Discourses Exploring the Space between Tradition and Modernity in Indonesia

Editorial Board:
Hermanu Joebagio,
Frank Dhont, et al.

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Theme:
Discourses Exploring the Space between Tradition and Modernity in Indonesia:

A Preliminary
There are three cultural layers in modern culture face in Indonesia, indigenous Indonesian, Hindu-Budha, Islamic, and European together in various forms. The first layer is an indigenous Indonesian culture, which still survives in a number of areas in a state which can be described as still very close to its origin. The second layer is the Indian, usually termed – Hindu-Budha. But over the greater part of Indonesia, in the islands of Java, Sumatra, and Borneo, the two earlier layers of Indigenous Indonesian and Indian cultures were overlaid by a third layer – Islamic culture, which penetrated Indonesian in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.

Problem of contemporary Indonesian culture is the product of the confrontation of Indonesian and modern culture. The manifestation of modern culture were indicated man’s freedom of thought and inquiry, technical progress, economic development, and belief in human right. Over the 32 years of development modern culture under Suharto, which were a significant shift from the various efforts at nation-building in Indonesia’s early years. This is not totally dissimilar to the way Dutch colonial development in Indonesia was once heralded as harbinger of modernity in a feudal archipelago rich with tradition, culture and religion. Indonesia has long been, and continues to be, the site of negotiations between tradition and modernity.

The discourses of tradition and modernity are perhaps best recognized at the national level and can be discerned in debates over such varied subjects as the morality of the youth, the value of the national curriculum in facing the challenges of the future, and the fate of traditional culture in the face of a global media, regional autonomy and development, religion and society. However, discourses of modernity and tradition are also carried out every day on a more minor scale: within groups, organizations, families, and even individuals. These discourses may not be recognized or framed in terms of tradition and modernity, but nevertheless cannot exist separately from this wider discourse and fill the space between tradition and modernity in everyday life in Indonesia. Taking various forms, and adopting a variety of positions, in the end these discourses aim towards striking a balance between the continuity of tradition and the change of modernity in a growing and developing Indonesia.

Frank Dhont, M.A., M.Hum., Ph.D
Prof. Dr. Hermanu Joebagio, M.Pd
Rector's Keynote Speaker

8th INTERNATIONAL INDONESIA FORUM CONFERENCE

Honourable the Chairman Board of International Indonesia Forum, Frank Dhoni.
Honourable Heads of Sebelas Maret University
Distinguished Keynote Speakers and all other speakers
Distinguished guests
Ladies and Gentleman

Assalamu ‘Alaikum Warahmatullahi WaBarakaatu
May peace and God’s blessings be upon you all
A Very Good Morning

The economic, politic, technological, telecommunication, transportation, and tourism development in Indonesia has accelerated and put Indonesia's economic growth as the 5th (fifth) of the world, based on the report of World Bank. On the other hand, the European countries currently face the economic crisis because of the Greek's economic decline.

The economic growth, indicated by free movement of goods and services in regional and international area, is the result of independent economic programs by the government of Republic of Indonesia. Meanwhile, the development of the local economy including arts, culture and tradition also give some contributions on the economic growth of Indonesia.

The local culture cannot be neglected in the modernization process as the local culture is important to respond that process by using strategies of cultural resistance and integrated mutualism. Those strategies are believed to be able to develop the new elan vital, which inserts spirituality, morality, social enthusiasm, and economy tourism commodity. The new notion of elan vital is the representation of local wisdom which can create the tolerance, harmony, and solidarity among Indonesian society.

Therefore, I strongly believe that the 8th (eighth) International Indonesia Forum Conference can engage participants in an informed and insightful discussion to solve the problems faced by Indonesia. The last but not least, on behalf of Sebelas Maret University, let me first of all extend you all my warmest welcome to the 8th IIF Conference held at Sebelas Maret University, the green campus. Have a great and beneficial conference. Having said all of the above, I hereby declare that the 8th (eighth) International Indonesia Forum Conference is officially opened.

Wassalamu 'alaikum Warahmatullahi WaBarakatuh.

