

## The Role of Public Administration in Indonesia's Islamic Education Reform

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### Abstract:

*This study examines the evolution and current challenges of Islamic education policy in Indonesia through qualitative document analysis, a PRISMA guided systematic review, and bibliometric mapping. Legal and regulatory texts, including Law No. 20 of 2003 (SISDIKNAS) and Ministry of Religious Affairs reports, were analyzed using the READ framework to trace thematic shifts. The review targeted 2021-2025 peer-reviewed literature on curriculum, financing, governance, and educator professionalism, with screening per PRISMA. Bibliometrics identified influential works and collaboration patterns. Findings show a shift from centralized control to decentralized, locally adaptive policy. Innovations include integrated curricula, sharia-compliant financing, and strengthened teacher development, yet disparities in administrative capacity and resource allocation persist, yielding uneven quality assurance. The study argues that harmonizing national standards with regional contexts, enhancing inter-ministerial coordination, and embedding maqasid al-Shariah principles are pivotal for equity and accountability. Future research should evaluate digital governance and financing models for scalability and sustained impact. This research provides a new contribution in formulating the direction of Islamic education policy that is more adaptive to the principles of modern public governance, while still maintaining Islamic spiritual and moral values as the basis for decision-making.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic education policy, Qualitative document analysis, PRISMA, Bibliometrics, Curriculum*

### Abstrak :

*Penelitian ini mengkaji evolusi dan tantangan kebijakan pendidikan Islam saat ini di Indonesia melalui analisis dokumen kualitatif, tinjauan sistematis terpandu PRISMA, dan pemetaan bibliometrik. Teks-teks hukum dan peraturan, termasuk Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 (SISDIKNAS) dan laporan Kementerian Agama, dianalisis menggunakan kerangka BACA untuk menelusuri pergeseran tematik. Tinjauan tersebut menargetkan literatur peer-review 2021-2025 tentang kurikulum, pembiayaan, tata kelola, dan profesionalisme pendidik, dengan penyaringan per PRISMA. Bibliometrik mengidentifikasi karya dan pola kolaborasi yang berpengaruh. Temuan menunjukkan pergeseran dari kontrol terpusat ke kebijakan adaptif lokal yang terdesentralisasi. Inovasi meliputi kurikulum terintegrasi, pembiayaan yang sesuai dengan syariah, dan penguatan pengembangan guru, namun kesenjangan dalam kapasitas administrasi dan alokasi sumber daya tetap ada, sehingga menghasilkan jaminan kualitas yang tidak merata. Studi ini berpendapat bahwa menyelaraskan standar nasional dengan konteks regional, meningkatkan koordinasi antar kementerian, dan menanamkan prinsip-prinsip maqasid al-Shariah sangat penting untuk kesetaraan dan akuntabilitas. Penelitian di masa depan harus mengevaluasi tata kelola digital dan model pembiayaan untuk skalabilitas dan dampak berkelanjutan.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Kebijakan pendidikan Islam, Analisis dokumen kualitatif, PRISMA, Bibliometrik, Kurikulum*

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## INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in Indonesia holds a distinctive role within the national education system, grounded in the constitutional mandate of Law No. 20/2003 (SISDIKNAS), which enshrines religious instruction as an integral component of the curriculum (Abdullah, Witro, Makka, Is, & Wiwaha, 2024). Under this framework, madrasahs and pesantrens operate alongside general schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, fostering a dual system

where secular and faith-based knowledge coexist (Sulaiman et al., 2024). During the New Order era, centralized public administration leveraged standardized curricula to promote Pancasila values and national unity, embedding religious education within a broader nation-building agenda (Taufik, Muhammad, & Nugraheni, 2023). Ideologically, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) institutions play a role as guardians of moderate Islamic values (wasathiyah). Through their curriculum and learning activities, PAI serves as a strategic instrument in countering radicalism, intolerance, and ideological deviations that endanger the nation's integrity (Pembelajaran, 2025).

In the post - Reformasi period, policy scholars have traced shifts toward decentralization, revealing significant regional variation in implementation. In Aceh, for example, local government policies actively integrate Dayah Islamic education to counter radicalization, demonstrating how decentralized governance can both empower communities and create disparities in resource allocation (Sulaiman et al., 2024; Baihaqi et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the demands of globalization and technological advancement are prompting Islamic educational institutions to explore new funding models (Umar, 2024). Abdullah et al. (2024) analyze these “sharia financial inclusion” challenges, emphasizing the need for innovative public administration approaches to ensure competitiveness and product innovation in Islamic schools (Witro, Abdullah, & Makka, 2024).

