THE SHIFT FROM *LANGGAR* TO *MADRASA*: CONTESTATION AND INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN SOUTH SULAWESI (1900–1942)

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Abstract

This article explores the transformation of Islamic education in South Sulawesi from the traditional langgar system to the more structured form of madrasah during the period 1900– 1942. The study aims to identify the social, political, and religious dynamics that underpinned the shift in Islamic education amidst Dutch colonial pressures and Christian missionary expansion. Utilizing a historical approach and descriptive-analytical method, this article provides a historical account of the emergence of madrasahs as both an adaptive response to modern challenges and a form of resistance to the hegemony of colonial education. The findings reveal that madrasahs were not merely a continuation of traditional langgar, but also institutional innovations that integrated elements of modernity, such as graded systems, structured curricula, and academic evaluations, while maintaining the core values of Islamic teachings. Madrasahs became ideological and cultural arenas of contestation between Islamic and secular colonial educational systems. Local scholars such as Anregurutta Sulaiman and H. Muhammad As'ad played crucial roles in establishing and developing madrasahs in regions like Sengkang, Bone, and Luwu. This article concludes that the transformation of Islamic educational institutions reflects the Muslim community's endeavor to preserve religious identity and create a competitive educational foundation within the colonial structure.

Keywords: Madrasah, Langgar, Colonialism, *Zending en missie*, South Sulawesi

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in Indonesia has evolved through a complex and enduring trajectory, rooted in indigenous traditions such as *langgar* (small prayer houses), *surau*, and *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) (Azra, 2017). In South Sulawesi, since the introduction of Islam in the 17th century, learning was conducted informally through *halaqah* (study circles), private religious instruction at scholars' residences, and

Qur'anic education in local prayer halls (Nasir et al., 2023). This early system was characterized by its flexibility but lacked standardized structures in terms of curriculum, assessment, and institutional hierarchy (Ismail, 2022). The onset of Dutch colonialism and the expansion of Christian missionary movements (*zending en missie*) in the early 20th century intensified the need for a more systematized and competitive model of Islamic education.

The period from 1900 to 1942 represents a formative era in the development of Islamic education in South Sulawesi. During these decades, a range of madrasahs were established by local ulama and Islamic organizations as a strategic response to the ideological, social, and political pressures posed by colonial rule and Christianization agendas (Kusdiana, 2023). Institutions such as Madrasatul Arabiyah al-Islamiyah (MAL) in Sengkang, Madrasah Amiriyah in Bone, and similar schools in Luwu, Gowa, and Palopo demonstrate a deliberate and structured effort to modernize Islamic learning (Pawiloy et al., 1981). These madrasahs introduced relatively formal curricula, tiered educational levels, and pedagogical innovations inspired in part by Western schooling models.

The transition from *langgar*-based learning to the madrasah system was not a mere administrative reconfiguration, but rather a profound process of educational adaptation and ideological contestation (Gaffar & Takbir M, 2018). On one hand, madrasahs incorporated modern educational features such as classroom stratification, scheduled assessments, and level- based progression. On the other hand, they retained the core of Islamic instruction, safeguarding religious knowledge as a key element of cultural and spiritual identity for local Muslim communities (Azra, 2013; Burhanudin, 2012). This dual function positions the madrasah as a dynamic site of negotiation—bridging tradition and modernity, mediating between indigenous agency and colonial imposition, and harmonizing normative Islamic doctrines with the lived religious experiences of everyday believers.

During the Dutch colonial period, education functioned as a strategic instrument for consolidating political and social control. The colonial administration established formal schools such as the *Hollandsch-Inlandsche School* (HIS) and *Meer*

*Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs (*MULO) (Cribb & Kahin, 2012), which provided secular education while simultaneously serving as a vehicle for Christian missionary outreach—particularly through zending institutions in regions like Toraja and Luwu (Pawiloy et al., 1981). These developments led many local Muslim communities to perceive colonial education as a threat to their religious identity, prompting the emergence of madrasahs as faith-based alternatives grounded in Islamic values.

The endpoint of this study, the year 1942, marks a pivotal historical juncture: the Japanese invasion brought an abrupt end to Dutch colonial rule in the Indies and profoundly disrupted the existing educational infrastructure, including Islamic institutions (Ilmi, 2022; Pradewi et al., 2019). Therefore, the period between 1900 and 1942 is especially significant for examining the institutional roots of modern Islamic education in South Sulawesi, as well as the socio-religious dynamics that shaped its formation and evolution.

