

## **ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN MINDANAO PHILIPPINES: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to elaborate on the history and development of Islamic education in Mindanao, Philippines. This research is library research with data sources obtained from various literature, both in books, journal articles, and other literature. The data obtained were analyzed using a content analysis approach. This study concludes that Islamic education in Mindanao, Philippines, has fluctuated according to political policyholders in the region. These developments can be described in three periods, namely during the pre-colonial period, during the colonial period, and during the period when the Philippines became the Republic.*

**Keywords:** Islamic Education, Mindanao Philippines

### **Introduction**

The Muslim population in the Philippines was the majority before the arrival of the Spanish colonialists in 1521 AD, accompanied by policies that tended to be counter to Muslims in the Philippines. Currently, the total Muslim population in the Philippines is approximately 5% of the total population. This drastic change was influenced by the political policies issued by the colonialists who came to the Philippines one after another.

The fluctuation of politics in the Philippines dramatically influences the existence of Islamic education in the Philippines. In the pre-colonial period, along with the domination of Muslims in politics, Islamic education received a special

place in society, even though it did not have an adequate education system. The arrival of the Spanish colonizers has changed the education system that has been built so far. The Spanish occupation had a policy that was not only powerful in terms of politics but also attempted to spread Catholicism through its various systems. It is a challenge in itself for the existence of Islamic education. The American colonizers who bought Philippine land from Spain had a slightly subtle educational policy. America made education as a policy so that Muslims would cooperate with America. American policies succeeded in making Filipino Muslims interested in the American-managed education system so that Islamic education was almost abandoned by society at that time. The Japanese colonizers had a different educational policy from the previous colonialists. Japanese education places more emphasis on vocational education by training young people the skills needed in life. These policies reflect the different priorities in structuring the education system in the Philippines. The education system has not accommodated the madrasa education system, which is a representation of the Islamic education system.

Education is an effort to develop human potential comprehensively and totally. This is in line with education from an Islamic perspective that education in Islam does develop not only physical potential but also develops spiritual and spiritual potential. In Islam, education is so broad and comprehensive because it includes all sciences, both general and religious sciences. Even though it seems a dichotomy, basically, the two types of knowledge are integrated between one another.

Furthermore, Kazeem and Balogun (2013) state that in Islam, education aims to develop a balanced human personality through training of the soul, intellectual, rational, feelings, and senses of the body. The training given to a Muslim must be based on the faith that is implanted into his entire personality so that there is an emotional attachment to Islam and enables him to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah, which are

regulated by the Islamic value system. Afzalur (2000) further concluded that “if education is separated from religion and moral values, it will lead to disintegration and the destruction of the social order of society.”

This point of view is under the opinion that Islam views knowledge as divinity and law. Hassan (1989), where he argues that the source of knowledge in Islam comes from two categories. The first is the Divine Revelation, and the second is human intelligence. The former is believed to be obligatory for every Muslim while the latter is obligatory only for some members of the community, whether Muslim or not.

So far, the education system in the Philippines has not integrated religion and general science because, in reality, religious knowledge is only taught in madrasas, while available science is only taught in public schools. As long as the education system is separate, it will not be effective in meeting the educational needs of Muslims in the Philippines.

The dichotomy of the education system in the Philippines has implications for the absorption of graduates by the world of work. Where the world of work only recruits graduates from general education who are more fluent in English because the language of instruction in public schools uses English. Meanwhile, graduates from madrasah who are fluent in Arabic many are unemployed or have low salaries because they only work in small madrasas which are managed by the private sector. As a result, the interest of young people to enter madrasas is low.

After the independence of the Philippines, the government tried to remove the dichotomy of education, namely general education and Islamic education, which is symbolized by madrasas. This policy is carried out by issuing various guidelines that regulate the curriculum for both general education and Islamic education, so that both become an integral part of the national education system, and there is no longer an educational dichotomy between public schools and madrasas.

In the following description, several things related to Islamic education in Mindanao will be explained, including the beginning of the entry of Islam to the Philippines and how the development of Islamic education in the Philippines.

