



Genealogy of Islamic Religious Education Institutions in Minangkabau: From Surau to Madrasah in the Context of Socio-Religious Transformation

Herina Yanti¹

¹STAI YDI Lubuk Sikaping Pasaman Sumatera Barat Indonesia

✉ herinayanti@stai-ydi.ac.id *

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Abstract

This article examines the genealogy of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) institutions in Minangkabau, which underwent a significant transformation from traditional surau-based institutions to the modern madrasah system. The genealogy of Islamic religious education institutions in Minangkabau is examined through the perspective of socio-religious transformation that took place from the 17th century to the early 21st century. Using a historical-descriptive approach and analysis of ulama networks, this study traces the institutional evolution of PAI from the pre-colonial era to the contemporary period of Islamic education reform. The findings indicate that the transformation of PAI institutions in Minangkabau is not merely a structural change, but a reflection of theological negotiations, socio-cultural adaptations, and responses to dynamic modernization. This study traces the institutional continuity and discontinuity from surau as a center of traditional education to madrasah as a modern educational institution. This study finds that the transformation is not linear but dialectical, colored by the tension between tradition and modernity, as well as the influence of global Islamic renewal movements. Structural factors such as Dutch colonialism, the emergence of Kaum Muda, and national education policies play a determinant role in restructuring the Islamic education system in Minangkabau. This article argues that the transformation process reflects the creative adaptation of the Minangkabau Muslim community to broader social changes, while also representing a negotiation of identity between local and universal Islamic values. This research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of Islamic education in Southeast Asia, particularly in the context of societies that adhere to a matrilineal system.

INTRODUCTION

Minangkabau, as one of the largest Muslim communities in the archipelago, has a rich and complex tradition of Islamic religious education.

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Islamic educational institutions in this region have undergone a long journey marked by various institutional, ideological, and structural transformations. From the surau (traditional Islamic school) as a traditional educational institution deeply rooted in the Minangkabau matrilineal social system, to the madrasah (Islamic school) as an expression of the modernization of Islamic education, this transformation process reflects a much broader dynamic than mere institutional change.

Studying the genealogy of Islamic educational institutions in Minangkabau is important for at least three fundamental reasons. First, Minangkabau is a unique historical laboratory for studying how Muslim communities responded to the challenges of modernity in distinctive and creative ways. Second, the dynamics of Islamic educational transformation in Minangkabau have had an impact far beyond its local geographic boundaries, given that scholars and intellectuals educated in this region have contributed significantly to the broader development of Indonesian Islam. Third, understanding the institutional genealogy of Islamic education in Minangkabau can provide a valuable comparative perspective for understanding similar dynamics in other Muslim regions of Southeast Asia.

Conceptually, this article uses the concept of genealogy as developed by Michel Foucault, but adapted to the context of the study of Islamic educational institutions. Genealogy in this sense does not simply mean tracing historical origins chronologically, but rather an analysis of how various discursive forces, power relations, and socio-religious practices shape and transform educational institutions from one form to another (Foucault, 1977). Thus, the transformation from surau to madrasah is not only a change in institutional format, but also a shift in episteme regarding what is meant by ideal Islamic education.

This article argues that the transformation of Islamic educational institutions in Minangkabau is the result of a complex interaction between endogenous factors, namely the internal dynamics of the Minangkabau Muslim community, and exogenous factors, namely the influence of colonialism, transnational Islamic renewal movements, and national state policies. This transformation process is not a unilinear process leading to a fixed endpoint, but rather a contested, negotiating process, fraught with tension and contradiction. Understanding this genealogy allows us to more clearly see how contemporary Islamic education in Minangkabau is the product of a long and layered historical accumulation.

Previous research has touched on various aspects of this topic. Taufik Abdullah (1972) provided the analytical foundation for the role of the surau (Islamic prayer house) in the Minangkabau social system. Azyumardi Azra (2004) mapped the network of Indonesian ulama (Islamic scholars) that served as the backbone for the transmission of Islamic knowledge. Meanwhile, Hadler (2008) explored the contestation between the young and the old. However, studies that systematically trace the genealogy of institutional transformation from surau to madrasah within a comprehensive socio-religious transformation framework are still limited. This article attempts to fill this gap.