This study addresses the historical and sociological dynamics of Islamic education in South Sulawesi between 1900 and 1942. It seeks to examine the early forms and characteristics of Islamic educational institutions prior to the 20th century, particularly when *langgar, surau,* and *halaqah* were the primary centers of learning. These traditional models were informal and fluid, based on personal relationships between teachers and students, without a standardized curriculum or structured educational levels (Fitri, 2023). Understanding how these systems functioned, along with their strengths and limitations in shaping an educated Muslim community, is essential to grasp the roots of Islamic institutional development in the region.

The study further explores the factors that drove the transformation from traditional education to modern madrasahs, especially during the early 20th century when colonial influence and Christian missionary activities created ideological and cultural challenges. Islamic education became not only a tool for knowledge transmission but also a means of resistance against colonial domination and Western values. The research focuses on how madrasahs—such as Madrasatul Arabiyah al-Islamiyah in Sengkang and Madrasah Amiriyah in Bone—responded to these pressures, contributed to the formation of Islamic identity, and played a strategic role in religious

and social mobilization. It aims to provide a deeper historical understanding of how Islamic education in South Sulawesi endured, adapted, and evolved amid the forces of colonialism and modernity.

LITERARY REVIEWS

Studies on Islamic education in Indonesia—particularly in South Sulawesi—have drawn scholarly attention through historical, sociological, and pedagogical lenses. A foundational reference in this field is Ismail's work, " Perkembangan Pendidikan Islam Awal di Sulawesi Selatan" which offers a comprehensive historical overview of the introduction and institutionalization of Islamic education in South Sulawesi (Ismail, 2022). The article not only traces the Islamization process led by figures such as Datuk ri Bandang but also documents the evolution from informal learning in mosques to formal institutions like Madrasah Amiriyah Islamiyah (Ismail, 2022). It serves as a crucial source for understanding how Islamic education was interwoven with local traditions and governance structures.

Complementing this, the article by Muh. Gaffar and M. Takbir titled "Modernisasi Pendidikan Islam Abad ke-20 di Sulawesi Selatan" frames Islamic education as a dynamic response to colonial and modern challenges (Gaffar & Takbir M, 2018). Centered on the establishment of Madrasah Arabiyah Islamiyah (MAI) in Sengkang by AGH. Muhammad As'ad, the article illustrates how modern Islamic schooling integrated religious and secular subjects, marking a transformative era in Islamic education across South Sulawesi (Gaffar & Takbir M, 2018). This work offers a vital perspective on the institutional modernization and intellectual resurgence of pesantren traditions in the 20th century.

Aripin, in his article *"Revitalisasi Pendidikan Islam pada Madrasah,"* highlights the ongoing efforts of madrasah institutions to harmonize Islamic teachings with the realities of the modern age (Aripin, 2018). He argues that this alignment is crucial to counter prevailing dichotomies such as science versus faith, secularism versus spirituality, and materialism versus piety. According to him, Islamic education must proactively adapt by reforming its educational system to remain relevant, enhance learning quality, and produce competent graduates—while still preserving the

foundational identity and legacy of the madrasah in responding to 21st-century challenges (Aripin, 2018).

The article *"Integration of Pesantren and Mosque Function in Teaching Islam in South Sulawesi and Their Significance Towards Consistency of Religious Moderation"* by Fatimah and Parninsih contributes to the growing body of literature on Islamic education and religious moderation in Indonesia (Fatimah & Parninsih, 2022). Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction, the study emphasizes how the integration of pesantren and mosque functions—particularly through the role of local ulema—serves as a foundation for sustaining moderate Islamic values. It highlights the enduring influence of social capital within these institutions, positioning ulema as pivotal agents in shaping religious discourse. This integration is not only a continuation of historical Islamization patterns but also a strategic means to align Islamic teachings with national efforts for moderation (Fatimah & Parninsih, 2022). The article complements prior research on educational reform and religious pluralism by underlining the collaborative role of state and religious actors in maintaining Indonesia's socio-religious harmony.

A valuable addition to the literature is the analysis of Dutch colonial policy on religion and education by Kusdiana (Kusdiana, 2023), which shows how the government balanced between allowing religious expression and maintaining political control. As highlighted in the study on colonial policies (1889–1942), the Dutch tended to support Islam as a purely spiritual tradition, while restricting its influence in state and political matters. This policy significantly affected Islamic education, which was often sidelined and left to develop independently without state support. Such conditions provide important context for understanding the transformation of Islamic educational institutions, especially the shift from *langgar* to *madrasah*, under colonial pressures.