Surakarta, July 29, 2015
Sebelas Maret University Rector

Prof. Dr. Ravik Karsidi, MS
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Redefinition of Philosophical Values of Classic Batik motive for Reinforcement of National Identity and Revitalization of Cultural Heritage

Multi-Ethnic Community Harmonization In Surakarta

Considering Women’s Participation In Global Interaction
GOVERNMENT OR LOCAL VALUE-ORIENTED?
AN ANALYSIS OF MUHAMMADIYAH'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM POLICY*

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Abstract
The article investigates how community-based education as developed by Muhammadiyah constructs its curriculum, whether it is merely governmentally-standardized or, more than that, enriched with its own local values. It seems interesting to portray due to the political tendency of the ruling government in making sure that all educational practices including managed by private sectors, politically fitted into the government existing educational policy. The Muhammadiyah's educational decision may sometimes be in line with and, in another time, to be different from the government policy. This article especially addresses Religious Education (RE) curriculum within Muhammadiyah, which to some extent enriches local value uniqueness over the government curriculum policy. To study this case, the article makes full use of historical, documentary and interview sources of shaping the standpoint of how the Muhammadiyah's RE curriculum design seems different and to enrich what the government has decided. The result of the study shows that as a non-governmental organization, Muhammadiyah decides to take the existing RE curriculum of the government with taking account of the enrichment of local or Muslims' values, competency and content standards endorsed by Muhammadiyah's state of mind. Besides, by considering the cases of the School-Based Curriculum started from 2006 and the 2013 Curriculum, Muhammadiyah's initiatives not only follow the existing government policy but also try to look for the other possible curriculum enrichment. Thus, politically speaking, Muhammadiyah education seems to combine both the government political decision and the local values of Muhammadiyah itself.

Key words: Muhammadiyah; Educational Standards; Religious Education; Curriculum Policy

Introduction
Muhammadiyah has been established since 1912—earlier than the Republic of Indonesia formally declared in 1945—and has autonomously fostered such social services as education and social welfare. Its activism in education seemed to have been set up as part of empowering

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communities. Historically speaking, at the first time, Ahmad Dahlan, its founder, inclined the educational service to be fully social, instead of reproducing economic interest. In other words, education had been created as a means of building on social criticism and awareness.

Directing the way to counter colonization emerging in Indonesia from physical to intellectual and spiritual struggle through the educational sector can be seen as a hidden strategic method. Apparently, Muhammadiyah has engineered its society by producing key persons with any capacity needed in boosting social change. Some of Dahlan’s students, for instance, had an understanding and braveness in trying to change the Great Mosque’s prayer direction fitted into their knowledge based on Astronomy they had learnt from their teacher, Dahlan himself. Here, like other modernist organizations that emerge in some regions in across countries, Muhammadiyah places education as a key sector for re-building and modernising Indonesian society.104

As previously mentioned, educational institutions within Muhammadiyah, like other private sectors, are typical of the so-called ‘community-based education’. It is meant that those institutions are initiated by, developed by and dependent upon society or communities within both socially and economically. Further, any decision making comes from the society, but not from the government.105 Like other traditionalist institutions such as pesantrens massively built by Nahdhatul Ulama, a more traditionalist Indonesian Muslim organization, Muhammadiyah schools and madrasahs are established initially by their elites or members who are economically supporting. However, in the following times coincided with the much stronger government, certain political influence which may come from the government itself or persons involved in certain political interests, then partly change the organization social tendency, either to be controlled by as well as to be independent from the government intervention.

An attention that will be much paid in this article is Muhammadiyah’s policy on education especially in Religious Education (RE) curriculum. As well known, this organization has produced its own religious—Islamic—concept as a state of mind. The decree on ‘back to the Quran and the Sunnah’ meaning all Islamic matters in Muslims’ belief or worship for instance, must fit both Islamic resources. However, it is often different from those understandings mentioned in textbooks on Islamic teaching formally issued by the Government’s team. Moreover, regulations on Religious Education in general, are some times different from those being issued by the Government. Hence,


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Muhammadiyah’s standards in Islamic teaching may be considered as either coincided or tense with the Government’s as that happens for Muslim education in general.106

Addressing such educational issues as Religious Education policy then becomes the main discussion of this article. It will try to analyse how Muhammadiyah’s educational policy has been constructed compared from that of the Government. Besides, it also discusses a possibility of Religious Education curriculum uniqueness—for instance local values—of Muhammadiyah policy under the State educational regulations. Systematically it then begins with taking account of some basic theories on education or Religious Education curriculum in the context of the government and community decisions, analyse findings based on such resources as documents and relevant literature to take more understandable conclusions.

