

The Religious Education Policy in Indonesia: Impact on Hinduism and Buddhism Religious Education Policy Formulation

Suryanto

Yogyakarta State University

E-mail: sury4nto@hotmail.com

<p>ARTICLE HISTORY</p> <p>Accepted: October 25th, 2018 Revised: November 2th, 2018 Published: November 5th, 2018</p>	<p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>This article discusses how Hindu and Buddhist communities of Indonesia response to the national religious education policy enacted in the National Education System Act of 2003. In the Law No.20/2003 of National Education System, Indonesian government introduced new policies in the religious education. Despite of the good intention for the equality right for getting religious education for all of six formally recognised religious adherents, the government regulation on religious education policy was a largely based on education political interest of majority religious groups. This article discussed how these religious education policies in Indonesia affected the religious education policy formulation of minority religious group in Indonesia especially those of Hinduism and Buddhism. This research employed the qualitative research approach with the content analysis method to study the impact of Indonesian religious education policy in the Law of 20/2003 NESA on the Hinduism and Buddhism institutional religious education policy formulation. Data resources for this research were from legal-formal government regulation documents regarding the legislation on national religious education policy, and both Hinduism and Buddhism institutional religious education policy</p> <p>The finding indicated that the religious education policy formulation in the Law 20/2003 and the Government Regulation 55/2007 of Religious Education and Institutional Religious Education of Hinduism and Buddhism, especially those of formal <i>pasraman</i> of Hindu and <i>dhamasekha</i> of Buddhism education would not be able to be implemented immediately. The main factors were the formulation were considered too idealistic in nature, but it is not relevant with the actual potency and human resources of Hindu and Buddhist education institutions.</p>
<p>KEYWORDS</p> <p>Religious education Policy Formulation</p>	

INTRODUCTION

This paper discuss how Hindu and Buddhist communities of Indonesia response to the national religious education policy enacted in the National Education System Act of 2003. Indonesia is one among many countries where the government policies explicitly address the religious education for public. Religious education is “related to systematic instruction concerning specific faith or practice that are categorized as *religion*” (Gross, 2011: 257) which can related to education into religion, education about religion, or education from religion (Schreiner, 2002, p. 86).

Religious education may have different types and objectives in several countries (Gross, 2011). When dealing with religious education Schreiner (2002), noted that the following four major factors have to be taken into considerations:(1)differences in the religious landscapes of various countries; (2) differences in the role and value of religion in society; (3) the variety of state and religion relationships, ranging from separation of church and state to sympathy, to a complete merger between church and state; (4) differences in the internal structure of a country’s school system.

These four points made by Schreiner makes the religious education in the Indonesian context is unique in several ways. The goal of religious education in Indonesia can be classified into the “education into religion”, as it has the function “to prepare learners to become community members who understand and practice religious values and acquire expertise in religious studies” (The Government of Indonesia, 2003).

The estimated total population of Indonesia is approximately 237.5 millions by the year of 2010 with there are six officially recognised religions. Approximately 88 per cent of the population is Islam, 7 per cent Christianity, 3 per cent Catholic, 1.5 per cent Hindu, 0,8 per cent Buddhism. The rest of percentage of population, are those who identifying with Confucianism and other religious groups such as traditional indigenous religions and those who did not filled out to the religious option of the census (National Statistical Bureau, 2010).

Adding to the diversity of religious groups, Indonesia also has 583 ethnic groups and local languages or dialects. It is based on these unique situation that the founding fathers Republic of Indonesia formulated the national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (commonly translated as ‘unity in diversity’).

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika is motto written on an emblem hold by national heraldic beast the Garuda Pancasila, vehicle of Lord Wishnu. The motto was taken from the

Hindu-Javanese heritage by Indonesia's founding fathers to inspire national unity (Masykuri Abdillah , 2013). More precisely, it was taken from the *Kakawin Sutasoma*, a fourteenth-century Buddhist epic, which was created by one of the foremost Hindu-Javanese poets, Mpu Tantular, in the heyday of the East Javanese kingdom of Majapahit (Ramstedz ,2004)

Pancasila is the Five Principles as Indonesian national ideology. Pancasila, pronounced *Panchaseela*, is the philosophical basis of the Indonesian state (Anita Lee, 2014). Pancasila consists of two Sanskrit words, "panca" meaning five, and "sila" meaning principle. It comprises five inseparable and interrelated principles. They are: (1) Belief in the One And Only God ; (2) Just and Civilized Humanity; (3) The Unity of Indonesia; (4) Democracy Guided by the Inner Wisdom in the Unanimity Arising Out of Deliberations Amongst Representatives; (5) Social Justice for The Whole of the People of Indonesia. The first principle, where Indonesian people belief in the One and the Only Almighty God, made Indonesia is neither a secular or religious state, but the existence of religious groups are formally recognized by the state. The Pancasila was a compromise between those who supported secular state and those who supported Islamic state (Masykuri Abdillah, 2013: 155).

The Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) was established in 1946 as a state agency for facilitating and serving the religious adherents. The Ministry of Religious Affairs extends official status to six religious groups: Islam, Roman Catholics, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and more recently to Confucianism (Pohl, 2011). Unrecognised groups namely indigenous or local beliefs may register with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as social organizations (Ramstedt, 2004; Picard, 2011). For the interest and to strengthen national unity, the government takes interest in national religious education policy. From 1946 to 1990's religious education is a compulsory subject matter for all students in public and private schools, from elementary to university levels under the supervision of MORA. Unfortunately, since the Indonesian Independent to 1990's era, religious education in public school was marginalised by the government. Religious education was considered as secondary to secular education curriculum under the control of Ministry of National Education and Culture. Under the government of former President Soeharto New Order Era, religious education is given in the form of two hours per week in the general public schools (Pohl, 2011). The existence of different private religious schools

The function of this types of religious education is to develop Indonesian people who belief and obedience to God, to teach morality and to promote peace and develop harmony among inter and intra-faith relation (Masykuri Abdillah, 2013).

Since 1998, along the fall of the Soeharto New Order regime, Indonesia underwent political transformation and reformation. Following the spirit of political reformation, a new National Education System Act (NESA) was enacted in June 2003 (Law of 20/2003) as an amendment to the Law of 2/1989. It introduced significance change to the national religious education policy by classifying religious education into two categories: one is called *pendidikan agama* (religious education), and the other is *pendidikan keagamaan* (institutional religious education).

The new education legislation surpassed beyond the previous regulations by stipulating that all students from all level of education must receive religious instruction according to their religious belief taught by teacher from the same faith (Pohl, 2011; Baidhawiy, 2007). The religious education (*pendidikan agama*) is compulsory subject matter in public and private schools for student in all level of education.

Pohl notes that one of the driving forces behind this piece of legislation was the political pressure from Muslims groups who were fearful of proselytising in private Christian schools that enrol large numbers of Muslim students. However, protest not only raised by Christian educational institutions, but also by large Muslim organisations of Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Ulama, concerning that these new regulations is potentially against the need of civic-religious education and interfaith understanding (Pohl, 2011: 402).

In the contrary, this new regulation of religious education brings the positive responses from Hindu and Buddhist groups, whose most of their students enrol in both Christian and Muslim education institution. This regulation open more chances to Hindu and Buddhist religious teachers to be occupied in more public schools where normally small number of their students enrolled. Before the stipulation of this religious education legislation, Hindu and Buddhist students who enrol in private Muslim or Christian education were mandatory to attend Muslim or Christian religious education.

Contrary to the first type of religious education policy, the second types of religious education policy in the new Education Legislation of 2003, namely institutional religious education (*pendidikan keagamaan*) was to some extent created problematic to Hinduism and Buddhism education policies in their formulation and

implementation, due to the difference political, geographical, demographical, and human resources context of each religious adherent.

There is a need to analyse how far the impact of Indonesian new religious education policies to the Hinduism institutional religious education policy formulation is? How far is the impact of Indonesian religious education policy of National Education System Act of 2003 on the Buddhism institutional religious education policy formulation?

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed the qualitative research approach with the content analysis method to study the impact of Indonesian religious education policy in the Law of 20/2003 NESA on the Hinduism and Buddhism institutional religious education policy formulation.

Data resources for this research were from legal-formal government regulation documents regarding the legislation on national religious education policy, and both Hinduism and Buddhism institutional religious education policy. The main legal documents for such regulations were as follows: (1) National Education System Act of 2003; (2) Government Regulation of 55/2007 on Religious Education and Religious Institutional Education; (3) Regulation of M.O.R.A. of 13/2014 on Islamic Religious Institutional Education; (4) Regulation of M.O.R.A. of 56/2014 on Hinduism Religious Institutional Education; (5) Regulation of M.O.R.A. of 39/2014 on Buddhism Religious Institutional Education; (6) Legal document legislations issued by Directorate General of Islamic Society Guidance of M.O.R.A. on *Pesantren* and *Diniyah* Education; (7) Legal document legislations issued by Directorate General of Hindu Society Guidance of M.O.R.A. on *Pasraman Education*, and (8) Legal document legislations issued by Directorate General of Buddhist Society Guidance of M.O.R.A. on *Pabbhaja Samanera* Education.

The data were analysed through descriptive-comparative data analysis methods to find out the pattern of Islamic institutional religious education policy formulation and its influence and impact on the Hinduism and Buddhism institutional religious education policy formulation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Article 30 of Act 20/2003 NESA stipulated that the institutional religious education is provided by government and any religious group, and intended especially to create religious experts among the respective religious group. It is a fact that each religious group in Indonesia has their specific traditional religious institution or system of education. Islam in Indonesia has *madrasah*, *diniyah*, and *pondok pesantren* systems of education which have been flourished in the entire Islamic society since the beginning of 19th century (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner, 2007).