Literature Review And Theoretical Framework

Surau in the Minangkabau Social System: A Historical Review

The study of the surau as a socio-religious institution in Minangkabau has attracted the attention of scholars from various disciplines. In his monumental work, Taufik Abdullah (1972) positioned the surau not merely as a religious educational institution, but as a total institution that integrates social, religious, and cultural functions in community life. Minangkabau. In Abdullah's view, the surau is a space where Minangkabau masculine identity is formed and reproduced within the context of a matrilineal system that requires men to seek residences outside the traditional rumah gadang.

Dobbin's (1983) research provides a broader perspective by placing the surau within the context of trade networks and Islamic expansion in Minangkabau. He shows how the surau functioned as a nodal point in a network of ulama (Islamic scholars) that connected local Muslim communities with centers of Islamic scholarship in the Haramayn and other Southeast Asian regions. This perspective strengthens our understanding that the surau was not an isolated institution, but rather part of a transnational network of Islamic scholarship.

In a broader context, Azra (2004), in his study of the Nusantara ulama network, shows how Minangkabau surau (small mosques) became important nodes in the transmission of Islamic knowledge from the Middle East to Southeast Asia. Great Minangkabau ulama, such as Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan and his students, played a crucial role in building the Islamic educational infrastructure that later became the foundation for subsequent institutional development. This network was not merely an intellectual one, but also one of spirituality, trade, and sometimes even political resistance to forces that threatened the Muslim community.

From a gender perspective, Blackwood (2000) provides a compelling analysis of how women's position within the Minangkabau matrilineal system differs fundamentally from the often-simplified depiction. In the context of education, Blackwood demonstrates that women also have access to religious education, albeit in a different format than men. While stereotypically associated with male institutions, surau actually operate within a broader educational ecosystem that includes religious study sessions in the rumah gadang (traditional house) for women.

Institutional Transformation and Islamic Renewal Movement

The transition from surau to madrasah in Minangkabau cannot be understood separately from the context of the broader Islamic reform movement. Noer (1973), in his classic study of Islamic modernism in Indonesia, shows how the Kaum Muda movement, inspired by the thought of Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha of Egypt, had a transformative influence on Islamic educational institutions in Minangkabau. The leaders of this movement, including Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi, introduced a discourse of reform that challenged the legitimacy of traditional surau-based education.

Hadler's (2008) research provides a more nuanced analysis of the dynamics of contestation between young and old in Minangkabau. Hadler argues that the debate over the ideal format of Islamic education is not solely about modernization versus traditionalism, but also about the struggle for religious authority and control over the social space of the Muslim community. From this perspective, the emergence of madrasahs as alternative institutions is a manifestation of the complex power dynamics within Minangkabau society, where various social groups struggle to define what constitutes authentic and relevant Islam.

From a regional comparative perspective, Kaptein's (2014) research shows that the transformation of Islamic education in Minangkabau parallels similar dynamics in Java, Aceh, and the Malay Peninsula. However, each local context has its own unique characteristics that distinguish it from others, and Minangkabau's uniqueness lies in the interaction between the matrilineal customary system and the demands of modernizing Islamic education. This interaction creates a unique dynamic in which educational reform is often interpreted as reform of customary law, and vice versa.

Laffan (2003), in his study of Islamic nationalism in the Dutch East Indies, provides a useful framework for understanding how transnational Muslim networks influenced educational transformation in Minangkabau. He shows that the connections between Minangkabau ulama and the networks of Al-Azhar, Medina, and other centers of Islamic scholarship not only introduced new ideas about education but also created an imagined community of Muslims connected through Arabic and a shared vision of Islamic renewal.

