private madrasahs than boys, with the difference being highest at the senior secondary level (grades 10-12). Although figures were not available for pesantren, estimates are that girls similarly are enrolled more than boys in pesantren at the higher grade levels.

Why are more students attending private madrasahs in the middle years? In answer to this question, according to Azra (2007) who gathered interview data, parents want their children to have some religious education and view the middle years as a tumultuous time needing more guidance. Furthermore, if a family is to keep their child in school beyond elementary years, it typically costs less to attend a private madrasah than it does the public school. Elementary level madrasahs are typically of lower quality than elementary public schools; therefore, it is common for parents to put their children in the pubic secular school at the elementary level, but then switch to the cheaper madrasah for the middle years. The quality of education tends to improve at this level in the madrasah. For senior secondary school, many students do not continue and those that do will sometimes switch back to the secular public school thinking their chances of doing well on university entrance exams will be higher because the scores still tend to be higher for students from the public schools. Socio-economic class is relevant also because students who continue schooling at the senior secondary level are usually from more affluent families and cost is not a hindrance. They also can likely afford private tutors to help study for the university entrance exams.

However, the trend more recently has been for affluent families to send their children to elite madrasahs, which explains why more senior secondary madrasahs are opening. These madrasahs are more expensive but well equipped and provide solid training in both general education and religious studies. Since the mid-1990s, as stated above, all public secular universities are required to consider graduates from Islamic schools that meet the 70/30% curriculum split for acceptance. This has fueled the growth of elite private madrasahs at the senior secondary level.

As for why more girls attend the private Islamic senior schools, the answer lies in the discussion above – the secular public senior secondary schools were viewed as necessary for admittance into the best universities until recently. Most families still viewed male children as needing the best education. This, combined with the view that girls' virtuosity needed to be guarded, made the private madrasahs a more attractive and cheaper option for parents of girls, which allowed girls to be educated, but freed up educational money for the boys to attend the more expensive public general education school and then seek admittance into the best universities to develop their future career prospects. Thus, even though girls are educated in Indonesia and working women are generally accepted, the emphasis is still more on preparing males for breadwinning, not very different from the situation in Western countries.

It should also be noted that many students cross-over between secular public general education schools and private madrasahs, and even pesantren, throughout their school years. Families strategize to obtain the best education for their children based on cost, desire to keep children living at home, general educational quality, and religious education.[32] Azra (2007) notes that many of the parents interviewed stated they wanted their children to have both a religious and a quality general education and that at different levels, different choices were made based on these two goals of education. Therefore, the chart above represents how many students are in Islamic schools at one point in time, but it does not capture how many students have ever been in an Islamic school. This figure would be much higher.

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[32] Azra, Azyumardi, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner (2007).

With crossing over between secular public general education and Islamic schools common and easier now with the Islamic schools following the national curriculum and with the eligibility for acceptance of students from Islamic schools into all universities, the interactions between students from the various schools is ever increasing. It is no longer uncommon to find graduates from Islamic schools at the Universitas Indonesia, the most prestigious university in Indonesia. In addition, the state run Islamic universities have improved and increased the quality and breadth of general education, which makes the Islamic universities a viable option for gaining an education conducive to building a solid career and advancing oneself within society.

In addition to making Islamic schools more mainstream and allowing for students to move back and forth between Islamic and secular schools, the increase of religious instruction in the public secular schools from one to two hours per week (begun in 2013) and the mandate that this instruction be done by a teacher who adheres to the faith being taught (numerous non-Muslim children in Catholic schools will now learn Islam from a Muslim) is resulting in all children being taught quite a bit of religion; thus, making the cross-over between secular and Islamic schools more natural and easy on all sides. The results have been to slowly Islamize the younger generation and this Islamization is also becoming more homogenous. The Department of Religion works with the Department of Education in developing the curriculum for the teaching of Islam in the secular schools; thus, exposing children to the same Islamic instruction in secular public schools. It is a modernist type of Islam. Pesantren still mostly teach a traditional variant of Islam but now students attending pesantren are more likely than in the past to also attend a non-pesantren school at some point and be exposed to modernist Islam. Some pesantren have even begun to blend in teaching of modernist Islam or encourage students to find their path within Islam that is most meaningful to them.