### **Method**

This research is qualitative research. The approach used is pure library research (library research). The data is obtained from reading material obtained by researchers from books, articles contained in various journals, whether printed in books or the form of files scattered in big data on the Internet. Data were collected and sorted to fill in the answers to formulated research questions. The analysis uses a content analysis approach that is tailored to the needs of compiling the history and development of Islamic education in Mindanao, Philippines.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### *Islam in the Trajectory of Philippine History*

Islam was the majority religion in the Philippines before Western colonialism entered the region. Islam entered the Philippines is estimated to have occurred in the 1300s. A tombstone in the name of Miqbal, dated 1310, was found in Badatto, not far from Jolo, on the island of Sulu. The discovery of this tombstone is one of the archaeological evidence of the entry and development of Islam in the Philippines. At that time, the people of Jolo Island were still worshiping idols and animism. Another important figure who is commonly referred to as the pioneer of Islam in the Philippines is Sharif Karim Al Makhdum, who preached through his mastery of occult sciences, medicine, and the like. He is said to have lived in the old capital, Bwasna. There he built a mosque, and people flocked there. One of the tribal chiefs reportedly converted to Islam (Majul, 1987).

Another pioneer was Mr. Masha'ika. The strength of Mr. Mashaika is that he is readily accepted and appreciated by

the local community, and even later married a daughter of Rapa Sipad. Tuan Masha'ika had three sons: Aisha, Tuan Hakim (with four sons Tuan Da'im, Tuan Buda, Tuang Bujang, and Tuan Muku), and another daughter who was not known by name. The four sons of Tuan Hakim (meaning the grandson of Tuan Masha'ika) ruled in Maimbung.

Since then, the development of Islam has spread to important places in the Philippines. Once its glory, Islam was once the majority religion in the Philippines, marked by the presence of ruling Islamic kingdoms such as the Kingdom of Manila (1500-1571) in the northern part of the Philippines or on the island of Luzon, the kingdom of Sulu, and the Kingdom of Maguindanao in the southern part of the Philippines. The presence of colonialism in the Philippines (especially Spain) has shifted the influence of Islam in the country and replaced it with Catholicism. Since then, the number of Muslims in the Philippines has been eroded until now it is only about 5%.

In the following, we try to briefly describe the historical presence of Islam in the Philippines in the past to the development of Islam in the present. The description of Islam in the Philippines starts from the story of Islam during the Islamic Kingdom of Manila, the Islamic Kingdom of Sulu, the Islamic Kingdom of Maguindanao. The role of colonialism in the dynamics of Islam in the Philippines was continued, starting with the Spanish era, era

America and Japanese times. After that, a little is described Islam in the early days after the Philippines became independent until the Tripoli agreement (1976), the second agreement between the Philippines and the MNLF (1996), and finally, the agreement between the Philippine Government and the MILF, another wing of Moro's struggle that originally wanted to separate from the Philippines.

### *Madrasah Education in the Philippines*

The Philippine government, although rather slow, is determined to unite all regions in the concept of a Philippine state. Because of this, several attempts to integrate Muslims into Philippine politics were continued. Several agreements were made between the Philippine government and the Moro group, such as the Tripoli Agreement (1976), the Philippine Agreement with the MNLF (1996), the last agreement between the Philippine government and the MILF (1912). Over time, in order to integrate Muslim politics within the framework of the Philippines state, the Philippine government made some accommodations to win over the hearts of Muslims. Saifullah SA made an inventory of several steps taken by the Philippine Government in accommodating the interests of Muslims, including the establishment of an autonomous Regional Government (RAG); Establishment of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs (1981); Establishment of the Philippine Hajj Travel Management Agency (1979); Established the Manila University Institute of Islamic Studies (1973); Established the King Faisal Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies, Mindanao State University (1973); Southern Philippines Center for Peace Studies (1979); Launched the Philippines Mandate Bank and Muslim Development Fund (1973).