Theoretical Framework

Educational management and decision making process can be taken through either the so-called community-based or government-based education (Nilson, 1999).107 Community-based education (CBE) means that any decision of education begins with society or communities’ voices, but not the government’s. In contrast, Government-based education (GBE) focuses on the top-down policy making from the government to the societies. The latter, however, politically places the communities are merely to be a target of the educational development brought and addressed by the government.

The emergence of the above binary oppositions of the educational decision making can be originated from the very initial discourse and practicality of the so-called Non-Governmental Organization. There are dozens of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) emerging in both developed and developing countries considered able to negotiate with the State(s) policy as to their development system.108 In Indonesia, the flourishing of those NGOs has occurred since 1980s. Their presence has become a balance power to a corrupt tendency of the ruling government especially relating to public policy. The work of Syamsuddin109 showed a strategic way of the so-called ‘allocative politic’ by which Muhammadiyah tried to negotiate its standpoints on the policy such as marriage and education Act. The legislation process intervention has been one of the types of how the NGOs, like Muhammadiyah, in encountering and balancing the State regulations.

The presence of Muhammadiyah, like other social and religious movements, taking part in optimizing and sustaining educational services has happened as not all social development can be

107 Nilson, D.
108 Fakih, M. Masyarakat Sipil untuk Transformasi Sosial: Pergolakan Ideologi LSM Indonesia (translated from The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Social Transformation: A Participatory Inquiry in Indonesia, a dissertation at University of Massachusetts at Amherst, USA). Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1996, p. 5
covered and run by the State(s) as the single agent. Even if, in the amended 1945 Constitution of
the Republic of Indonesia states that ‘the government shall provide a National educational system’
for Indonesian society and, at the same time, every citizen has a right to have an access to education,
the participation rate to basic and middle education has longer been contested. Having considered the
fact, the presence of Muhammadiyah’s schools seems to be a momentum of empowering society so
far untouchable by the government calculation and intervention.

Referring to the constitution, the social participation genuinely to some extent free from the
State intervention has been stated in the 2013 Education Act, stating that education is both under
Government and community responsibility. From that legal perspective, they, the Government and
the community can side by side or supportedly build on and develop the National education. It is also
legally accepted as one of them independently develop and proceed an educational circumstance
where both national and local values are promoted. The recognition to the non-governmental
activism in education, accordingly, is the main point of providing a spacious arena for it to grow
connecting to its own identity, cultures and values.

It is considerably important to strengthen a decision making process by which the
Government and the communities have an opportunity to enrich the National education system. As
highly recognised, the country, Indonesia, is unlikely to shape a monolithic system of education by
taking account of the Indonesian pluralistic society, culturally and religiously. It seems the truth that
the Government may produce certain educational standards such as National curriculum and, at the
same time, the communities either established or growing also have a place to develop its potentiality
including their local values offered and educated in its classrooms. Therefore, the ideal type of
educational policy for building Indonesian pluralistic society is ‘negotiable policy’ which combine
top-down and bottom-up decision making approach: standardization and creativity models of
curriculum development; and enforcement and wisdom in shaping educational communities based on
issued laws and regulations.

**Contribution and Evolution of Muhammadiyah Education System**

The Indonesian national education system does not begin with and grow from a neutral,
empty space of the real Indonesia itself. Before independence, it had longer been colonialised by
some European—Portuguese and Dutch—and Japanese military and political forces. Those colonial
governments by means partly influence how the National education to be shaped. Their effect can
be traced back from such infrastructure as school buildings and such as subjects as Natural and
Social sciences typical of public schools that can be contrastingly compared from the indigenous,
Muslim learning place, pesantren whose lessons are essentially pure traditional Islamic sciences. In

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110 The term ‘negotiable policy’ is a reflective phrase used, by the writers of this article, to place the importance of
‘Social Interaction’ model of curriculum design between ‘members of the adopting group’ such as Muhammadiyah
and other public and private sectors with their communities. See: Kelly, A.V. *The Curriculum: Theory and Practice 6th

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short, before Indonesia formally declared, there had been some educational practices underlying the following forms of Indonesian educational system.