With the popularity among the middle and upper classes of elite madrasah, the trend of slow Islamization will only strengthen as Islamic education is no longer viewed as something that holds ones chances for success in life back. In fact, it is becoming fashionable to have attended Islamic schools. These students then become leaders within business, organizations, and government. Islamic education is thus contributing to the growing, albeit slow, Islamization of Indonesian society and governance. It is not necessarily increasing in a radical direction, but Indonesia is becoming more Islamized through the greater attendance and acceptance of Islamic schools in Indonesia, the teaching of Islam in secular schools to all Muslim students, and the frequent cross-over of students between secular and Islamic schools. This Islamization can be seen in the significant increase in women wearing Islamic dress and headscarves, which was unusual in Indonesia just a couple decades ago. It can also be seen in the voting for Islamic parties, acceptance of some Islamic law in a growing number of districts, acceptance of Islamic oriented policies from the national government, the conservative fatwahs issued by the MUI, the Islamization of public discourse, and the increasing number of parents who chose to send their children to Islamic schools, which in turn reinforces the cycle.

A look at what has been happening within the higher education sector is interesting as it shows the strengthening of Islamic universities and the growing prestige of their degrees and the Islamization of public secular campuses.

Islamic Higher Education
The new President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo (called Jokowi), announced in October 2014 that the Directorate of Higher Education would leave the Department of Education and Culture and move to the Department of Research and Technology (now called the Department of Research, Technology, and Higher Education).[33] This Directorate is still responsible for overseeing all the public and private secular institutes of higher education. The Department of Religion still oversees the Islamic universities and colleges, both public and private. This move was taken in order to better connect research, universities, and the rest of society,

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[33] Nurdiani, Ria (November 14, 2014).

including business, energy, etc. Connecting research to places in society that need to keep abreast of the latest research will help the country grow economically and encourage universities to conduct more research that is beneficial to society. Indonesia needs to expand and keep improving its higher education sector as discussed below.

Indonesia ranks low compared to other emerging economies in terms of the percentage of its college aged population enrolled in higher education. With only 51% of its 15-18 year olds enrolled in senior secondary schools, low college enrollment rates is understandable. The government is attempting to increase enrollment in higher education, as well as in junior and senior secondary education. Thus, Islamic schools, at all levels are being used to increase enrollments. The infrastructure is already there, so the government has sought to improve the quality of education in Islamic schools and increase their enrollments. This is simultaneous to planning the establishment of a network of public secular community colleges with credits transferable to a university. These community colleges will focus on training for jobs in manufacturing, nursing, automotive technology, and other trades. The government also plans to create technical colleges and increase vocational secondary schools.[34]

Competition for entry to Indonesia's public universities is very fierce. There were only seats for 18% of students who took the entrance exams for public, secular universities, which are the most prestigious in Indonesia, in 2010.[35] Students not accepted to the public secular universities typically seek admission to smaller colleges, but many are private and expensive. The Islamic universities and colleges use a different exam that includes Arabic grammar and religious studies. This is true for both public and private Islamic university entrance exams. Students from Islamic schools frequently take exams for public secular universities and the entrance exams for Islamic universities. Since the existence of lower tier public secular colleges and community colleges has been limited, many parents see advantages

to having their children attend Islamic schools because they will then have more options when seeking higher education. Students who attended Islamic schools previously, typically do better on the entrance exams of the Islamic universities because they studied Arabic and a lot of religious studies and can do well on these portions of the tests.

