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## **POLITICAL REFORMATION AND ITS IMPACT ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION AND PRACTICE: A CASE STUDY OF INDONESIA DURING AND POST-PRESIDENT-SOEHARTO ADMINISTRATION**

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**Abstract.** The author discusses library and information science education before and after 1998, the year President Soeharto stepped down. Before 1998, the government centralized policy making. For LIS education, the Ministry of Education through the Directorate General of Higher Education (DGHE), issued a nation-wide curriculum for *sarjana* or undergraduate programmes, leaving little space for LIS schools to establish additional courses. After 1998, the Directorate General of Higher Education issued minimum requirements for LIS schools with the remaining credit hours to be decided by each institution. Also before 1998, DGHE issued permission to open new LIS schools after reviewing the submitted proposals. Post 1998, any university could open undergraduate and graduate programmes in LIS without DGHE permission even though not all academic requirements are fulfilled. However, LIS schools must be supervised for two years after their programmes begin by an accrediting agency. The centralised policy also influenced course content.

### **Introduction**

Indonesia declared independence in 1945. After that, for more than four years the young republic fought the British and Dutch. During that time little library work was done with the exception of the efforts of medical students and lecturers in Yogyakarta who moved their library collection from Yogyakarta to a small town, ahead of the advancing Dutch Army. Those efforts reflected the principle that libraries are kept by the society.

Libraries began to receive government attention in the early 1950s, with the establishment of a Course for Library Technicians in 1952 and the establishment of public libraries from the mid through late 1950s. Those developments took place during the administration of President Soekarno, known as a reading minded person.

From 1945 to 1998, Indonesia only knew two presidents. The first president was Soekarno who occupied the position from 1945 to 1967. Afterwards he was replaced by President Soeharto a military general who ruled Indonesia from 1967 to 1998, so he was in power for almost 32 years! After Soeharto resigned in 1998, there were four new presidents in a matter of 6 years!

Soeharto's administration was known as the New Order, while the period before that was called the Old Order. After 1998, the year Soeharto stepped down, the period was known as the Reformation Era because the people and the government are reforming the state after thirty-two years of almost dictatorial rule under Soeharto.

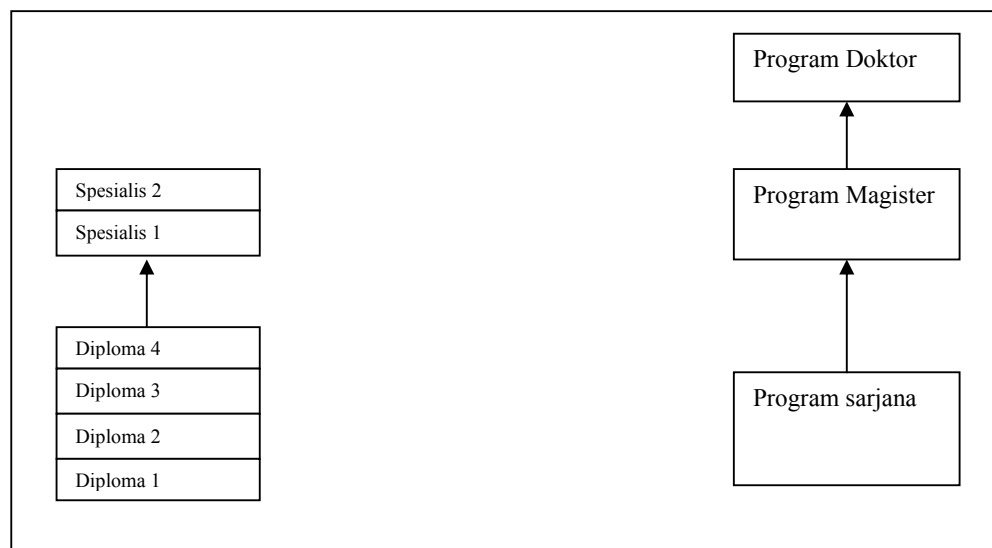
This paper describes the library and information science education and practice during and after the Soeharto administration. This paper does not cover all political affairs; it is limited to issues in library and information science education and practice (hereafter called LIS E&P).

### **Library and information science education system**

The present tertiary education system was introduced in 1982. It was revised with various presidential decrees, but almost no significant change took place. At the tertiary education level, there are two streams, professional and academic. The professional stream, known as the Diploma Programme, is from Diploma One to Four. Each number denotes the duration of study, for example, Diploma One means that the students study for one year after Senior High School. Diploma Two holders study for two years and so on. From Diploma Four the student could proceed to Spesialis (*Specialist*) One and Two. The Specialist Programme is considered a terminal programme.