As described in picture 1, 2 and 3, there has been an evolutionary process of how the National education system is shaped and what the connectedness of the Government's and the community's, especially Muhammadiyah, educational policy looks like. Picture 1 illustrates that the National education system is a complex system which includes the Dutch (school), pesantren, madrasah and other educational models. Picture 2 simply shapes the next pattern of Muhammadiyah's self-reliance, in the one hand, of becoming part of the whole National education system and that of the independent education system or it is often called sub-system of the National education. The third picture, finally, there has been the negotiated type of educational policy making process between the Government and Muhammadiyah. These brief schemes at least reveal that the construction of the National education system originates from the socio-educational complexity, rather than singularity.

**Picture 1**

**Picture 2**

**Picture 3**

Drawn from a specific contribution of Muhammadiyah education system, it is historically interesting by tracing back the initial model of Muhammadiyah's madrasah built in 1911, combining pesantren and Dutch (secular) school model.\[11\] This Muhammadiyah type of education has considerably contributed in building a relatively new Indonesian educational system. The so-called *Madrasah Diniyah Islamiyah Muhammadiyah* (MDIM) taught such subjects as religious and foreign sciences. In terms of curriculum approach, it applied the dichotomic and connected way interchangeably. The former accentuated how the Islamic teaching taught was separated from the foreign sciences and *vice versa*. The latter, on the other, accentuated on relating Islamic decrees to

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social issues. The teaching process even encouraged students to directly implement Islamic teaching in students’ real life.

The origin of madrasah as one of the Muslim education system can be taken from, for instance, the growth of such madrasah system in the Muslim middle ages (750-1258) and the education system in Al-Azhar University, Egypt, when its integrated curriculum, both Islamic and modern ('secular') sciences, was designed by Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha, the two education reformers in that University. This type of Madrasah might be more conservative by looking at it in the mid- and end-twentieth century Pakistan where traditionalist Muslim curricula were dominantly or fully taught. Meanwhile, madrasah developed by Ahmad Dachlan, the Muhammadiyah founder, was an intellectual effort (ijitihad) for combining as well as integrating the spirit of "progressive Islam" through Islamic teaching and modern sciences. For Muhammadiyah, both sciences are conditio sine qua non as well as the complete worship, both individual (with God) and social (with all creature), to re-build the Indonesian society and humanity.\footnote{112}

Moreover, Dachlan also contributed in establishing Madrasah Zoe’ama (for males) and Za’imat (for females) in 1935. Subjects taught in this Madrasah were mostly Islamic traditions oriented to create truly Muslim scholars (see picture 4).\footnote{113} The depth and width of Islamic teaching taught were expected of being able to bring students to be intellectually well-informed (fuqih), but not merely to put basic knowledge of Islam into practice as educated in MIDN. It can be said that Madrasah Zoe’ama and Za’imat had been a continued level of MIDN early established and Kwekschool Muhammadiyah (now is Madrasah Muallimin serving secondary school) than was then established around 1940s. Therefore. Muhammadiyah has had a real practice of managing madrasah system.

As massively established by Nahdatul Ulama, a more traditionalist Indonesian Muslim organization, Muhammadiyah also had its history of establishing a kind of pesantren approximately in 1909 where Dachlan taught merely traditionalist Muslim traditions. However, in the following time, he used to incline the madrasah as the core of schooling while pesantren (boarding system) was placed as its complementary system where, for the rest of time, his students could apply in practice intensively what they had learnt in madrasah. Such combined-education system was by means different from pesantren system spread out by those traditionalist Muslims. In this respect, pesantren in Muhammadiyah historically was not in separation from madrasah system.

Another contribution of Muhammadiyah in establishing educational institutions is when it built Sekolah "Angka Lara" (2n Level School) or Sekolah Rendah in 1924. This school was Muhammadiyah Public school added with Religious (Islamic) Teaching. This type of school was in practice affected by the Dutch school system where modern sciences were mostly delivered while


\footnote{113} see Peratoeran Choessoes Pembahagiaan di dalam Madrasah Zoe’ama Mehammadijah, 1935.
Islamic teaching was to be added as well as complementary. This Dachlan’s initiative was because of his previous involvement of giving a religious lesson in *Kweekschool*, a Dutch school, in Jetis, Magelang, Middle Java. Besides spreading out the madrasah system, Muhammadiyah has considerably mushroomed the school model. Today it has had a couple of thousands of schools across the country.