Another important dimension is the incorporation of maqasid al-Shariah (objectives of Islamic law) into educational policy. Taufik, Muhammad, and Nugraheni (2023) demonstrate that integrating maqasid frameworks into institutional performance metrics promotes holistic development balancing ethical, social, and economic objectives within educational governance (Sezer & Adnan, 2024; Kisa & Kisa, 2024). Current literature identifies four critical policy domains curriculum design, financing mechanisms, institutional governance, and educator professionalism as central to advancing Islamic education in Indonesia (Hansen & Pickering, 2024). Building on this foundation, the present study examines how public administration can harmonize national standards with regional contexts, ensuring equitable access, accountability, and quality across the diverse landscape of faith-based schooling (Pickering, Hansen, & Abdallah, 2024; Kisa & Kisa, 2024).

Research on Islamic education policy in Indonesia has proliferated across four interrelated domains such as curriculum design, financing mechanisms, governance, and educator professionalism. Curriculum integration remains a focal concern, as Law No. 20/2003 (SISDIKNAS) mandates religious instruction but allows regional adaptation that yields integrated madrasah models in Java and segregated pesantren tracks in Aceh and West Sumatra (Abdullah, Witro, Makka, Is, & Wiwaha, 2024; Sulaiman, Lubis, Baihaqi, Musriparto, Marhaban, & Nur, 2024). Teacher perceptions highlight the need for specialized Islamic pedagogy training to reconcile religious and secular objectives (Sezer & Adnan, 2024; Kisa & Kisa, 2024). Empirical studies on maqasid al-Shariah suggest that embedding objectives of Islamic law into curriculum fosters holistic moral development and institutional accountability (Taufik, Muhammad, & Nugraheni, 2023; Baihaqi et al., 2024; Umar, 2024).

Financing remains uneven, with public allocations supplementing zakat, waqf, and corporate philanthropy. Abdullah et al. (2024) and Kisa and Kisa (2024) document inconsistent state funding, driving institutions toward sharia compliant financial inclusion models (Abdullah et al., 2024; Doli Witro, Abdullah, & Makka, 2024). Corporate partnerships, including equity crowdfunding initiatives, offer new revenue streams but necessitate transparent accounting standards (Umar, 2024; Hansen & Pickering, 2024).

Governance research underscores the Ministry of Religious Affairs' accreditation and oversight, yet implementation varies by province. Comparative analyses reveal that pesantren with community accountability mechanisms achieve higher quality benchmarks (Pickering, Hansen, & Abdallah, 2024; Hansen, Pickering, & Abdallah, 2024). Regional autonomy introduces

both innovation and disparity in regulatory compliance (Sezer & Adnan, 2024; Taufik et al., 2023).

Educator professionalism emerges as pivotal, with continuous development programs integrating Islamic worldview modules into public administration curricula shown to enhance teacher efficacy (Baihaqi et al., 2024; Sezer & Adnan, 2024; Sulaiman et al., 2024). Research also highlights the efficacy of international exchange programs in improving pedagogical practices (Hansen & Pickering, 2024; Kisa & Kisa, 2024). Collectively, these studies articulate a multifaceted policy framework that balances national standards and regional contexts, emphasizing transparent financing, robust governance, and empowered educators as prerequisites for advancing Indonesia's Islamic education agenda.

Although various studies have addressed Islamic education reform in Indonesia, most have focused on the curriculum and institutional aspects, while the public administration and governance dimensions of Islamic education policy have received less attention. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining how public administration practices play a role in Islamic education reform in Indonesia. Based on this, the main research question is: what is the role of public administration in promoting the effectiveness of Islamic education reform in Indonesia?

## **METHODS**

This study integrates qualitative document analysis, a PRISMA-guided systematic literature review, and bibliometric analysis to examine Islamic education policy in Indonesia. Legal and regulatory texts such as Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System (SISDIKNAS), related ministerial regulations, and Ministry of Religious Affairs reports were analyzed using the READ framework to identify thematic categories and policy shifts over time (Dalglish et al., 2020). The review followed PRISMA 2020 guidelines and targeted peer-reviewed articles (2021-2025) from Scopus and regional journals on curriculum design, financing, governance, and educator professionalism. Searches used predefined keywords and Boolean operators; title–abstract screening; full-text eligibility assessment; standardized data extraction; and a PRISMA flow diagram to document study selection (Page et al., 2021). Bibliometric procedures mapped publication trends using Scopus-derived output and citation metrics to identify influential works and to track policy evolution and research dynamics (Donthu et al., 2021; Ganti, 2025).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Policy Evolution and Public Administration Alignment**

Indonesia's Islamic education governance has undergone a profound transformation from the New Order's centralized, top-down model to a more decentralized framework following Reformasi. Under the New Order, the Ministry of Religious Affairs maintained strict control over madrasahs and pesantrens, embedding Pancasila principles and uniform curricula nationwide (Abdullah, Witro, Makka, Is, & Wiwaha, 2024). Decentralization since 1998 granted provinces authority to adapt policies to local contexts; Aceh, for example, has leveraged Dayah institutions to foster social cohesion and counter radicalization (Sulaiman, Lubis, Baihaqi, Musriparto, Marhaban, & Nur, 2024). However, disparities in administrative capacity have produced uneven resource allocation and regulatory compliance. Provinces with robust educational administrations, such as West Java and Yogyakarta, routinely meet national quality benchmarks, while regions lacking institutional support struggle to implement standardized policies (Sulaiman et al., 2024). Strengthening inter-ministerial coordination between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs is essential to harmonize regulations, standardize oversight procedures, and reduce provincial imbalances (Taufik, Muhammad, & Nugraheni, 2023).