The first Islamic university in Indonesia was opened in 1946 in Yogyakarta, South Central Java, and was called the Sekolah Tinggi Islam (Islamic School of Higher Learning) but was renamed two years later, the Universitas Islam Indonesia and still exists under that name today. This school taught western curriculum of science, math, social studies, and Islamic studies. It was a modernist Muslim university that was comfortable mixing Islamic and western style education.[36] In fact, the mixing of the two traditions was viewed by its founders and supporters, particularly Muhammad Hatta, a nationalist hero, as necessary in building a strong Indonesian nation. Islam, modernity, and nationalism were thus linked, as seen in the establishment of this university.

In 1960, the Indonesian government began a nation-wide system of State Islamic Institutes (Institute Agama Islam Negeri or IAIN). Over a hundred small campuses existed by the 1970s that consisted of one building with underpaid and poorly trained teachers.[37] In 1975, the Department of Religion reorganized the IAIN system of Islamic universities reducing the number of campuses to 13. The Department of Religion also began sending senior officials from the Department of Religion and IAIN campuses to universities in Canada, the US, and West Europe to study in an effort to modernize the Islamic university system. This evolved into a special relationship with McGill University's Islamic Studies Program in Canada, which is where numerous senior officials have studied and are still sent today.[38] Today there are six Islamic research universities called UIN

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[34] Clark, Nick. (April 4, 2014).
[35] Clark, Nick (April 4, 2014).

[36] Azra, Azyumardi, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner (2007).
[37] Azra, Azyumardi, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner (2007).
[38] Azra, Azyumardi, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner (2007).

(Universitas Islam Negara) that offer advanced degrees in medicine, law, psychology, economics, comparative religion, and other fields in addition to Islamic sciences and thirteen IAIN.[39] There are thirty-three second-tier state Islamic colleges, called Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri or STAIN (State Islamic School of Higher Education). In the state run Islamic universities and colleges, no specific legal school of Islam (madhhab) is taught. Instead students are exposed to several and are required to take a course in contextualizing Islamic teachings.

Since 2003, students are required to take a civic education course that includes instruction on democracy, civil society, and human rights, including women's rights, which will be discussed below.[40] Shortly afterwards, the Muhammadiyah private Islamic universities adopted a similar required course. The fact that the Islamic universities and colleges employ faculty trained to teach in their discipline, as opposed to merely being trained in Islamic studies, combined with the required contexualization of Islam course and the civic education course, as well as the lack of emphasis on any one legal trradition within Islam has improved the quality and broadened the viewpoints of teachers trained at these institutes of higher education. Most of these teachers go on to teach at pesantren or madrasahs; thus, the modernized education is filtered down to the lower levels of education. Some of the more stringently fundamentalist madrasahs are in fact leery of hiring graduates from the state run Islamic universities and colleges because they are viewed to have been liberalized. They prefer graduates from the private Muhammadiyah universities that also teach the non-Islamic sciences but adhere to a stricter teaching of Islam.

The Muhammadiyah organization runs an extensive network of private universities and colleges that ranges from research universities to smaller regional colleges. They have been actively improving the quality and breadth of their non-Islamic programs, similar to the state run Islamic universities, but doing so with more infusion of Islamic doctrine that is Qur'anic based. However, the modern and general education basis of instruction in both the state and Muhammadiyah run Islamic universities and colleges has allowed students from both subsets of Islamic higher education to be educated well in an Islamic based setting and become leaders on par with graduates from the secular universities.

The most prestigious secular universities are becoming more Islamized due partly to the extensive cross-over of students in and out of Islamic and public general education schools during grades 1-12. The mandate for religious instruction in a student's own religion, not comparative religious studies, in the secular public schools during grades 1-12 ensures all students have religious training, even if their families were not mosque attending or very religious. Since education is compulsory through grade nine, even though this is not fully achieved, it means most all of Indonesian society has weekly religious instruction for nine of the most formative years and those attending college would have had formal religious instruction for twelve years. Recently, the government mandate for religious instruction was increased from one to two hours per week and the religious instruction must be provided by a religious teacher from that religion as described above.