For the academic stream, there are three levels. Level One, commonly called *Strata One*, then *Strata Two* and the last is *Strata Three*. *Strata One* is also called the *Sarjana* programme, *Strata Two* is called the *Magister* programme while *Strata Three* was named the *Doctorate* programme.

The duration of study for Strata One is four years, it is more or less equal to the Bachelors programme in many countries. For Strata Two, the duration is one or two years, it is equal to the Masters programme in many developed countries. Strata Three duration varies, although the regulation states from four to six years. It is the same with Doctorate programme in many other universities.



**Figure 1. Tertiary education system**

This system began in 1986 and still applies today.

For the Diploma Programme, each programme needs around thirty-six credit hours, hence Diploma Four needs 144 credit hours. The difference between the *Program Diploma* with the *Program Sarjana* is that in the *Diploma Programme* the ratio between theory and practice is 40 : 60 and geared toward the work market, while for the *Program Sarjana* the ratio between theory and practice is 60 : 40 and geared toward preparing a professional librarian. Right now there are only Program Diploma Two and Three, none for Diploma Four. Holders of Diploma Two and Three are considered paraprofessionals.

For Strata One or the undergraduate degree, the requirements include a minimum of 144 credit hours while the maximum are 160 credit hours. A student usually needs eight semesters or approximately four years or more to get a *sarjana* or bachelor degree. The current universities which conduct *program sarjana* or undergraduate programmes are listed in Table 1.

Apart from the undergraduate programmes, there are also Diploma programmes operated by various universities. There are about twenty-one Diploma Programmes in LIS institutions in Indonesia.

## The LIS curriculum

### *Centralisation policy*

During his presidency, Soeharto applied a strong central government policy, trying to standardize almost all matters in Indonesia, including education. The responsibility for education matters was in the hand of the Ministry of National Education.<sup>1</sup> Supervision, guidance, and support was undertaken by the Directorate General of Higher Education (hereafter called DGHE). DGHE supervised all tertiary education, either state controlled or private. Consequently, LIS education comes under the jurisdiction of DGHE. In lieu of this centralized policy, the Ministry of Education and Culture issued a nation-wide-curriculum for LIS education. At that time (1986) there were only two universities which conducted *sarjana* programmes or Strata One, so the curriculum applied only to the two universities. Later on, the

<sup>1</sup> This Ministry changed its name many times. In 1950s it was known as the Ministry of Education, Teaching and Culture, then the Department of Basic Education, then Department of Education and Culture and lastly the Department of National Education.

**Table 1. List of undergraduate programme operators**

	University	City	Province	Notes
1.	Universitas Indonesia	Jakarta	Jakarta	Established in 1986*
2	Universitas Padjadjaran±	Bandung	West Java	1985
3	Universitas Sam Ratulangi	Manado	North Sulawesi♣	2002
4	Universitas Sumatera Utara	Medan	North Sumatera	2002
5	Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah¥	Jakarta	Jakarta	Formerly known as Islamic State Institute Syariif Hidayatullah
6	Universitas YARSI	Jakarta	Jakarta	A private institution
7	Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga	Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta	Formerly State Islamic Institute Sunan Kalijaga, 2002
8	Universitas Diponegoro	Semarang	Central Java	2005
9	Universitas Islam Nusantara	Bandung	West Java	1986
10	Universitas Airlangga	Surabaya	East Java	2003
11	Universitas Wijaya Kusuma Surabaya	Surabaya	East Java	2000, private
12	Universitas Bengkulu	Bengkulu	Bengkulu	2002
13	Univerditas Hasanuddin	Makassar	South Sulawesi	
14	Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Syah	Makassar	South Sulawesi	Formerly Islamic State Institute Alauddin Syah
15	Universitas Terbuka	Jakarta	Jakarta	For <i>sarjana</i> programme begins in 2006

\*Established in 1952 as School for Library Technicians,

±Formerly part of Bandung Teachers College, now known as Indonesia Educational University