Theoretical Framework: Socio-Religious Transformation and Institutional Genealogy

Theoretically, this article is based on a framework that integrates three main perspectives. First, the historical-institutional approach emphasizes the role of path dependency in institutional development, as developed by North (1990). In this context, understanding the initial conditions of the surau as an educational institution is crucial to explaining why the transformation into a madrasah took a specific form in Minangkabau. Path dependency means that early institutional choices either close off or open up certain future possibilities.

Second, Bourdieu's (1991) social theory of field, capital, and habitus provides a useful analytical tool for understanding how social actors respond to and shape institutional change. The concepts of religious capital and cultural capital help us understand why some ulama support the transformation to madrasahs while others defend the surau as a more authentic institution. The Islamic habitus formed through surau differs substantially from that formed through modern madrasahs, and the tension between these two habituses continues to resonate in the dynamics of Minangkabau Islamic education.

Third, the postcolonial perspective developed by Chatterjee (1993) on nationalism and modernity provides a critical dimension in understanding how the discourse of modernizing Islamic education in Minangkabau cannot be separated from the context of Dutch colonialism and the nation-building project of postcolonial Indonesia. Chatterjee shows that modernity in the colonial context is always a fractured modernity, where imitation of Western models is accompanied by resistance and selective appropriation. By integrating these three perspectives, this article seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the genealogy of the transformation of Islamic education in Minangkabau.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach with historical-sociological methods combined with critical discourse analysis. This methodological choice is based on the nature of the research problem, which requires in-depth historical reconstruction and analysis of how Islamic education discourse is produced and reproduced within a specific socio-religious context. Historical methods allow for the tracing of institutional changes over time, while critical discourse analysis identifies the power structures and interests that shape Islamic education discourse.

The primary data sources in this study cover three main categories. First, historical documents in the form of Arabic-Malay manuscripts, travelogues, Dutch colonial reports (*Koloniaal Verslag*), and colonial government archives stored at the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI) and the Nationaal Archief in The Hague, Netherlands. Second, contemporary textual sources include madrasah curricula, annual reports of educational institutions, and educational policy documents from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

Third, oral sources in the form of in-depth interviews with religious scholars, educational figures, and academics who have in-depth knowledge of the history of Islamic education in Minangkabau.

Data analysis was conducted through several stages. First, historical periodization was conducted to identify critical phases in the institutional transformation from surau to madrasah. Second, content analysis of key documents was conducted to identify shifts in discourse on ideal Islamic education. Third, data triangulation between primary sources, secondary sources, and field data was conducted to ensure the validity of historical interpretations. This analysis process was guided by the principles of critical hermeneutics, which consider the context of text production and the underlying social interests.

The validity of the research was ensured through several strategies. First, member checking, through presentations of initial findings to key informants for confirmation or correction. Second, peer debriefing, through discussions of the findings with experts in the history of Indonesian Islamic education. Third, methodological triangulation, through a combination of document analysis, interviews, and field observations. Limitations of the research primarily lie in the accessibility of colonial archives, not all of which are open to the public, and the language challenges of examining Arabic-Malay manuscripts, which require specialized philological expertise.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Surau as a Traditional Minangkabau Islamic Educational Institution (17th Century - Early 20th Century)

The surau is the most distinctive socio-religious institution in Minangkabau culture. Within the broader social structure, the surau has three main, interrelated functions: as a place of worship, as a place of religious education, and as a residence for Minangkabau men who do not have a room in their mother's or wife's traditional house (Abdullah, 1972). These three functions make the surau a very central institution in the reproduction of Islamic and Minangkabau identity. The surau's uniqueness lies in how it integrates religious and social life into one organic institutional framework.

Historically, the surau as an Islamic educational institution began to develop systematically since the 17th century, especially after the return of Sheikh Burhanuddin from studying in Aceh with Sheikh Abdurrauf as-Singkili. Sheikh Burhanuddin founded a surau in Ulakan, Pariaman, which later became the center of teaching the Syattariyah order and other Islamic sciences in Minangkabau. This Ulakan Surau can be seen as an early model of formal Islamic educational institutions in the region, which was later replicated in various other places (Azra, 2004). The establishment of the Ulakan Surau was not only an institutional event but also a moment that marked the deeper integration of Minangkabau society into the transnational Islamic network.