The forced training in religion for all Indonesian students; the prominent role of Islamic schools in educating Indonesians at all levels; the prominent role graduates from Islamic schools play in all sectors of Indonesian society, economy, and governance; and the extensive cross-over of students between Islamic and secular public general education schools are all contributing factors to the Islamization of Indonesian society and its secular universities. The Islamization of the secular public universities is evidenced by the growing strength of Islamic organizations on their campuses and pressure for women at these prestigious secular

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[39] The IAIN in Jakarta was converted to a UIN in 2002, which began a government push to convert IAINs to UINs in order to offer opportunities in several province to receive advanced degrees in secular fields within an Islamic university.
[40] The civic education was first piloted at the Jakarta IAIN (now UIN) in 2000.

institutions to wear Islamic clothes and Islamic head scarves.

Islam during Suharto's Last Years and in the Young Democracy that Followed

During the last few years of Suharto's reign, he raised the status of Islam and Muslim leaders, but he did so while also controlling it. These factors influencing the Islamization of Indonesian society and politics include the building of more mosques, particularly in the latter decade of his rule; Suharto making the pilgrimage to Mecca very publically; raising the status of Muslim leaders through bringing them into governing leadership positions in the 1990s and channeling more patronage to devout Muslims in the form of business contracts; as well as providing better funding for Islamic schools and increasing the number of well-funded state run madrasahs. After the fall of Suharto in 1998 and the transition to democracy over the next few years, Islamization has accelerated with democracy creating opportunities for Islamic groups and parties.

Suharto's "turn toward Islam" that occurred during the early 1990s was partly a reaction to what was already occurring in society. Many observers think Suharto was using Islam as a political tool to boost his fading legitimacy as his family was viewed as more corrupt and out of touch with society. He had to contend with the rising tide of Islam and attempted to coopt it.[41] Regardless of why Suharto turned toward

Islam, by the time he was overthrown through massive street protests in 1998, Islamic leaders already existed within and had ties to factions of the military, governing party called Golkar, government bureaucracies, and leading business figures. Some Muslim leaders wanted to use the chaos that ensued during the transitional period to grab power with help from factions in the army and Golkar. However, others opposed this plan, particularly the leaders of the two mass based Islamic organizations, NU and Muhammadiyah. Islam and its leaders were thus an important part of negotiating the transition to democracy that ensued after the fall of Suharto.[42]

Although large scale violence in the name of Islam was avoided, the transition to democracy created possibilities for a more Islamization of society and politics. With Suharto's "lid" and cooptation/control gone, Islam could play a more prominent role in governance, even within a secular state. Some power-seekers have also shown a willingness to use Islam in attempts to propel themselves to power in the young democracy.

It is unclear if this Islamization in Indonesia will continue or fade away. Understanding the causes of the Islamization and the role that schools have played in creating the gradual Islamization of society and in bringing about Suharto's need to coopt modernist Muslims as an effort to control the influence of Islam on society and politics makes it likely that the path will continue in the same direction that it is currently headed. This is a direction of gradually increasing the Islamization of society, but within democratic governance. Indonesia is becoming a model for a devoutly Muslim society that sees no conflict between being Muslim and being democratic. However, democracy in Indonesia and the policies spawned from that democracy may look different from Western democracies. Not only will Indonesia likely continue to have Islamic values infused in policy-making and public discourse, but also Indonesia is struggling with

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[41] Strict modernist Islamic groups had existed in Indonesia since the time of independence in 1945 and sought the creation of an Islamic state, but these groups had been outlawed and a nationalist form of Islam represented by Muhammad Hatta, the first Vice President and discussed with the founding of the first Islamic university, took hold. Sukarno, Indonesia's first president, balanced Islam, Communism, and the army (nationalists) during his rule. Suharto, his successor, diminished Islam, banned Communism, and ruled with the army. However, he allowed one Islamic party (PPP) to nominally run for seats in elections, along with the nationalist party (PDI) and the governing party (Golkar). The modernist Muslims were viewed as the most threatening to the state, whereas the traditional ulama in the Nahdlatul Ulama were more closely allied with Suharto

throughout most of his rule. However, toward the end, it is the modernists to whom he turned and attempted to coopt and it is their influence that has grown.