As with the Islamic tradition in the Asian landmark region, Islamic education is transmitted through several forms of formal educational media such as through *maktab* or *madrasah*, non-formal education through places of worship such as mosques, *surau*, *pesantren*, and informal education through family education. Especially regarding madrasas, initial information about madrasas in the Philippines is mentioned. In 1950 two preachers from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, arrived in the Southern Philippines. They opened a madrasa “Al-Kuliyat Al-Istihadiyah” in Malibu, Lanao de Sur. After one year, it was closed. One of these preachers, Toha Omar, moved to Jalo, Sulu and became the head of the Sulu Islamic madrasa which was founded under the leadership of Major Barley Abu Bakar. Since the 1980s, the Philippine

government has tried to take serious efforts to accommodate Islamic interests in the Philippine government system. It was starting with the establishment of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, as well as the Ministry of Religion in Indonesia, in 1981. The Philippine government has also tried to initiate efforts to develop Islamic education. Efforts in the field of Islamic education in the Philippines included holding the First Congress of Islamic Education (27-31 October 1980), in which discussions were divided into three groups. Group I (Madrasah Management and Organization), Group II (Curriculum, Teaching, Madrasah Teaching, and Student Staff), Group III (Madrasah Physical and Financial Facilities).

The Congress on Muslim Education was held at Mindanao State University on 27-31 October 1980. And was a series or the beginning of several congresses on education and education that followed. One of the important papers presented by Professor Manaros Boransing is *Policy of Total Development as an Approach to the Nation Moro Problem: An Alternative to Autonomy*. Where the paper was later accepted as a recommendation from the Congress, namely: (a) integration of the 10-level curriculum for Arabic language education/Islamic studies into an integrated public school system; (b) the reorganization, appointment, and establishment of madaris as secondary school teaching centers for further studies in Islamic theology and civilization; (c) standardization and printing of teaching materials, particularly textbooks, for Islamic and Arabic education curricula; (d) a short training program for teachers and education administrators in management administration, Arabic and Islamic studies; and (e) organizing. *Forms of Islamic Education in Mindanao*

The first form of education in the Moro Region in Pre-Spanish times was a small community gathered in a building known as a *maktab* (literally meaning 'library' or 'book center'). Maktab is a place where teachers, who are religious leaders in the village, teach a small group of children about Islamic basics, such as reading and writing Arabic. At a later stage, the

teacher's duties are taken over by the *pandita* (spiritual leader in the community). When local teachers had the opportunity to receive formal education in Arab countries, madrasah-type schools were introduced. The term madrasah is the Arabic word for "school." This concept is used when referring to "private Muslim schools with a core emphasis on Islamic studies and Arabic literacy." Madrasas are private schools that rely on support from local communities or foreign donors, particularly Islamic or Muslim countries.

Madrasas are Mindanao's oldest educational institutions and are recognized as the most important factor in the preservation of Islamic beliefs and culture in the Philippines. "As practiced in the Philippines, *madrasah* has three general types. The first is traditional *madrasah*, whose teaching is basically religious and informal. It is characterized by the following features: (a) classes are held only on Saturdays and Sundays or days agreed by the teacher and students; (b) do not have a formal curriculum; (c) are not graded and may have many age groupings, and (d) the requirements to become a teacher are graduates of madrasas or become imams (Muslim religious leaders).

Formal madrasah is the second type of madrasah. This type indicates a structured and hierarchical education system that functions as a formal education system. This education system operates from pre-school (*edadi*) to high school (*sana'awi*). The curriculum integrates Islamic religion and culture with some secular subjects such as mathematics and science, but still uses Arabic as the language of instruction. The education system does not apply to the Ministry of Education's standard curriculum because it is not recognized and accredited by the office. As such, students' competitive ability is less necessary for employment and does not qualify for transfer to regular public schools.

The third type is the standard private madrasah. This type is the one recognized and accredited by the Ministry of Education. The curriculum has been harmonized, upgraded,



and modified so that it becomes a component of the Philippine education system through the issuance of the Ministry of Education Regulation No. 51 of 2004, which regulates the Standard Curriculum for Public Elementary Schools and Madrasahs. Under this law and as a requirement for recognition and accreditation, all madrasa institutions in the country are required to adopt and implement a curriculum of this standard. Even in public schools, the curriculum is enriched by incorporating Arabic language material and Islamic values for Muslim students from all countries in areas with Muslim populations.

In general, the development of Islamic education in Mindanao Philippines can be divided into the pre-colonial period, the Spanish colonial period, the American colonial period, the Japanese colonial period, the Philippine period to become the Republic.