However, this study offers a significant contribution to the historiography of Islamic education in Indonesia by exploring the institutional shift from *langgar* (traditional prayer and learning spaces) to modern madrasah in South Sulawesi during the period 1900–1942. Unlike previous studies that primarily describe the development of Islamic institutions or focus on prominent figures and pesantren networks, this

research emphasizes the contestation and negotiation among local actors, religious elites, and colonial authorities that shaped the transformation of Islamic education. Utilizing a social history approach and institutional theory, the study reveals that this transformation was not merely an adaptive response to modernity, but a contested arena involving struggles over discourse, authority, and legitimacy.

The research framework is constructed on three analytical pillars: first, the institutional dynamics between *langgar* and *madrasah*; second, the strategies and roles of key actors— including traditionalist *ulama*, Islamic reformers, and the Dutch colonial administration; and third, the structure of power relations within the colonial socio-political context. Through this framework, the study contributes both theoretically and empirically to a deeper understanding of how Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia underwent structural changes amidst the pressures of modernization and colonial governance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs historical research methods aimed at reconstructing historical facts chronologically and understanding the socio-cultural and religious dynamics (Abdurrahman, 2011) underlying the transformation of Islamic education from the *langgar* system to the madrasah model in South Sulawesi between 1900 and 1942. By integrating historical analysis, the study views Islamic educational institutions as cultural constructs shaped by ongoing dialectics between structure and agency, as well as between tradition and modernity.

The historical method applied in this study follows four main stages. The first is heuristics, or source collection, in which relevant documents and literature are identified and compiled (Sjamsuddin, 2005). Primary sources include early studies on Islamic education in South Sulawesi, complemented by scholarly articles and archival materials from the Dutch colonial education system, such as official reports and missionary school documents. These are supported by secondary sources, including books, journal articles, and prior research related to Islamic education and colonial dynamics. All gathered data are subjected to source criticism, which includes external criticism to verify authenticity and provenance, and internal criticism to assess the

reliability, ideological orientation, and relevance of the content to the research objectives.

Validated data are then interpreted contextually (Sjamsuddin, 2005). The interpretation phase explores the relationship between historical facts and the socio-political conditions of Muslims during colonial rule. A socio-anthropological approach is employed to understand how Islamic educational institutions became arenas for identity contestation, symbolic resistance, and cultural adaptation to colonial dominance and modernity. Finally, the research constructs a chronological and thematic historical narrative, dividing the development of Islamic education into the pre-madrasah era, the emergence of madrasahs, and institutional consolidation up to 1942. This method enables a deeper historical interpretation (Kartodirjo, 1993), not only explaining what happened in Islamic education, but also uncovering how and why such transformations occurred—offering a more comprehensive understanding of the institutional evolution of Islamic education in the colonial context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Historical Context of Early Islamic Education in South Sulawesi

Islamic education in South Sulawesi has its roots in the socio-religious dynamics of Bugis- Makassar society following the Islamization process that began in the 17th century (Mattulada, 1998). This process brought not only theological change but also paved the way for the formation of religious institutions that played key roles in the informal transmission of Islamic teachings. Institutions such as the l*anggar* (prayer hall) and study gatherings at the homes of ulama became primary sites for learning the Qur'an, basic fiqh, ethics, and religious character development (Enhas et al., 2023). However, prior to the 20th century, these educational practices had not yet developed into a structured institutional system. They functioned primarily as moral and spiritual education spaces rooted in community social and cultural ties.

This situation began to change as Dutch colonialism intensified in South Sulawesi. Alongside the expansion of colonial power, education became a strategic instrument for extending political and social control (Mokodenseho et al., 2023). Schools established by the colonial government and Christian missions gradually entered the educational spaces of local communities (Ilmi, 2022). In this context, Islamic education

began to be seen as a form of resistance and a response to external cultural and religious threats. This marked the background for the emergence of more organized forms of Islamic education in the early 20th century.

Although many local communities were initially reluctant to send their children to Dutch colonial schools—fearing the loss of their religious and cultural identity—institutions like the *Hollandsch-Inlandsche School (HIS)* continued to grow, especially after the Dutch fully conquered South Sulawesi in 1905–1906(Ilmi, 2022). At the same time, Christian zending missions became increasingly active, particularly in regions such as Toraja and Luwu, creating ideological tensions that led Muslims to establish madrasahs as a form of cultural resistance against colonialism and Christianization (Pawiloy et al., 1981).

