The Development of the Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam Organization in Medan City Post-Reformation

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Abstract The present study aims to analyze Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam's (HMI) development in Medan City after the reform era, employing a qualitative research design with a case study approach. This study showcases that HMI has developed significantly through in-depth interviews, document analysis, and field observations. The organization has demonstrated its ability to adapt to social, political, and cultural changes. HMI proactively participates in a wide range of social, political, and religious activities that contribute to the betterment of students, campuses, and the local community. By serving as a platform for political education, HMI in Medan City plays a pivotal role in facilitating thoughtful discussions and fostering the advancement of Islamic thought. Moreover, it acts as a catalyst for promoting constructive social change within its sphere of influence. HMI is firmly dedicated to promoting education, protecting students' rights, and actively advocating for political and social reforms in Indonesia. This research offers valuable insights into the development of HMI in Medan City after the reform era, thereby contributing significantly to the comprehension of the role and potential of student organizations in driving social and political changes in Indonesia.

Keywords: Islamic Student Association, Medan City, post-reform era

Abstrak Perkembangan Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) di Kota Medan pasca reformasi dianalisis melalui penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Melalui wawancara mendalam, analisis dokumen, dan observasi lapangan, penelitian ini memperlihatkan bahwa HMI mengalami perkembangan signifikan. HMI mampu beradaptasi dengan perubahan sosial, politik, dan budaya di masyarakat. Organisasi ini terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan sosial, politik, dan dakwah yang bermanfaat bagi mahasiswa, kampus, dan masyarakat. Sebagai wadah pendidikan politik, HMI di Kota Medan menjadi tempat diskusi dan pengembangan pemikiran Islam, serta penggerak perubahan sosial positif; HMI berkomitmen memajukan pendidikan, membela hak-hak mahasiswa, dan mengawal reformasi politik dan sosial di Indonesia. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang perkembangan HMI di Kota Medan pasca reformasi, berkontribusi pada pemahaman peran dan potensi organisasi kemahasiswaan dalam perubahan sosial dan politik di Indonesia

Kata kunci: Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, Kota Medan, pasca Reformasi

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INTRODUCTION

During the early years of independence, Indonesia faced political instability caused by the Dutch attempts to reoccupy their former colony. Jakarta, serving as the capital of Indonesia, became unsafe primarily due to the presence of the KNIL (Aditian & Kuswono, 2017, p. 17). Consequently, on January 4, 1946, the capital of Indonesia had to be relocated to Yogyakarta (Limah et al., 2018, p. 37). This decision rendered Yogyakarta a crucial stronghold for resisting Dutch colonialism and safeguarding the integrity of the Indonesian state. Subsequently, Yogyakarta emerged as the focal point of government, as it accommodated the president, vice president, and nearly all national leaders. Throughout this period, the Yogyakarta Sultanate, under the leadership of Sri Sultan Hamengkubowono IX, actively supported, assisted, and integrated themselves into the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, with the primary aim of safeguarding Indonesia's independence (Solichin, 2010, p. 1).

During the struggle for independence, endeavors to advance the education sector in Indonesia also commenced. In 1946, the Gajah Mada Higher Education Institute was established, subsequently gaining recognition as one of the esteemed universities in Indonesia. Alongside the Gajah Mada Higher Education Institute, Yogyakarta housed other prominent higher education institutions, including the Higher Technical School (STT), the Islamic Higher School (STI), and the Police Science Academy. The dynamic campus environment played a crucial role in establishing Yogyakarta as a city renowned for its vibrant student life, a distinction it still retains (Solichin, 2010, p. 2).

Historically, HMI (Islamic Student Association) emerged during political instability in Indonesia. This historical context has profoundly influenced HMI's vision and mission, aligning it with the aspiration to participate in the nation's defense actively (Kurniawan et al., 2017, p. 2). HMI was founded on February 5, 1947, in Yogyakarta, with its initial leadership comprised of campus activists, including Lahfran Pane, Mintaredja, Sanusi, Hutagalung, Ahmad, and others. The organization rapidly expanded its presence to different regions surrounding Yogyakarta, such as Klaten and Solo (Syachbudy, 2017, p. 108).