[42] Woodward, Kathleen (2002).

issues of tolerance for non-Muslims and Muslims who practice Islam in ways that modernist leaders think are heretical. The separation of Church and State does not exist in the same form it does in the United States and individual rights are truncated when they butt against the role of the government in "protecting" the Muslim majority.

A look at civic education in Islamic schools highlights these issues. Some Western observers assume civic education in Indonesia teaches the same Western values of democracy, human rights, and pluralism because these same words are used to describe civic education in Indonesia. These observers assume elements of Islamic theology and history are merely used to promote these virtues that are identical to western conceptions. However, this is an incorrect appraisal of civic education in Indonesia. Democracy, human rights, and pluralism are taught in slightly different forms based on contextualizing these ideals in an Islamic context as will be explained below.

Civic Education in Islamic Schools

The civic education offered in the Islamic universities is a step forward in promoting the growth of civil society, acceptance of pluralism, and understanding of democracy. However, the main emphasis in the instruction is on democratic participation, human rights including women's rights, and the compatibility of Islam with democracy. The pluralism aspect is addressed in the sense that the Constitution of Medina is used as evidence that Muhamad allowed non-Muslims to live in a Muslim society, but it is not addressed in the manner Westerners may assume when they hear the word pluralism. The fact that Indonesia is a Muslim society is made very clear and there is not an attempt to separate Islam from politics beyond the fact that Indonesia is not an Islamic based state required to follow Islamic law.

Instead, the curriculum in civic education courses in Indonesia emphasizes that students need to be responsible citizens and uphold the tenets in Islam that promote human rights and democratic participation. A lot of references are made to Medina from Islam's early history and consociational decision making where

consultation and compromise within the leadership of the Muslim community is highly regarded. The important role of women in Muslim society is covered, and that "people of the book" (includes Muslims, Jews, and Christians) should be respected, as did Muhammad, for worshiping the same God and many prophets the same as Muslims.

This conceptualization of pluralism is different from Western conceptions where religion and state are separate and religion is a personal, not public matter. In Indonesia, although it is not an Islamic state, Islam is very much a part of the public domain and policy making. The civic education taught in Indonesia is therefore grounded in the assumption that as a Muslim society, Muslim values should be upheld and that these values are compatible with political participation, human rights, and some pluralism, as long as that pluralism does not threaten the Muslim nature of society. Teaching civic education in Islamic universities is therefore, on the one hand, a step forward for the promotion of democracy, but, on the other hand, it also reinforces the Muslim identity of that democracy and society and homogenizes which Muslim values and traditions are viewed as important and honored in Indonesia. The emphasis on the Muslim aspects of civil society, democracy, and human rights may, in fact, reinforce prejudices against non-Muslims since, although they were allowed to live in Medina during Muhammad's time and had a role in that society, non-Muslims were not fully equal citizens. Similarly, Muslim sects that are different from the Islam that is becoming mainstream in Indonesia (modernist) are not protected through this form of civic education.

This civic education is then replicated in the elementary and secondary schools as teachers are trained in the Islamic universities where they learned civic education. The model being taught in the state run Islamic universities is being replicated in private Muhammadiyah universities and even being used in public secular universities to some extent. The model is also being increasingly applied directly in Islamic elementary and secondary schools. The argument is not that the Indonesian form of civic education is negative, it is just to point out that

we must be honest about what it is and what to expect from it.