Therefore to acknowledge and to accommodate Islamic institutional religious education as public school and supported by the government, the existence of Islamic *diniyah* and *pesantren* education, including Hindu's *pasraman* and Buddhism *pabhaja samanera* are stipulated in the Articles 30 of Law 20/2003 of NESA, as follows:

- a. Religious education is provided by Government and by any group of people belonging to the same religion by the law in force.
- b. Religious education has the function to prepare learners to become community members who understand and practice religious values and acquire expertise in religious studies.
- c. Religious education can be conducted through formal education, non-formal education, and informal education.
- d. Religious education can take the form of *diniyah* education, *pesantren*, *pasraman*, *pabhaja samanera*, and other education forms of the similar type.
- e. The implementation of the provisions for religious education, outlined in verse (1), verse (2), verse (3), and verse (4), shall be further stipulated by the Government Regulation (The Government of Indonesia, 2003).

Further regulation on the religious education was stipulated in the Government Regulation of 55/2007 of Religious Education and Institutional Religious Education, where more specific and detailed role and regulation pertaining every institutional religious education of six official religion recognised by Indonesian government are stipulated.

Problems arose when Hindu and Buddhist religious groups should follow the standard of national religious education system policy, while in actuality their institutional religious education were not developed sufficiently during the historical development of Indonesia as state, due to various factors (Nala, 2004; Ramstedz, 2007:

Pohl, 2011; Bhaidawy, 2007). The research by Research and Development Section of M.O.R.A in 2012 also indicated that the formulation of institutional religious education policy in Government Regulation 55/2007 were not followed by the readiness of other Islamic groups to execute the policies in actuality.

Based on the data analysis, the findings of this research are as follows. The formulation of Hindu institution religious education called formal *pasraman* in the Government Regulation 55/2007 are totally new to the practice of Hindu groups in Indonesia. In the *pasraman* formal formulation, it is stipulated that *pasraman* formal are consist of all level of Hindu education ranging from kindergarten (*pratama widya pasraman*; , elementary school (*Adi Widya Pasraman*), primary high school (*Madyama Widya Pasraman*), and senior high school (*Utama Widya Pasraman*), higher education level (*Maha Widya Pasraman*) (Ministry of Religious Affairs , 2014c).

To establish any formal *pasraman* the same regulation also stipulated several mandatory requirement which in reality would be difficult to accomplish, due to the nature of demographical, political, and cultural aspect of Hindu groups in Indonesia. Also, historically, Hindu groups have not been having experience in implementing any formal Hindu education in Indonesia in the kindergarten, elementary, and secondary level of education.

Nala (2004: 76) argued that “in contrast to Muslim education in Indonesia or Hindu education in India, there are no ashram or boarding schools for children and adolescents to acquire a formal Hindu education outside primary and secondary schools in Bali or elsewhere in Indonesia for that matter”.

For the Buddhist religious groups, the formulation of *pabbaja sammanera* as nonformal Buddhist institutional religious education and *dhammasekha* as formal Buddhist institutional religious education also indicated that it would not be easily implemented, due to the social, demographical, cultural, and political context. The formal education institution for Buddhist namely *dhammasekha* also cover the level of childhood education (*Nava Dhammasekha*), elementary school level (*Mula Dhammasekha*), secondary level (*Muda Dhammasekha*); and senior high school level (*Uttama Dhammasekha*) (Ministry of Religious Affairs , 2014b).

Meanwhile, the analysis to the formulation of religious education policy for *diniyah* and *pesantren* of Islam indicated that it was based on solid academic and empiric study of current situation of Islamic education in Indonesia. In fact, official

government statistics for the school year 2007 -2008 show that the majority of Indonesia's students are educated in the institutions of the public system. Private Islamic institution, however, occupy a significant share within the national education system (Pohl, 2011: 402). The data show that there are more than 39.500 madrasah, 90 per cent of which are private, enrolled more than 13 per cent of the total of 48 million students (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008; Pohl, 2011).

Pohl and Azra argued that the formulation of religious education and institutional religious education policy in the both NESA of 2003 and Government Regulation of 55/2007 were based heavily on the *madrasah* and *pondok pesantren* system, which have been developing in Indonesia since 1900's. Therefore as Pohl (2011) argued, the stipulation of new religious education policy in the NESA of 2003 and in sequence The Government Regulation of 55/2007 on Religious Education and Institutional Religious Education were actually having a positive intention of state toward the equal right of all six formally recognised religion in Indonesia to get religious education. But for the Hindu and Buddhist groups, the policy formulation and implementation of such religious education policy are depending on several factors, among them are historical and political context of Hinduism and Buddhism in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Research finding indicated that despite of the good intention for the equality right for getting religious education for all of six formally recognised religious adherents, the government regulation on religious education policy was a largely based on education political interest of majority religious groups. The religious education policy formulation in the Law 20/2003 and the Government Regulation 55/2007 of Religious Education and Institutional Religious Education of Hinduism and Buddhism, especially those of formal *pasraman* of Hindu and *dhamasekha* of Buddhism education would not be able to implemented immediately. The main factors were the formulation were considered too idealistic in nature, but it not relevant with the actual potency and human resources of Hindu and Buddhist education institutions in current Indonesia.

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