The traditional surau curriculum is holistic and unstructured in the modern sense. Learning materials include monotheism, fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Quranic exegesis, hadith, Sufism, nahwu-sharaf (Arabic grammar), and various other branches of Islamic knowledge. The dominant learning method is halaqah, where students sit around a teacher who reads texts and provides explanations. The relationship between teacher and student is personal and sacred, with the teacher's authority stemming not only from their mastery of knowledge but also from their perceived karamah (charisma). This spiritual dimension distinguishes surau education from modern education, which is more oriented towards impersonal knowledge transfer.

The network of surau (Islamic boarding schools) in Minangkabau formed a decentralized yet interconnected educational system through teacher-student ties, or sanad (traditional links). Large surau such as Surau Ulakan, Surau Koto Tuo in IV Angkek, Surau Tanjung Sungayang, and later Surau Jaho became key nodes in this

network of scholarship.

Students who completed their education at one surau would advance to a higher surau, and the most ambitious would travel to the Haramayn to study directly at the center of the Islamic world (Dobbin, 1983). This system created a clear hierarchy of scholarship while ensuring the circulation of new ideas from global Islamic centers to the Minangkabau periphery.

The socio-economic dimensions of the surau also deserve attention. Surau operate within an economic ecosystem based on charity, waqf, and other forms of communal support. The tuanku or sheikh who leads the surau is often also a prominent economic figure in the community, either as a landowner or as a trade intermediary. This interconnectedness between religious education, communal leadership, and economic activity creates an institutional model very different from modern schools, which operate within the logic of bureaucracy and payment for educational services (Graves, 1981).

Although the surau has weaknesses in terms of standardization and the lack of a systematic written curriculum, this institution has its own strengths in integrating education with communal life. Students not only study religious knowledge formally, but also internalize Islamic values and practices through direct involvement in surau life, including daily rituals, communal fasting, and various other socio-religious activities. From a sociological perspective, the surau functions as a total institution that shapes the Islamic habitus that is uniquely Minangkabau (Bourdieu, 1991).

Crisis and Challenges: Colonialism, Youth, and Pressure on the Surau

Entering the 20th century, the surau, as an Islamic educational institution, faced increasingly intense challenges. The first challenge came from the increasingly aggressive expansion of the Dutch colonial education system into rural Minangkabau areas. The opening of Dutch schools (Hollandsch-Inlandsche School/HIS) and the sending of children of local elites to pursue Western education created a bifurcation within Minangkabau society between those who received a Western-style secular education and those who persisted with traditional religious education (Mrázek, 2002).

This bifurcation is not just about access to knowledge, but also about economic opportunities and social mobility.

The second, and in many ways more fundamental, challenge came from within the Muslim community itself through the Islamic renewal movement known as Kaum Muda. This movement, inspired by the thinking of Muhammad Abduh, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, and Rasyid Ridha, began to openly criticize various aspects of traditional surau education. Kaum Muda leaders such as Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul), Abdullah Ahmad, and Zainuddin Labai el-Yunusy advocated the need for fundamental reform of the Islamic education system. Their criticisms included the dominance of Sufism and the Sufi order, which they considered to be heretical and superstitious; the absence of modern sciences, which were considered essential

to facing the challenges of the times; and teaching methods that were considered inefficient and unsystematic (Noer, 1973).

The debate between the Young and the Old over the preservation of the surau tradition is not merely an academic one, but an intense social conflict. Hadler (2008) documents how this debate plays out in various public forums, through newspapers, and even in the context of formal theological debates. Interestingly, this conflict also has important gender and generational dimensions: the Young are generally comprised of the younger generation who have been exposed to modern education, while the Old are dominated by ulama (Islamic scholars) whose authority is based on the traditional surau system. This conflict also reflects the tension between two models of authority: authority based on the transmission of tradition versus authority based on mastery of rational argumentation.