Conclusion

This paper argues that Indonesia is experiencing Islamization of society and that this is gradually influencing government decision-making and politics. While some analysts think the Islamic influence will fade over time, it is argued here that the education system which includes numerous mainstreamed Islamic schools and religious instruction in the secular public schools will continue to push Indonesia in the direction of Islamization. While the past and new presidents, Yudhoyono and Jokowi respectively have prioritized creating greater access to and improving the quality of the secular public schools, Islamic schools present an increasingly viable option for families seeking educational pathways for their children that will help them be successful and move up the economic ladder in this rapidly rising country. Therefore, even with improvements and greater accessibility in the secular public schools, Islamic schools from the elementary to university level will likely remain integral for educating Indonesians. The government has embraced Islamic schools as can be seen through the several decisions discussed above regarding bringing them into the mainstream educational structure and with increased funding given to the Islamic universities and colleges in order to broaden the degrees offered.

While the teaching of Islam in Indonesia is not usually radical or anti-democratic, there are some Islamic schools that do preach such viewpoints. However, these are not the ones most influencing society. It is the mainstream, more moderate Islamic schools that are most influencing the Islamizaton of Indonesian society and ultimately its politics. The Islamization of society and governance is not necessarily bad for a country or for democracy, just as the Christianization of a country's society is not necessarily bad or good. Democracy is embraced by Indonesian Muslims and human rights are generally honored within the Indonesian Muslim community. As discussed above, the area of concern is in the realm of tolerating pluralism within the Muslim community and of other faiths. It is also important to recognize what is occurring in Indonesia and why the situation is as it is so that we can better predict where the country is headed and how democracy may interact with Islam in other Muslim countries with similar educational and Islamic systems. Further, the importance of a country's educational system in shaping the future is highlighted in this paper.

One of the negative aspects of the Islamization of Indonesia it that it has brought with it intolerance that leads to violence and can become stifling for public discourse that negatively affects the quality of democracy. Potentially, democracy itself could be threatened, but that does not appear likely. Indonesia will probably continue being a democracy and even consolidate that democracy. However, the quality of democracy will continue to be affected by the lack of tolerance for different groups and for open discourse on topics viewed as being offensive or dangerous to the fabric of Islamic society or threatening to the promulgation of Islamic ideals. Free speech technically exists in Indonesia and the news tabloids publish all kinds of stories, but there are unspoken limits on what can be said when it comes to addressing questions concerning Islam. People are also either encouraged or required by law, depending upon the district, to adhere to Islamic precepts in their daily lives.

Thus, the Islamization experienced in Indonesia affects the nature of democracy, but the country still meets the procedural definition of democracy.[43] Schools are a vital link in both the Islamization of society and for understanding what civics mean in Indonesia. Schools should

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[43] A procedural definition of democracy is the commonly accepted measure used by Political Scientists to determine if a country should be called democratic or not. It is a conceptual category used for regime typologies. It includes both political and civil liberties. Political liberties include holding free and fair elections, allowing most all candidates and parties to participate in elections, and elections resulting in change of office-holders depending upon who won the election. Civil liberties include free press and speech and the freedom to organize and assemble.

therefore be watched closely if one wants to understand both the past and the future of this young democratic Muslim country.

Author Biography

KATHLEEN WOODWARD is an Associate Professor at the University of North Georgia near Atlanta, Georgia, USA. She obtained her Ph.D. in political science from the Ohio State University with a concentration in comparative politics and an inter-disciplinary minor in studies of Islam. Her dissertation research was funded with a Fulbright-Hays grant and was on the topic of Indonesia's transition to democracy and the role of Islam in this transition. She has lived in Indonesia for over three years, including the period of Indonesia's transition. Kathleen also has a M.A. in International Studies, Southeast Asia Studies and a M.A. in Education, curriculum and instruction.   She has one daughter and several pets and loves to travel.

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