Since 1970s, Muhammadiyah education institutions have become part of the whole national educational system as described on picture 2. Relating to this changing shape of the Muhammadiyah education system, scheme 1 also posits it in the dynamics of National educational policy. Politically speaking, any education policy of the government must be followed by this organization. In line with the much stronger power of the New Order regime, the top-down system of educational policy tended to increase. One of the leaders of the Muhammadiyah educational board, Projokusumo, said that the place of Muhammadiyah for the government was ‘just to help’. It seems that Muhammadiyah has had a commitment of taking part in succeeding the National education projects. But, on the other hand, it can be meant that the government policy is generally dominant. However, the scheme also indicates that Muhammadiyah council for education has had an important place for making its schools nearer to Muhammadiyah’s values. The challenge is that how Muhammadiyah's education system can operate fitting its own identity while the government as the supra-structure tends to dominate public sectors especially education.

![Diagram](image)

**Scheme 1**

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114 see Rangrang Pengadjaran (Leerplan) pada Sekolah Kelas II Muhammadiyah, Soera Moehammadjah, No. 4 Th. 2, 1924.
After the Reform era, since the early 2000s, Muhammadiyah's schools have changed its political mainstream in education in order for being revitalised of its identity as one of Muslims' standpoints in Indonesian education. This effort is truly able to be tracked when this organization critized the 1998 Education act. One of the attracting issues debated within the regulation was the significance of Religious Education (RE) for Indonesian students. After having a long-term struggle, Muhammadiyah, along with other Muslim organization, finally reached a goal of placing RE as an obligatory subject and must be taught by a teacher who has the same religion as his or her student's religion mentioned in the 2003 Education Act. The more technical rules of the 2003 Education Act such as the Government Regulation on Religious Education and the Ministry of Education and Culture's Regulations especially on outcome, content, process and evaluation standards issued in 2005 and 2013 respectively, have become an anchor how standardized education processes in Indonesia operate. In terms of the policy impact, Muhammadiyah has so far made use of those regulations just to be a standard which means a minimum aspect that must be both formally and substantially fulfilled. In this respect, Muhammadiyah can optimize its local values as additional standards as long as the government's standards have been covered. However, in practice, the regulations seem not easy to deal with. For instance, the teaching times per week for RE administratively accepted are 5 hours whereas those for RE in Muhammadiyah's schools are 7 hours, meaning that the local policy of such private sectors as Muhammadiyah is by no means considered.

Scheme 2

Scheme 2 at least sums up political trends of Muhammadiyah's education system when it encounter the government policy. First, it began with the type of management—including
curriculum—separated from the Government educational dominancy (1911-1970s). Second, the Muhammadiyah's education then entered a phase couped with the ruling government (1970s-2000s) and, thirds, it has developed its negotiated local values and tendencies, socially and religiously started from 2000s. Being tense and compromising with the government policy sometimes also inevitably happens.

Another contribution of Muhammadiyah's education is that of RE delivery. As historically known, there has been an educational institution 'diaspora' such as pesantren initially established in 1909s, madrasah in 1911, sekolah since 1940s and higher education in 1960s. Each of them has various tendencies. As described in picture 4, the the portion of Religious education is that pesantren is the top in delivering RE and the followings are madrasah, sekolah and higher education. However, in the madrasah and school systems combined with boarding (pesantren), the RE portion is by means enhanced. Theoretically, outcome quality from such institution should be enhanced from the side of understanding and possible practices of religious values.