Before the emergence of the madrasah system, Islamic education in South Sulawesi was simple and community-based. The main educational spaces at that time were langgar, surau, or the homes of ulama, which served as places for Qur'anic recitation, Islamic discussions, and the formation of religious character (Agustina et al., 2024). These institutions lacked standardized curricula, educational levels, or formal structures, and learning often took place in the form of halaqah or intensive study groups (Furqan, 2019). Nonetheless, this system was highly effective in producing pious Muslim generations who maintained close spiritual connections with their teachers (known locally as anrongguru or puang) (Pawiloy et al., 1981).

The subjects taught generally covered the fundamentals of Islam, such as Qur'anic reading, ritual fiqh, tawhid, ethics, as well as stories of the prophets and other popular Islamic narratives. In many cases, classical Arabic texts (kitab kuning) served as primary references, which were explained orally by the teacher in the local language, such as Bugis or Makassarese (Arief, 2008). In addition, education in the langgar and surau was often accompanied by the practice of wirid, dhikr, and tarekat rituals (Ali et al., 2021). This reinforced the integration of intellectual and spiritual dimensions in traditional Islamic education.

The role of the ulama was central—not only as instructors but also as moral exemplars and community leaders (Hamid, 2018). Education occurred within a

personal and respectful relationship, often continuing to the point where students became part of their teacher's scholarly lineage. In many regions, the homes of ulama functioned as respected informal learning centers visited by students from various areas (Burhanudin, 2012).

Despite its significant spiritual and moral strengths, this educational system also had limitations. The absence of formal curricula and evaluations made academic achievement difficult to measure. The system also heavily relied on the authority and personal capacity of the ulama, making it difficult to transfer across generations without strong regeneration. In the context of colonialism and modernization, the *langgar*-based system began to be seen as inadequate to meet the growing need for more systematic and competitive Islamic education. This opened the path for the emergence of new educational models, particularly the madrasah.

The Impact of Colonialism and Local Muslim Responses

The Dutch colonialism in South Sulawesi during the 19th and early 20th centuries had a profound impact on local social, political, and educational structures (Sewang, 2005). One relevant aspect is the concept of *zending en missie*, a term that refers to the two main forms of Christian missionary activity during the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia. *Zending* denotes Protestant evangelism efforts (Pradewi et al., 2019), while *missie* refers to Catholic missionary work (Derksen, 2016). Although they employed different approaches, both played significant roles in introducing Christianity across various regions of the archipelago, including South Sulawesi.

Christian missionary efforts in Makassar developed in two main phases. Before the 1930s, the mission focused on serving the Dutch Christian population, such as officials, soldiers, and merchants, due to restrictions on preaching to the local Bugis-Makassarese community, who were considered devout Muslims (Ilmi, 2022). This policy was enforced by Governor W.E. Kroesen to avoid social unrest. The mission began in 1848 with B.F. Matthes, a Dutch linguist who translated parts of the New Testament into local languages. He was succeeded by G. Maan, who served from 1895 to 1905. Although missionary activity was limited afterward, 1895 is seen as a key moment marking the beginning of Christianity's presence in the region (Ilmi, 2022).

The colonial administration of the Dutch East Indies not only sought territorial

control but also intervened in local value systems and cultural practices, particularly in education. Through the Ethical Policy and the introduction of Western-style schooling, the Dutch established formal institutions such as *Hollandsch-Inlandsche School* (HIS), *Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs* (MULO), and Christian *zending* schools in rural areas (Kusdiana, 2023; Mokodenseho et al., 2023). These schools offered secular education and often included subtle but systematic Christian missionary agendas, particularly through Protestant missions in regions such as Toraja and Luwu (Pawiloy et al., 1981).

The impact of these developments was strongly felt by local Muslim communities. While colonial schools presented modern and attractive educational opportunities, they also introduced ideological elements that conflicted with Islamic values (Furqan, 2019). As a result, many Muslims refused to enroll their children in Dutch or Christian schools out of concern for preserving their religious and cultural identity (Syah et al., 2025). These tensions catalyzed the rise of alternative Islamic educational movements rooted in local tradition.