#### *The Pre-Colonial Period*

In accordance with the claims of scholars, that Islamic education in Mindanao, the Philippines, coincided with the arrival and growth of Islam brought by Arab and Malay missionaries and traders in the 13th century who settled in Sulu and its surroundings. The first missionary was Mr. Mashaika, who arrived in Sulu and introduced Islam to the local population (Abubakar, 1983). At that time, Islam was taught informally in the teacher's house. The lessons are limited to reading and writing Arabic as a means of reading the Koran. Sometimes classes are also conducted in mosques or mosques are used when the teacher's house cannot accommodate many learners. In the second half of the 14th century, another missionary by the name of Karim-ul-Makhdum arrived who had strengthened the growing religious activity in the Islamic community in Sulu. Not long after, Makhdum was joined by a Muslim noble Sumatran, Rajah Baguinda, who introduced the first formal leadership system in the Sulu Archipelago. He spread Islamic teachings even further (Hassoubah, quoted in Alonto, 1986).

Towards the beginning of the 15th century, Sayyid Abū Bakr, also known as Sharif-ul Hashim, landed on Jolo Island. Although he was an Arab missionary, Abu Bakr came to Sulu not only for religious activities, he consolidated political power by introducing local natives to the concept of the sultanate as a political system and establishing himself as the first sultan. The construction of mosques and the establishment of mad-rasas were carried out during his reign as local tribal chiefs for three decades.

With respect to most of the non-Muslim communities in the North, the pre-colonial education system was characterized by the following characteristics: (1) education was informal, unstructured, and methodless. Children are given more vocational training and less academic training by their parents and in-house tribal tutors; (2) because the learning is informal, ideas and facts are obtained through suggestions, observations, examples, and imitation; and, (3) the absence of an educational system organization.

In short, in the pre-colonial Philippines, the learning system adopted in Muslim and non-Muslim communities had similar features. Their educational goals are aimed at survival, conformity, and enculturation. The teaching methods consist of show-and-tell, observation, trial and error, and imitation. And the types of learning are informal education, practical and theoretical training.

#### *Spanish Colonial Period*

Islamic education during the Spanish colonialism encountered major obstacles. Prior to the controversy between Moro and Spain, Muslim education in Mindanao, which was purely religious and carried out freely in the villages, was carried out by *pandita/ulama* who served as teachers, as well as advisors to local leaders. Barriers to Islamic education began when the Spanish authorities, at the suggestion of the monks, used schools “as instruments for occupation, conquest, and preaching.” However, Muslims did not fall into Spanish hands because their advanced system of life was established centuries

before the arrival of Christianity. Supporting this view, Tan (1982) relates that “even before the arrival of the Spanish Muslims developed their own civilization, whose laws, social organization, government, educational system, navigation skills, commerce, industry, and commerce distinguished them from other parts of the Philippines.” Furthermore, Gamon (2014) notes that “During the Spanish occupation, not a single type of Western school was established by the Spaniards in the Muslim community. Pandita schools, which later became madaaris became the dominant education in Muslim areas.” Because the Spaniards were so uncomfortable with Islam, coupled with their failure to conquer Moro, they used the following strategies: (1) destroying the Koran and other Arabic manuscripts they found in the Philippines, (2) using Filipino Christians to spread terror in Muslim areas, (3) linking evil descriptions to Moro, such as savages, born of violence, and (4) poisoning people’s minds g Filipino Christians to fight Filipino Muslims.

Some of the specific characteristics of the education system that Spain applies to native Filipinos are as follows: (a) formal and organized learning, (b) religious-oriented, (c) Spanish missionaries as tutors, (d) teaching centered on Christian doctrine, prayer, and sacred songs, (e) the curriculum is 3R (reading, writing and religion), (f) compulsory learning of Spanish, and (h) education only for the elite which is completely controlled by the monks. After the Education Decree of 1863 was enacted, the Spanish-designed Curriculum was widely adopted in the Philippines. The law governs subjects at three grade levels (i.e., *entrada*, *asenso* and *termino*), including Christian doctrine, values, history, reading and writing in Spanish, mathematics, agriculture, etiquette, singing, world geography, and Spanish history.