![Picture 4](image)

**Muhammadiyah's Religious Education after reform era: Enriching?**

The subject of Religious Education (RE) in Muhammadiyah schools is called ISMUBA which is abbreviate from *Al-Islam, Kemuhmmadiyahin* and *Bahasa Arab* (Islamic Teaching, Muhammadiyah Studies and Arabic). The Islamic teaching itself is devided into four foci of teaching such as *Aqidah* (Belief), *Akhlak* (Ethics), *Quran-Hadis* and *Tariikh* (Muslim History). Meanwhile, the existing name of the subject officially issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture is *Pendidikan Agama Islam* (Islamic Religious Education) and *Akhlak Mulia* (Good Ethics). The two different names for this subject may have several indications. First, RE package in Muhammadiyah seems much wider in terms of scoups and contents of the teaching due to the Muhammadiyah Council for Basic and Middle Education, for instance, develops its own standpoints and values beyond curriculum standards decided by the National Board for Educational Standards. Second, RE version of the Government indicates that there has been accentuation on the separation of the understanding
concept with the term “Islamic Religious Education” and of the practical aspect with the term “Good Ethics”. However, by making the separation, as if this ethical issue is not part of the religion itself.

Relating to the government regulations on RE, Muhammadiyah education, as part of the National education system, consistently takes those stated in the 2013 Education Act and several key aspects especially curriculum standards either issued in 2005 or 2015. The former becomes a foundation of the 2006 curriculum commonly known as School-based Curriculum (SBC) and the later for the 2013 curriculum. As described on scheme 3, Muhammadiyah then develops its own local potentials by producing the Muhammadiyah school regulations and curriculum guidance especially on Islamic Teaching.

![Scheme 3](image)

If the Educational National Standards relating to curriculum design as a scoup of debates are considered, Muhammadiyah education seems to have referred to the standards being issued. Scheme 4 below at least indicates that there are some local values of Muhammadiyah emphasized in broadening and enriching the existing values being projected by the government. The two areas which are highly possibly enriched by Muhammadiyah education correlate with competency and content standards. As a modernist Muslim organization, it has had its own state of mind on religion. Muhammadiyah characters mentioned in that scheme here for instance linked to the spirit of being back to the Quran and Hadis (Prophet’s decisions). Such spirit, in some cases, can be distinguished from the more traditionalist one like Nahdhatul Ulama often referring their religious standpoints to certain Muslim school of thought especially Syafii school of law. The place of Syafii interpretation to the Quran and Hadis seems to be highly considered. From this perspective, religious standpoints

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115 see the four curriculum aspects such as objectives, experiences, methods and evaluation, for instance in Stanley, A.F. “The Tyler Rationale and the Ralph Tyler Project: An Historical Reconsideration.” PhD Dissertation in the University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, 2009.
endorsed by an author of the RE official textbook supported by the government are by means in line
with certain religious standpoints, put simply, either traditionalists or modernists.

Scheme 4

Leading the 2006 and 2013 curricula, for the government, is not only how to make sure that
students are able to master knowledge and skills, but also linked to its commitment to include 18
primary characters such as discipline, social care and other individual and social characters. As
evidence to enrich those National characters, Muhammadiyah council for education located in
Yogyakarta produces 40 religious values endorsed to be taught in Muhammadiyah’s schools. Those
values are

- caring the poor and the needy, progressive thinking, simple, responsible, wise, peaceful,
dynamic, discipline, economical, affection, happiness, freedom, cleanliness, sincerity,
honesty, cooperation, modesty, balance (moderate), role model, commitment, creative,
serving, loyalty, reading, respect, nationalism, innovation (tajdid), self-confidence, unity,
proactive, voluntarism, humility, patience, praiseworthiness, decent, critical, socially good
practice, accuracy, carefulness, tolerance and resilience.\(^{116}\)

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\(^{116}\) Muhammadiyah Council of Basic and Middle Education of Yogyakarta, \textit{ISMUBA Curriculum Guidance.}

Yogyakarta: Muhammadiyah Council of Basic and Middle Education of Yogyakarta, 2012, p. 5
Conclusion

As an independent, non-Governmental organization, Muhammadiyah sets up its own education system, however, in the following time, it has either partly or fully and either cooperatively or independently established its educational policy under National education system. Its strategy not to follow all the Government policy seems to be its character which is autonomous and typical of Non-governmental organizations.

Muhammadiyah’s Religious Education (RE) uniqueness can be seen from such standards as competencies and contents, its local values and much more times of teaching provided compared from those of the Government’s. It reveals that providing more contents and values has made it run beyond the RE curriculum standards issued by the Government. Muhammadiyah does not totally take ‘a different way’, but exactly enriches formal values/characters being issued by the Government.

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