♣Sulawesi known also as Celebes

¥Formerly State Islamic Institute Syarif Hidayatullah

**Table 2. List of Diploma Programmes**

#	Institute	City	Remarks
1	Universitas Indonesia	Jakarta	
2	Universitas YARSI	Jakarta	
3	Universitas Terbuka	Jakarta	Open University
4	Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah	Jakarta	
5	Universitas Padjadjaran	Bandung	West Java
6	Universitas Islam Nusantara	Bandung	West Java
7	Universitas Gadjah Mada	Yogyakarta	Yogya Province
8	Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga	Yogyakarta	
9	Universitas Negeri Surakarta	Solo	Central Java
10	Universitas Diponegoro	Semarang	Central Java
11	Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram	Mataram,	Province of West Nusa Tenggara
12	Universitas Hasanuddin	Makasar	South Sulawesi
13	Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Syah	Makassar	South Sulawesi
14	Universitas Sam Ratulangi	Manado	North Sulawesi
15	Universitas Lampung	Bandarlampung	Lampung
16	Universitas Bengkulu	Bengkulu	Bengkulu, sometimes written as Bencoolen
17	Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa	Palembang	South Sumatera, private
18	Universitas Lancang Kuning	Pekanbaru	Riau, private
19	Universitas Negeri Padang	Padang	West Sumatera
20	Institut Agama Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol	Padang	Islamic State Institute
21	Universitas Sumatera Utara	Medan	North Sumatera

national curriculum for LIS education was applied to other universities as they opened *Sarjana* programmes. The curriculum is very comprehensive, covering almost all the courses offered for undergraduate programmes. Out of 144 credits, there are eight credits for university and twelve credits for each faculty. The nation-wide required courses for the new undergraduate students were Pancasila or the state ideology, and Bahasa Indonesia, the Indonesian language. The course for each faculty is different, for example, LIS Education in Universitas Padjadajaran is under the Faculty of Communication while in Universitas Indonesia it is under the Faculty of Letters (now the Faculty of Humanities). With the minimum 144 credits and the maximum 160 credits, there was almost no room for the university to add their own choices. For example, if the national curriculum stated that the Library Automation course is, say six credits, then it was very difficult for the corresponding LIS educational institute to introduce new courses such as Digital Libraries or Internet; even to add more credit hours for the course was out of the question. The only way to introduce new topics was to insert the new topics into the existing ones.

The national-wide-curriculum even stated the credits for each courses. For example Introduction to Library Science was given two credits, Reference Works two credits and so on. The national curriculum was revised three times: in 1986, 1992 and 1996. In lieu of nation-wide-application, the curriculum is homogenous in all part of Indonesia.

### ***Decentralisation policy***

In 1998 Soeharto stepped down in face of student demonstrations and the rising price of petroleum. The post-Soeharto era is known as the Reformation Era because the society and the new government want to reform wrong practices [sic]. The downfall of Soeharto was followed by the granting of autonomy to the regions/cities in 2000.

During the Soeharto administration, DGHE established various committees which studied the curriculum for each discipline. For example, the committee of education would design the curriculum for undergraduate programmes in education with the result then submitted to the Minister of Education who in turn issued decrees on curriculum. In the 1990s the committees were called consortia. Each discipline has its own consortium. Among them is the Consortium for Philosophy and Literature, covering Literature, Linguistics, History, Philosophy, Archaeology and Library Science. Reacting to LIS Education Institutes' cries for reformation in their curriculum, and in the spirit of reformation, the Consortium of Literature and Philosophy (hereafter called Consortium) made changes. Instead of 144 credits regulated by the DGHE through the Consortium, now it offered only fifty-two credits or about forty percent of the minimum requirement for undergraduate programmes. The remainder will be developed by the respective universities. The Consortium used the four pillars of education as proposed by the UNESCO-established International Commission on Education chaired by Jacques Delors. The pillars of learning consist of expertise to do and behaviour of doing. The course of expertise to do consists of twenty credits (Table 3).

**Table 3. Courses for learning to do – expertise to do (20 credit hours)**

Nos.	Course title	Credits
1	Introduction to Library and Information Science	4
2	Telematique	4
3	Research Methods in LIS	4
4	English language	6
5	Indonesian Librarianship	2

*Sources: Konsorium Sastra dan Filsafat*

**Table 4. Courses for Learning to do –behaviour of doing**

Nos	Course title	Credits
1	Information organisation	4
2	Information source and services	4
3	Conservation and preservation	2
4	Library and Information Institution Management	4
5	Information Marketing	2
6	User Studies	2

**Table 5. Courses for learning to live together**

Nos	Course Title	Credit
1	Communication	4
2	Library co-operation and information networks	2
3	Professional Ethics	2
4	Psychology of Information User	4
5	Library practice	2

Learning to live together, learning to live with others need 14 credit hours (Table 5)

For courses belonging to the principle of learning to be, DGHE stated that there are six credit hours, compulsory for new students and which applies nation-wide for all tertiary education. The courses consist of Pancasila, two credit hours, Bahasa Indonesia or Indonesian language two credit hours and National Resilience two credit hours.