Local Muslim responses to this challenge were diverse. Some communities continued to uphold the traditional *langgar*-based educational system and firmly rejected colonial models. Others—especially reformist *ulama* and Muslim thinkers—began to engage more creatively with the situation by adapting aspects of Western educational models without abandoning Islamic principles (Muslim, 2021). This gave rise to the development of *madrasahs*, modern Islamic schools designed to bridge the need for structured education with the desire to maintain the integrity of Islamic teachings (Annisa Urrobingah et al., 2024; Fitri, 2023).

One prominent example was *Madrasatul Arabiyah al-Islamiyah* (MAI), founded in Sengkang in 1930 by Haji Muhammad As'ad bin Haji Abdul Rasyid, a Mecca-born scholar who returned to Wajo in 1928(Nasir et al., 2023). Initially, classes were held in his private home before being moved to the Great Mosque of Sengkang due to the growing number of students. Learners came from various regions, including Bone, Pare-Pare, Barru, Soppeng, and Palopo, making the school a major Islamic educational center in South Sulawesi, later known as *Ka'batul Ilm* (The Kaaba of Knowledge).

Another important institution was *Madrasah Amiriyah* in Bone, established in 1933 by the King of Bone, Andi Mappanyukki Sultan Ibrahim (1905–1946), a devout Muslim ruler (Harlinda et al., 2023). He invited a scholar from Al-Azhar University, Cairo—Al-Ustadz Assyech Abdul Aziz Asysyimie—to serve as its first principal. Under the leadership of other renowned figures such as Shaykh Mahmud Al-Jawad, a former mufti of Medina who later lived in Bone for 13 years, the madrasah flourished (Arief, 2008; Pawiloy et al., 1981). With full support from the Bone royal court, the school expanded its facilities, including dormitories for students from surrounding areas like Wajo, Soppeng, and Sinjai.

Shaykh Mahmud Al-Jawad had relocated to South Sulawesi after leaving Medina due to political unrest in the Hijaz region. His presence significantly enriched the intellectual landscape of Islamic education in the area, as he was a widely respected scholar with strong religious authority in the Middle East prior to settling in Bone (Ismail, 2022).

Another noteworthy example was *Madrasah Al-Falah* in Palopo, also founded by Shaykh Mahmud Al-Jawad (Ismail, 2022). This institution received strong backing from the Luwu Kingdom and became a symbolic stronghold for protecting Islamic values against the persistent colonial and missionary pressures that were prevalent in the region (Gaffar & Takbir M, 2018).

These developments reflect the dynamic and adaptive nature of Islamic education in South Sulawesi. The transformation from the *langgar* model to the *madrasah* was not merely a reaction to external pressure, but also a manifestation of collective awareness among Muslims to construct an educational system capable of addressing both their spiritual and intellectual needs in the context of colonial domination.

Ideological Contestation: Madrasahs, Zending, and Dutch Colonial Schools

The emergence of *madrasahs* in South Sulawesi cannot be separated from the broader context of ideological contestation during the colonial period. *Madrasahs* were not merely alternative educational institutions; they served as key actors in the struggle for cultural and social influence between the Muslim community and colonial powers

(Syah et al., 2025). On one side, the Dutch colonial government and Christian missionary institutions (*zending en missie*) established schools that combined general education with Christian evangelization (Ilmi, 2022). On the other, Muslims built Islamic educational institutions that upheld Islamic values while selectively adopting relevant aspects of modernity.

Colonial schools such as *Hollandsch-Inlandsche School* (HIS) and *zending* schools offered free education, better facilities, and job prospects in the colonial bureaucracy (Kusdiana, 2023). However, for many Muslim families, these schools were perceived as threats to their children's faith and cultural identity. Colonial education was often seen as a tool of secularization—or even Christianization—prompting resistance from Muslim communities, particularly in religiously devout regions like Bone, Gowa, and Wajo. In this context, *madrasahs* emerged as a form of

"cultural resistance," strategically designed to counter colonial influence.

The rise of *madrasahs* as new Islamic educational institutions in South Sulawesi represented an intelligent and strategic response by Muslims to the challenges of modernity and colonial domination (Pelras, 1993). These schools did not emerge in a vacuum—they evolved from and improved upon traditional systems such as *langgar* and home-based religious study groups. At the same time, *madrasahs* reflected processes of social and intellectual adaptation to the modern education model introduced by the Dutch and Christian missionaries.