#### *American Colonial Period*

During the American regime, Islamic education in the Philippine islands was placed at a crossroads because of its

influence, prestige, and importance challenged by the new educational system brought in from the west. The general education system handled by Americans appears to be more popular, practical, and useful from a Moro perspective, especially from a job opportunity perspective. Soon, upon their arrival on Philippine soil, American educators opened public schools for all eligible children, concurrently with their campaign against Muslims. Yet because of years of hostility between the Moros and previous Spanish colonizers, the Moro family, especially respectable people, refused to send their children to American schools until they realized that their English literacy was the only qualification for holding public office. Feelings of hatred for the American education system attracted Maranaos. In detail about Maranao's attitude vis-à-vis the new American education policy, Isidro (1980) says:

“It was common knowledge that during the early part of the American regime in the country, the Maranaos were very reluctant to send their children to public schools run by Americans and other Christian teachers. The Maranao dates, when forced to send their school-aged children to school, kept their sons and daughters at home and sent their tenants' children instead. The dates' children were sent to the local *madrasah*. To those who received a public education first were the farmers' children and those coming from the non-influential families. Later on, the educated ones rose to prominence after schooling. Some of them became superintendents and supervisors of public schools in Mindanao when the country regained independence in 1946. When the public school-educated Maranaos rose to power both in politics and education, they were convinced of the importance of public education established by the government. So, they started to enroll their children in public schools instead of the *madrasah*.

The popularity and attractiveness of American Schools are generally felt in several areas in Moroland, such

as Cotabato and Zamboanga. In this place, it was calculated that the *pandita* school would eventually decline and deteriorate miserably within a few years. As has been said, in order to ensure the effectiveness of their educational campaigns, the Americans first sought to appeal to Moro children by offering them scholarships and even giving them personal tutoring. The first Moro leaders to grab the opportunity were former Senator Salipada K. Pendatun from Cotabato and former Congressman Rashid Lucman from Lanao. The popularity of American secular education lasted until the Commonwealth Government (Tamano, 2010).

Compared to the Spanish education style, the American education system can be summarized by looking at three major components, namely the goal (to teach democracy and the separation of church and state), type (formal, open to all, democratic), and method (recitation, participation, debate, and game/play).

### Japanese Colonial Period

The new educational policy of the Japanese imperial army when they set foot in the Philippines was marked by the release of Military Regulation No. 2. This regulation mandates the Philippine Executive Commission to create a Commission on Education, Health and Public Welfare. Based on this, the school reopened in June 1942 and was attended by more than 300,000 students from different classes.

To promote the effectiveness of the above regulations, the Japanese-sponsored Philippine Constitution states in Article IX, Section 10 that:

“All educational institutions shall be under the supervision of and subject to regulation by the state. The government shall establish a complete and adequate system of national education and shall provide at least free public elementary instruction and citizenship training to adult citizens. All schools, colleges, and universities shall aim to develop moral character,

personal Ana collective discipline, civic conscience, and vocational skills, secure social efficiency, and teach the duties of citizenship. Optional religious instruction shall De maintained in the public schools as now authorized Bay law. The state shall create scholarships in arts, science, and letters for specially gifted citizens.

As applied in all national curricula, the Filipino Education organized by Japan incorporates the so-called” Six Principles of the Republic of Japan “which are the Basic Principles of Japanese Education in that country, meaning: (1) the creation of a new order and promotion of friendly relations between Japan and the Philippines to the farthest level; (2) fostering a new Filipino culture, (3) striving to improve the morals of society, giving up the emphasis on materialism, (4) Diffusion of Japanese in the Philippines, (5) promoting vocational education, and (6) inspiring people with enthusiasm to love one another.

#### Period of the Philippines Becoming a Republic

Under the Republic of the Philippines, some of the core public education policies of the government include: (1) a complete and adequate national education system, (2) the concept of academic freedom will only be carried out in tertiary institutions established by the state, (3) religious teaching in public schools is optional, and (4) formation of scholarships in the arts and science aimed at gifted citizens, those with certain abilities and who cannot afford education.

With regard to Muslim education in the Philippines, the previous president of the Philippines implemented various educational measures in addressing developing challenges. During Marcos, not less than the 1973 Constitution was made to regulate education regulation in the Philippines. The provisions contained in Article XV, Section 8, Paragraph 1 states that “. . . The state shall establish and maintain a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the goals of national development. “This provision becomes

the legal basis for the enactment of the Letter Instruction No. 1221 dated March 31, 1982 which gave three specific directions for all government officials by instructing them to: (1) formulate and adopt a program for Madrasah development, at least for the improvement of teaching staff and learning facilities, but which must be prioritized for the process of integrating madrasah into the national education system, with an improved curriculum, so that graduates can pursue general education under the Philippine government, training them to contribute to the modernization of their community within the framework of their faith; (2) strengthening the development of Islamic study programs in state universities, especially in Mindanao, including accelerating the strengthening of the Sharia program; and, (3) establishing and strengthening Arabic language teaching and learning programs which are very important for educational programs in Mindanao, even as an important field in professional studies and education in higher education, either as compulsory or optional subjects (Kulidtod, 2017).