Months after the consortium issued the proposed new curriculum, DGHE conducted national seminars on the new curriculum attended by deans of faculty of humanities, experts in each field and officials from the DGHE. For the LIS curriculum, after the seminar, the British Council sponsored a follow-up seminar<sup>2</sup>. The results were adopted by all participating institutions and distributed to all institutions offering LIS education, becoming the base of each institution's LIS curriculum.

Post-seminar activities were marked by a rather shocking result for the consortium members. While during the Soeharto administration all curriculums was decided on by DGHE and criticised for being too paternalistic, now LIS institutions complained that they could not fulfil the remaining credits! For example, for those LIS schools which are taking the minimum approach, the LIS institutions should design  $144 - 52 = 92$  credit hour courses! Actually the sum is less than 92 credit hours because there nation-wide required courses (six credits) and eight credits of required courses for each faculty. These required courses depend on the faculty. For example, the LIS Department under the Faculty of Humanities required eight courses. These are History of Modern Thought (two credits), Basis of Philosophy (two credits), History of Indonesian Culture (two credits) and Introduction to Humanities (two credits). For the LIS department under the Faculty of Social Sciences, the courses are different; so is that for the LIS Department under the Faculty of Communication (such as in Universitas Padjadjaran). The LIS institutions complained that they did not have enough lecturers, the literature is scarce and obsolete, and they want to know what Jakarta (read DGHE or even Universitas Indonesia) was doing and planning! So on one side there are demands among the LIS institution to develop their own curricula, and on the other side, the LIS institution encountered difficulties in developing their –tailor-made– curriculum for various reasons.

The difficulties are caused by a lack of experienced lecturers, reading materials and IT facilities. Although the DGHE stated that the minimum requirement for a LIS department is six permanent lecturers, four of them having at least a master's degree and two of them holding *Sarjana degrees* (equal to Bachelor degrees), in fact not all universities comply with that requirement. Some of the lecturers are librarians who hold a Masters degree, but by university regulations they are still librarians not lecturers. The second reason is the lack of professional literature. Although there are free publications on the Internet, not all universities subscribe to various vendors. For some lucky academic libraries, the lecturers can obtain free access through the US Embassy-based Information Resource Center in Jakarta. The US IRC established American Corner in fourteen universities. Some academic libraries subscribe to Proquest or Emerald or from other vendors.

Right now, LIS institutions are free to develop their own curricula, free from DGHE or consortium intervention because all consortia were disbanded in early 2002, hence one can find a variety of courses offered by LIS schools in Indonesia.

### Course contents

The nation-wide Ministry of Education issued curriculum just stated the course name with its credit per semester equivalent, it did not specify course content. The making of course content depended on the LIS institutes. However, there were some political events that affected course content for specific courses. Following the New Order era, the new government banned all Communist-related or left-leaning authors, but did not specify their works. For example, the government banned the acclaimed author Pramoedya Ananta Toer, but not specifically his works, although some of his works were pub-

<sup>2</sup> Seminar on Benchmarking Curriculum in Library and Information Science in Indonesia, Bogor, May 2000

lished in the 1950s, before the New Order, and won awards. Those banned books are not allowed to be taught nor can they be used as materials for cataloguing and classification. As banned books, they are not allowed as part of collection management although some are award-winning books.

After the Reformation Era, almost all literary works that were previously banned now are published and freely available at book shops. This condition caused some dilemmas for LIS lecturers because they could not mention the still prohibited books although they are available freely at book shops! This condition also reflected the legal situation in Indonesia!

For the library users, there is a lost generation, a generation that never read literary works produced by Pramoedya Ananta Toer and other prohibited authors. Even now the National Library of Indonesia still required its users who want to read Pramoedya Ananta Toer's works to get permission from the National Intelligence Agency [sic] while the requested books are available everywhere!

### **Opening new programmes**

Before 1998 tertiary education institutions which wanted to open a new department had to submit a proposal to the DGHE. Then the DGHE established a committee to study the proposal, if necessary including site visits. If the committee accepted the proposal, then it submitted its recommendation to the DGHE who then formally issued a declaration that the university could open the programme. This permission from DGHE correlated to the recognition of the degree. If a certain university opens a new programme without DGHE permission, the new programme is considered un-accredited. Un-accredited programmes will cause difficulties for graduates because the degree is not recognised by the DGHE, hence not accepted by the state agencies.