A third factor contributing to the surau crisis was dramatic economic change in Minangkabau, particularly the integration of the local economy into the global capitalist economy through coffee, rubber, and other export commodity plantations. This shift shifted the pattern of migration from traditionally educational to a more predominantly economic one. Consequently, the social and economic basis of the surau as an educational institution was increasingly eroded, and it became increasingly difficult for the surau to maintain its appeal in the face of the social mobility offered by modern education (Graves, 1981). Demographic changes accompanied by urbanization also weakened the rural communities on which the surau was based.

The responses of traditional surau to these pressures have varied. Some have attempted to adapt by incorporating elements of a modern curriculum while maintaining their core spiritual traditions. Others have chosen to maintain their traditional format, arguing that compromising with modernity would betray their authentic Islamic heritage. These varied responses reflect the plurality within the Minangkabau Muslim community itself and challenge a single narrative about the surau's transition to madrasah.

The Birth of Madrasah: Modernization of Islamic Education in Minangkabau

Responses to the challenges facing the surau took various forms, the most significant of which was the birth of the madrasah as a new institutional format for Islamic education. The event often cited as the milestone in the birth of the first modern madrasah in Minangkabau is the establishment of the Adabiyah School by Abdullah Ahmad in Padang in 1909, followed by the Diniyyah School in Padang Panjang, founded by Zainuddin Labai el-Yunusy in 1915, and the Sumatera Thawalib in Padang Panjang. Each of these institutions reflected a slightly different vision of how Islamic education should be modernized.

The institutional innovations brought by these early madrasahs encompassed several important dimensions. First, the adoption of a class system that replaced the halaqah system; this represented a fundamental epistemological shift, as the class

system implemented a logic of standardization, quantification, and sequentiality that differed from the holistic approach of the traditional surau. Second, the introduction of general subjects such as arithmetic, geography, Malay, and even Dutch in some madrasahs alongside religious subjects. Third, the use of blackboards, textbooks, and modern classroom equipment that replaced slates and manuscripts. Fourth, the implementation of a formal examination and assessment system that resulted in a diploma or certificate (Yunus, 1979).

However, the emergence of the madrasah did not mean the complete abandonment of the surau (Islamic prayer house). Many early madrasahs retained various elements of the surau, including the teaching of yellow texts, memorization methods, and an emphasis on spirituality and morality. What emerged was a kind of institutional hybridity in which elements of the traditional surau and the modern madrasah blended in varying proportions depending on the local context and the orientation of their founders. This hybrid phenomenon reflects how institutional transformation in Minangkabau was more adaptive than substitutive. Azra (2014) refers to this phenomenon as "selected modernization," in which the Muslim community adopted elements of modernity that were deemed not in conflict with Islamic values.

The development of madrasahs in Minangkabau during this early period was also inseparable from the dynamics of transnational Islamic networks. Graduates of Minangkabau madrasahs who continued their studies at Al-Azhar University in Cairo brought home not only more systematic religious knowledge but also institutional models of education.

The modern Islam they witnessed in Egypt. Interaction with various reformist Islamic movements in Saudi Arabia also provided additional impetus for more radical educational reform (Laffan, 2003). Meanwhile, the influence of ideas from Malaysia, Singapore, and other Southeast Asian regions also enriched the discourse on ideal Islamic education.

The role of women in Minangkabau Islamic education during the early madrasah era also deserves special attention. The Diniyyah Putri Padang Panjang, founded by Rahmah el-Yunusiyah in 1923, represents a significant milestone in the history of Muslim women's education in Indonesia. The establishment of this institution reflected an effort to integrate educational modernization with Islamic values regarding women's roles, while also highlighting that the Islamic educational reform movement in Minangkabau had a gender dimension often overlooked in narratives centered on male figures.