A year later, the policy on madrasah was further strengthened by the issuance of a Letter of Instruction No. 17-A enacted by President Marcos, who specifically ordered that “the Secretary of Education and Culture to authorize and formalize the use of Arabic as the language of instruction in schools and/or areas in the Philippines where it is possible.”

The strong concern and interest for the development and enhancement of Islamic education for Moro people are clearly seen in the constitutional provisions which stipulate that “The State shall recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies. “As a response to the status of the Autonomous Region in Mindanao, the Mindanao Muslim Autonomy Law Number 14 in its Part 3 in it states that: the Regional Government shall accredit the *madaris* and shall ensure their integrative together

with the private schools into the regional system of education which should be at par with national standard. One of the aims and purposes of the regionally integrated education system is to promote and strengthen the *madaris* as an integral part of the regional education program. It means the integrative of Arabic language and Islamic studies in the regional public schools to improve student proficiency and understanding of Islamic values and culture. “(Kulidtod, 2017)

To further strengthen the integration of Islamic education into the Philippine public school system, Ministry of Education Regulation No. 51 on August 28, 2004, which states that “For the Muslims of Mindanao and other parts of the country, the rightful and legitimate aspiration is to have an Islamic Education that is authentic and appropriate for the Bangsa Moro population. They aim to establish Islamic schools that would prepare generations of learned and intellectual Muslims imbued with Islamic values and spiritually prepared to serve the people and the country as a whole. “This law regulates the so-called “Standard Curriculum for Public Elementary Schools and Madrasahs” which aims to: (1) facilitate the movement of students from public schools to Madrasahs or vice versa; (2) unites the long history of dichotomies among Muslims; and (3) promoting the national identity of the Philippines while at the same time preserving the cultural heritage of Muslims (Kulidtod, 2017).

However, the curriculum stipulated under the Ministry of Education Regulation No. 51 has been amended by the Ministry of Education Regulation No. 40 which was stipulated on May 19, 2011, which stipulates the form of Refined Elementary Madrasah Curriculum (REMC) with two models: (a) Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) Curriculum for Public Schools, and (b) Refined Standard Madrasah Curriculum (RSMC) for schools in the form of Madrasah (Kulidtod, 2017).

Commenting on efforts to integrate the madrasa curriculum into the national education system, Gonsang (1996)



said that making Islam an important component in the general education of Muslims is a stepping stone to the realization of what Daniel (1962) meant when he said: "Islam is not a religion. In the commonly distorted meaning of the word, confining itself to The life of men. It is a complete way of life catering to all fields for all walks of life - individual and social, legal and cultural, national, and international. "Islam, as a complete rule of life, is similar to Mutahari's (1981) belief, as quoted in Gonsang (1996), that "... knowledge and faith play various significant roles in constructing the future of the human beings. Knowledge shows them the way and establishes them to shape their future according to their own will. But faith guides them as to how they should build themselves and their future, that they may best serve themselves and their society. "

### Conclusion

Islam has been a part of Philippine Mindanao society since the 13th century brought by *da'is* and traders. The development of Islamic education in Mindanao Philippines has fluctuated, influenced by the political policies in power in Philippine Mindanao. In the pre-colonial era, Islamic education flourished in the form of *maktab*. During the Spanish colonial period, although Spain could not conquer the Moro people, its anti-Islamic policies hampered the development of Islamic education. During the American occupation, the popularity of Islamic education declined, along with the increasing popularity of public schools under America, especially in relation to the job opportunities obtained for American school graduates. During the Japanese colonial period, education emphasized the formation of good morals and vocational education. After the independence of the Philippines, the government made every effort to integrate Islamic education in the national education system, by equalizing the madrasa curriculum with general education, and including religious subjects in general education.

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