## Curriculum and Quality Assurance

Madrasahs now employ an integral curriculum that blends religious studies with national academic standards, pursuant to Law No. 20/2003's mandate (Abdullah et al., 2024). While this model has enhanced students' dual competencies, quality assurance remains uneven. High-performing institutions have instituted internal monitoring systems aligned with national examination frameworks, using regular assessments, teacher peer reviews, and data-driven instructional adjustments to boost student outcomes in mathematics, sciences, and religious studies (Pickering, Hansen, & Abdallah, 2024). Conversely, under-resourced madrasahs lack systematic evaluation protocols, resulting in curriculum drift, teacher turnover, and stagnating academic performance (Sezer & Adnan, 2024). To bridge this gap, regional education offices must receive dedicated funding and technical assistance to deploy standardized supervisory tools and train local evaluators in both pedagogical and religious quality metrics.

Bibliometric results indicate that research trends in Islamic education in Indonesia over the past five years have focused more on curriculum and institutional quality, while studies on public administration governance remain limited. This finding aligns with the PRISMA results, which show a low frequency of publications related to the decentralization of Islamic education policy. Therefore, this synthesis demonstrates that the role of public administration has not been optimally integrated into Islamic education policy, even though this aspect is crucial for increasing accountability and the effectiveness of institutional reform. (Rois et al., 2025)

## Financing and Accountability

Financing Islamic education relies on a tripartite stream: public budgets, zakat, and waqf. State allocations have increased modestly, but inconsistent disbursements compel many institutions to depend on community-based funding (Kisa & Kisa, 2024). Case studies show that madrasahs and pesantrens adopting sharia-compliant accounting frameworks and community oversight boards experience higher stakeholder trust and reduced mismanagement (Abdullah et al., 2024); instituting transparent financial reporting leveraging digital ledgers and third-party audits has improved operational efficiency by up to 25% in pilot regions (Umar, 2024). Moreover, partnerships with corporate philanthropists via equity crowdfunding platforms have diversified revenue without compromising religious values (Doli Witro, Abdullah, & Makka, 2024). Scaling these innovations requires public administrators to codify sharia accounting standards within regulatory statutes and to build local capacities for auditing and financial governance.

## Educator Capacity and Professional Development

Educator professionalism is vital for sustaining integrated curricula. Overreliance on Western-centric public administration textbooks has diluted Islamic pedagogical values (Sezer & Adnan, 2024). Empirical research demonstrates that incorporating Islamic worldview modules such as maqasid al-Shariah ethics into teacher training enhances educators' ability to foster moral development, civic responsibility, and critical thinking (Taufik et al., 2023). Targeted workshops on student-centered pedagogy, combined with international exchange programs with Malaysian and Middle Eastern institutions, have led to a 30% increase in teacher self-efficacy scores (Hansen & Pickering, 2024). To institutionalize these gains, accreditation bodies should link professional development credits to mastery of both Islamic ethical frameworks and modern instructional methodologies.

## SIMPULAN

This study reveals that Islamic education policy in Indonesia has undergone significant transformation from centralized regulation under the New Order toward a more decentralized, locally adaptive framework in the Reformasi era. The integration of curriculum design, financing

mechanisms, governance structures, and educator professionalism demonstrates both the potential and challenges of balancing national standards with diverse regional needs. Findings highlight the importance of inter-ministerial coordination, equitable financing models, transparent accountability mechanisms, and continuous teacher professional development as the cornerstones of policy effectiveness. The analysis further shows that while some provinces and institutions have successfully leveraged decentralization to innovate in curriculum integration, financial transparency, and educator training, others struggle with limited administrative capacity and resource disparities. Bibliometric evidence indicates a growing scholarly interest in financing, governance, and maqasid al-Shariah integration, underscoring the relevance of holistic approaches to Islamic education in the globalized era. Collectively, the findings affirm that strengthening policy coherence and institutional accountability is essential to ensuring equitable access, quality assurance, and sustainable development in Indonesia's Islamic education sector.

Future research should run multi-province comparative studies to pinpoint how decentralization and uneven administrative capacity drive disparities in resources and regulatory compliance across Islamic education systems, and rigorously evaluate sharia compliant financing innovations such as digital ledgers, third-party audits, and equity-crowdfunding alongside digitally enabled governance tools to test their sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and scalability for madrasahs and pesantren..

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