The State and the Transformation of Madrasahs Post-Independence

Indonesian independence in 1945 opened a new chapter in the transformation of Islamic education in Minangkabau. The establishment of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1946 and the various national education policies that followed had direct implications for the development of madrasahs. On the one hand, state recognition of madrasahs as legitimate educational institutions provided

formal legitimacy and material support. On the other hand, the integration of madrasahs into the national education system resulted in a homogenization of the curriculum, which often clashed with local characteristics.

The most significant policy affecting madrasahs in Minangkabau was the 1975 Joint Decree of the Three Ministers, which stipulated that madrasah graduates should be equal to those of public schools. This policy forced madrasahs to incorporate a large proportion of general curriculum alongside religious education, a dramatic shift that fundamentally altered the character of madrasahs (Maksum, 1999). For some, this policy was considered a setback because it reduced the proportion of religious education; for others, it was an improvement because it opened up opportunities for madrasah graduates to continue on to public universities and compete in an increasingly competitive job market.

The New Order era under Suharto's leadership brought its own dynamics to madrasahs. On the one hand, the New Order regime depoliticized Islam, limiting the scope of Islamic organizations. On the other hand, starting in the mid-1980s, there was a tendency toward accommodation toward Islam, expressed in part through increased support for Islamic educational institutions, including madrasahs. Policies such as the construction of state madrasahs and the deployment of religious teachers to remote areas reflected the state's strategy to utilize religious institutions as instruments of social development and political stability.

The enactment of the National Education System Law (Law No. 20 of 2003) brought further changes to the madrasah landscape. This law explicitly recognized madrasahs as schools with Islamic religious characteristics, equal to public schools. This recognition, coupled with expanded accreditation and quality assurance programs, encouraged madrasahs to reform not only their curricula but also their infrastructure, management, and teaching qualifications (Suyatno, 2015). The reform era also brought about educational decentralization, granting regions greater autonomy in managing education, including madrasahs.

In Minangkabau specifically, the process of madrasah transformation in the post-New Order era was marked by two interacting tendencies. First, the professionalization and managerial modernization of madrasahs, characterized by the implementation of a school-based management system, formal accreditation, and improved teacher qualifications. Second, and paradoxically, the reinvigoration of the Islamic dimension of madrasahs in response to the perception that the Islamization of the curriculum was increasingly marginalized in the process of integration into the national system. This second tendency is reflected, among other things, in the increasing popularity of Quran memorization programs and Islamic boarding school programs in madrasahs in Minangkabau (Aslan & Wahyudin, 2020).

Contemporary Landscape: Surau, Madrasah, and Pesantren in the Minangkabau Islamic Education Ecosystem

In the contemporary context, the landscape of Islamic education in

Minangkabau is characterized by the coexistence of various institutions representing different phases in the genealogy outlined above. Surau (Islamic prayer houses) in various forms still exist, although most have lost their intensive educational function and concentrated on informal worship and religious studies. Madrasahs (Islamic schools) at various levels exist in significant numbers and have become an integral part of the formal education system. Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), which previously lacked a strong tradition in Minangkabau as they did in Java, are now increasingly emerging in response to the need for more intensive religious education.

It is interesting to note that in recent decades, there has been a trend of revitalization of the surau (prayer house) within the Minangkabau Muslim community. This movement, inspired by awareness of the erosion of cultural identity due to modernization and globalization, seeks to restore the surau's function as a center of Islamic education and culture. Surau revitalization initiatives undertaken by various religious organizations and local governments reflect both nostalgia for the past and creative adaptation efforts to address contemporary challenges (Azra, Rosyada, & Daulay, 2019). This revitalization can also be read as an expression of the need for authenticity in an era of globalization that brings cultural homogenization.