Between 1900 and the 1930s, numerous *madrasahs* began to appear in key regions of South Sulawesi. One of the earliest and most influential was *Madrasatul Arabiyah al-Islamiyah* (MAL) in Sengkang, founded by Anregurutta Sulaiman and Haji Muhammad As'ad (Aripin, 2018; Pawiloy et al., 1981). This school pioneered the implementation of classical learning systems, class-level divisions, and curriculum development that integrated religious and general subjects (Arief, 2008). Other examples include *Madrasah Amiriyah* in Bone and various *madrasahs* in Gowa, Luwu, and Palopo, all founded by local *ulama* and community leaders with visions for Islamic educational reform.

The emergence of these institutions cannot be divorced from the broader spirit of resistance against colonial ideological dominance and the threat of Christianization. For many Muslims, the *madrasah* was more than an educational alternative—it was a cultural symbol of struggle that reinforced Islamic identity amid the onslaught of foreign values (Syah et al., 2025). In this regard, *madrasahs* became ideological battlegrounds between Islam and colonialism, between local religious values and Western-driven cultural globalization. *Madrasahs* must therefore be understood as products of two opposing forces: adaptation to modernity and resistance to colonial hegemony. They were not merely schools, but also sociopolitical instruments that helped reinforce the spiritual and cultural sovereignty of South Sulawesi's Muslim communities (Agustina et al., 2024).

This contestation was not purely religious—it also touched on identity and sovereignty. While colonial schools aimed to produce educated natives loyal to the colonial regime, *madrasahs* cultivated students with strong Islamic consciousness and collective awareness of colonial oppression. In several cases, *madrasah* graduates became leaders of local Islamic movements or figures in the struggle for independence who actively rejected Dutch domination.

The Turning Point of 1942: The End of Colonialism and the Beginning of a New Era

The year 1942 marked a pivotal moment in the history of Islamic education in South Sulawesi and in Indonesia more broadly. The Japanese occupation, which replaced Dutch colonial rule, brought significant changes to governmental policies—including those concerning education. Islamic *madrasahs*, which had previously developed independently under the repressive oversight of the Dutch, were given more room to operate during the Japanese era, albeit under continued military supervision. Several local Muslim leaders who had previously worked underground gained opportunities to lead Islamic organizations and manage religious education more formally (Pawiloy et al., 1981). In this context, 1942 represented not only a turning point in colonial power dynamics but also a critical moment in the institutional strengthening of Islamic education in regions such as South Sulawesi. (Ismail, 2022)

However, this shift did not immediately result in a complete transformation of

the *madrasah* system. Challenges remained, particularly in terms of human resources, curriculum development, and institutional legitimacy. Nonetheless, the collapse of Dutch rule inspired a stronger drive among Muslims to assert educational independence (Mokodenseho et al., 2023). Many *madrasahs* began to reinforce their organizational structures, establish connections with national Islamic organizations, and formulate more systematic and standardized curricula. Some even initiated higher levels of education, such as *madrasah tsanawiyah* and *madrasah aliyah*, although still on a limited scale (Annisa Urrobingah et al., 2024).

The year 1942 can thus be seen as the beginning of a new phase in Islamic education in Indonesia—a transitional period from community-based learning institutions to more formal, coordinated systems that would later be integrated into the national education framework after independence. In this regard, the *madrasahs* of South Sulawesi, which had been growing steadily since the early 20th century, laid a critical foundation for the future development of Islamic education in Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examines the development of Islamic education in South Sulawesi between 1900 and 1942, focusing on the shift from informal *langgar*-based learning to the structured *madrasah* system. The emergence of *madrasahs* was closely tied to the colonial context, where Dutch and Christian missionary schools challenged Islamic values. In response, local *ulama* and Muslim communities established *madrasahs* as educational institutions that combined Islamic teachings with elements of modern education, while also acting as a form of cultural resistance.

The research shows that *madrasahs* played an important role not only in transmitting religious knowledge but also in strengthening the Islamic identity of local communities. These institutions adapted to social and political changes, particularly during the Japanese occupation in 1942, which marked the end of Dutch educational control and allowed greater freedom for Islamic schools. The transformation of *madrasahs* during this period laid the foundation for the post-independence Islamic education system in Indonesia.

The findings suggest that *madrasahs* should be seen as both educational and

socio-political institutions. Policymakers are encouraged to support Islamic schools by recognizing their historical role and helping them modernize without losing their religious roots. Educators and researchers are also advised to further explore local educational histories to strengthen the connection between tradition and national educational development.

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