Any state or private firm must get permission from the DGHE to open new programmes. This permit is released after the university submits a proposal of feasibility to open a new programme. The proposal to the DGHE is then submitted to the respective consortium which will judge the proposal, if necessary followed by site visit.<sup>3</sup> During the New Order era, it is compulsory to get permission from the DGHE. If the university broke the law, the DGHE closed the program, gave them un-accredited status and a warning. In the reformation era, such practices were abandoned. Instead the DGHE now acts as a facilitator instead of supervisor! Universities can open any programme. After two years the programme will be inspected by the National Accreditation Agency. This situation caused an excess of new graduate programmes. For graduate programmes, DGHE stated that the would-be programme should employ at least two PhDs in the discipline. Universitas Indonesia complied with that requirement in 1990 when the university opened the first graduate school in LIS.<sup>4</sup> However in the late 1990s Universitas Gadjah Mada and Universitas Padjadjaran opened graduate programmes in LIS without employing any PhDs in Library Science.<sup>5</sup> So, either in undergraduate or graduate LIS programmes there was a breach of law, thanks to the reformation era!

For Diploma Programmes the DGHE's permission is not needed because they are considered internal programmes which needing the university president's agreement.

### **Accreditation**

The Minister of Education set up an accreditation agency called The National Accreditation Board. Its members consist of DGHE officers, academics, and professional associations. LIS institutions were represented by lecturers; so was the Indonesian Library Association.

Regarding curriculum and accreditation, the Indonesian Library Association has no authority to accredit LIS schools as is common practice in many countries, but lately the association was requested to join the accreditation process.

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<sup>3</sup> Many universities are known as naughty ones. They prepared the labs, library, lecture room very well, anticipating the consortium visit, after that they will abandon the facilities and move back to the original situations. For example, in order to impress visitors with the library collection, the university library would borrow from other academic libraries!

<sup>4</sup> The proposal prepared by Sulisty Basuki, Putu L. Pendit and Binny Buchori was fully supported by Dr Norman Roberts who came to Indonesia for that works, thanks to the British Council assistance.

<sup>5</sup> Right now there are only four PhDs in LIS in Indonesia: one teaches at the Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia, one taught at the Faculty of Computer Science Universitas Indonesia, one lady works as librarian cum researcher at Atma Jaya Catholic University in Jakarta and one lecturer moved to the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. None of them taught at Universitas Gadjah Mada and Universitas Padjadjaran!

## Remarks

During the centralised policy era, the curriculum for LIS was decided by the Department of Education and Culture via the Directorate General of Higher Education. For undergraduate programmes, the credit hours needed ranged between 144 to 160. Besides the required courses for new students, there are required courses for each faculty (school). The nation-wide required courses are the same for tertiary education.

For LIS education, the Department of Education and Culture issued a new curriculum regulating the 144 credit hours. From 1985 to 1998, The Minister of Education issued two curricula, one in 1986 and the other in 1992. The centralised policy left little space for any LIS Department to design new courses. During the centralised policy era, introducing new courses or even changes in the department name required DGHE permission!

After the Reformation Era, DGHE changed its approach. Instead of a nation-wide curriculum, DGHE, through various consortia, prepared the a list of minimum courses based on four pillars of education. Consortium Literature and Philosophy, which also covers LIS arranged the new curriculum. For LIS education, the consortium issued only 52 required-credit hours. Hence the LIS education institution which decided to opt for the minimum requirement for *sarjana degree* (144 credit hours), now has more than 90 credits to add. It seemed easy in writing, but difficult in implementation. Lack of current literature, the absorption of the graduates and geographical area determines the curriculum, including the course contents.

Most of the *Program sarjana* graduates are absorbed by special and academic libraries. This situation indirectly influences the LIS institutions to tailor their curriculum for academic and special libraries. In so doing, the LIS institutes neglect school and public libraries, the two kinds of libraries which are neglected and almost all which are in bad condition.

The spread of LIS institutes is not geographically balanced. Only three LIS schools are situated in Eastern Indonesia (Manado and Makassar) while the remaining are on the island of Java and Western Indonesia. Those alumnae are reluctant to work in eastern Indonesia owing to a lack of career development, lack of appreciation toward library works, not always good infrastructure, and bad library situations. In the long term those conditions create an imbalance in Indonesian librarianship, especially for school and public libraries.

## Conclusions

The centralised as well as decentralised policy affected LIS institutions, especially in the curriculum, course content and practice. The nation-wide uniform curriculum applied to any LIS school, leaving little space to manoeuvre for additional courses. The minimum nation-wide curriculum gives enough space for LIS schools to develop its specific courses.

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