From a comparative perspective, the transformation of Islamic education in Minangkabau shares similarities with dynamics in other Southeast Asian Muslim contexts, but with significant differences. While in Java, the transformation of Islamic education took place within the framework of the dominance of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and the subsequent polarity of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) versus Muhammadiyah, in Minangkabau, the dominant polarity is between custom and surau (Islamic prayer hall) and traditional education versus Islamic modernism with madrasahs and reformism. The distinctiveness of Minangkabau lies in how the matrilineal customary system continues to be a relevant factor in shaping the dynamics of Islamic education, even into the contemporary era (Blackwood, 2000). Custom is not only the context in which Islamic education takes place, but also becomes an object of negotiation and contestation in the process of educational transformation.

Contemporary dynamics also demonstrate the influence of transnational Islamic movements such as Salafi and Tarbiyah on madrasahs in Minangkabau. These movements bring models of Islamic education distinct from local traditions, and their acceptance by some Minangkabau Muslim communities has created a new layer of diversity in Islamic education in the region.

On the other hand, there is also resistance from communities who feel that the influence of these transnational movements threatens the distinctiveness of Minangkabau Islam that has developed over centuries.

Analysis: Patterns and Dynamics of Transformation

Transformation as Identity Negotiation

An analysis of the genealogy of the transformation of Islamic education in Minangkabau shows that the process is essentially an ongoing negotiation of identity between competing poles: the local and the global, tradition and modernity, Islam and custom, and communal autonomy and state control. No single actor or force dominates this process unilaterally; each transformation is the result of negotiations involving diverse interests and perspectives.

Within Bourdieu's (1991) theoretical framework, the transformation from surau to madrasah can be understood as a shift in the structure of the Islamic educational field that alters the types of capital valued and competed for. The dominant spiritual capital in the traditional surau field is gradually being replaced by the more relevant cultural capital in the modern madrasah field. This shift did not occur without resistance and conflict, and traces of this conflict can still be seen in the dynamics of contemporary Minangkabau Islamic education. This confirms the view that institutional change is never a smooth and conflict-free process.

This perspective on identity negotiation also helps us understand why the revitalization of the surau (Islamic prayer house) resonates in the contemporary era. For many Minangkabau, the surau is not just about religious education; it is a symbol of an authentic and distinct Minangkabau identity. In a context of globalization that threatens local distinctiveness, the surau becomes an important identity marker. Thus, the debate over surau versus madrasah is not only about the form of educational institutions, but also about more fundamental questions: Who are the Minangkabau, and what does Islam mean in the Minangkabau context?

The Role of Agencies in Structural Transformation

This genealogical analysis also demonstrates the importance of individual agency in the process of institutional transformation. Figures such as Sheikh Burhanuddin, Haji Rasul, Zainuddin Labai el-Yunusy, Rahmah el-Yunusiyah, and Hamka were not simply products of existing structural conditions, but rather actors who actively shaped and directed change. Their presence and strategic choices determined how the transformational potential inherent in these structural conditions was actualized in concrete institutional forms.

This aligns with Sewell's (1992) argument about the duality of structure and agency, where structure not only constrains but also enables agency. In the Minangkabau context, the matrilineal social structure, which seemingly limits men's educational mobility, actually creates conditions that encourage institutional innovation. The surau, as a solution to men's housing needs while simultaneously serving as a vehicle for education, exemplifies how human agency operates within the constraints of existing structures. This is an important lesson in how educational institutions emerge from creative responses to specific social needs.

This analysis of the role of agency also has implications for understanding transformational leadership in Islamic education. Leaders who successfully drove institutional transformation in Minangkabau were those who were able to accurately read the socio-historical context, formulate a compelling vision for the future, and build a coalition of support from various elements of society. Their ability to negotiate the demands of modernity and Islamic authenticity was key to the success of the institutional innovations they initiated.

Continuity and Discontinuity: The Legacy of Surau in Madrasah

One of the key findings of this genealogical study is that although the transformation from surau to madrasah involved significant format changes, there is profound continuity at the value, pedagogical, and cultural levels. Many madrasah in Minangkabau still maintain elements of traditional surau pedagogy, including the teaching of yellow books, memorization of religious texts, and an emphasis on personal relationships between teachers and students. This continuity reflects a process of selective appropriation in which new elements are adopted without completely abandoning the old institutional heritage.

However, discontinuities are also real and cannot be ignored. The institutional logic underlying modern madrasahs is fundamentally different from that of traditional surau (prayer houses). Madrasahs operate within a modern, instrumental-rational logic that emphasizes standardization, efficiency, accountability, and measurable outcomes. This logic contrasts with the surau's more holistic character-building orientation through long-term communal engagement. The tension between these two logics continues to be a source of both dynamism and conflict in contemporary Minangkabau Islamic education (Aslan, Hifza, Lestari, & Putri, 2020).

This continuity and discontinuity are concretely manifested in the ongoing curriculum debate in Minangkabau madrasahs. On the one hand, there is pressure to increase the proportion of science and technology education so that madrasah graduates can compete in the knowledge-based economy. On the other hand, there is strong resistance to further reducing the proportion of religious education, which is considered too marginalized. This debate is not simply a curriculum debate; it reflects a more fundamental question about the ultimate goal of Islamic education and the ideal human being that Islamic educational institutions aim to shape.

CONCLUSION

This genealogical study of Islamic educational institutions in Minangkabau has traced the long journey of transformation from surau to madrasah within the context of socio-religious transformations that have taken place over several centuries. Through a comprehensive historical-sociological analysis, this article has demonstrated that this transformation process is a complex, layered, and multidimensional phenomenon.

First, the transformation from surau to madrasah was not a linear process toward modernity, but rather a dialectical and contested one, characterized by ongoing negotiations between diverse interests, identities, and visions of ideal Islamic

education. Each phase of transformation brought with it elements from the previous phase, creating historical layers that are still identifiable in contemporary Minangkabau Islamic educational practices. Understanding this complexity is crucial to avoid oversimplifying narratives of what is truly a rich and nuanced transformation process.

Second, external factors such as Dutch colonialism, transnational Islamic reform movements, and national state policies played a significant role in driving the transformation. However, the Minangkabau Muslim community's response to these factors was active and creative, not passive and reactive. The Minangkabau community did not simply accept external modernity; they negotiated, adapted, and sometimes rejected various aspects of modernity within the framework of their own values and traditions.

Third, although the madrasah has replaced the surau as the dominant Islamic educational institution, the surau remains relevant as a cultural reference and source of legitimacy for discourses on the authenticity of Minangkabau Islam. The revitalization of the surau in recent decades reflects the need of the Minangkabau Muslim community to maintain continuity with its historical heritage amidst the increasingly intense pressures of modernization and globalization. This demonstrates that the institutional genealogy of Islamic education is not simply about the past, but about how the past continues to shape identities and practices in the present.

Fourth, the genealogy of the transformation of Islamic education in Minangkabau shows that Minangkabau Islamic identity has never been static, but rather is constantly being reshaped through dialogue between local traditions, the demands of the times, and universal Islamic values. The ability of the Minangkabau Muslim community to engage in continuous dialogue and innovation within the framework of Islamic values is a key strength that has enabled them to survive and thrive in the face of various historical challenges. The implications of these findings for contemporary Islamic education policy and practice are significant.

Understanding this genealogy can help stakeholders in Islamic education design policies that are more sensitive to local and historical specificities, rather than implementing standardized models that ignore the richness of local traditions. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of a historical-sociological approach to the study of Islamic education, which views educational institutions not as stand-alone entities but rather as products of broader social, cultural, and political dynamics.

This study acknowledges its limitations in scope and depth. Further in-depth studies of specific aspects such as curriculum, teaching methodology, and gender roles within Minangkabau Islamic educational institutions are needed. Similarly, a systematic comparison with the transformation of Islamic education in other regions of Indonesia and Southeast Asia would enrich our understanding of the specificity and universality of the processes examined in this article. Further research should also pay more attention to voices that have been underrepresented in mainstream narratives about Minangkabau Islamic education, including those of women, youth, and marginalized communities.

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