Conceptually, the organization serves as a platform for its members to actualize and enhance their personal development. In education, such organizations play a crucial role in contributing significantly to attaining specific educational objectives (Solihah & Asri, 2023, p. 35). This encompasses the responsibility of safeguarding and fostering the moral values of society, which are frequently entrusted to education during this era of globalization. The dynamics of cultural development and rapid progress in knowledge and technology have given rise to competition in diverse realms, including ideology, economy, and social affairs (Al Ayubbi, 2015, p. 1).
Student organizations are commonly categorized into two groups: intra-campus organizations and extra-campus organizations. Intra-campus student organizations are characterized by their specific objectives and administrative affiliations with the university (Muniruddin et al., 2014, pp. 17-18). On the other hand, extra-campus organizations operate independently from the university bureaucracy and frequently play a pivotal role in cadre development, engaging in various activities that can extend to the national level. Notably, specific extra-campus organizations even establish a presence in foreign universities. As a platform for human resource development, organizations also bear the responsibility of higher education institutions to contribute to the advancement and enrichment of Indonesian society, as stipulated in Law Number 12 of 2012 on Higher Education, Article 5 (Cahyorinartri, 2018, p. 28).

Apart from HMI, there exist various extra-campus organizations, including the Indonesian Islamic Student Movement (PMII), Muhammadiyah Islamic Student Association (IMM), Indonesian Muslim Students Action Union (KAMMI), Indonesian Catholic Student Association (PMKRI), Indonesian Christian Student Movement (GMKI), Indonesian National Student Movement (GMNI), among others. Each organization possesses its unique founding background and distinct characteristics stemming from its diverse objectives and concerns. However, precisely these differences bestow each organization with its unique traits or characteristics. Each organization undergoes dynamics that align with the development of Islam and the historical journey of the Republic of Indonesia (Sitompul, 2008, p. 5).

HMI pursues lofty goals and ideals that aim to improve the nation, society, and state. The objectives of HMI can be summarized as follows: firstly, to uphold and promote Islam based on the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah, with the ultimate goal of instilling a robust belief in monotheism within the diverse societal, national, and state contexts through the practice of enjoining good and forbidding evil. Secondly, to actively, constructively, proactively, inclusively, and integratively engage with the government of the Republic of Indonesia and all national forces, intending to elevate the dignity and civilization of the Indonesian nation in various dimensions, including religious, educational, economic, cultural, social, political, and communal aspects, while promoting harmonious coexistence with other countries worldwide. This is to achieve a just and prosperous society founded on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, following the blessings of Allah SWT. Thirdly, HMI aims to diligently pursue acquiring and advancing knowledge and technology to fortify the nation's future. Fourthly, the organization endeavors to nurture intellectual cadres and advocates for the country, individuals with Islamic, Indonesian, scientific, and independent perspectives. These individuals are envisioned as future leaders who will uphold the principles of independence. Fifthly, HMI strives to identify and eliminate the latent dangers of communist ideologies/teachings in all their manifestations and other ideologies that contradict Islam and Pancasila. Lastly, HMI is committed to consistently striving for the unity of
the Muslim community and the diverse Indonesian nation and the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, encompassing the entire archipelago from Sabang to Merauke. Such unity is regarded as an indispensable prerequisite for realizing the lofty and noble aspirations of the Muslim community and the Indonesian nation as they coexist with other countries (Solichin, 2010, p. 21).

HMI has traversed diverse historical periods as an organization that has endured for over half a century. Each period has yielded valuable records, experiences, and lessons that enrich the Islamic organization’s commitment to the community and the nation while upholding its dedication to serving the divine (Muniruddin et al., 2014, p. 27). This research study analyzes the developmental trajectory of the HMI’s Medan branch, one of the prominent Islamic student organizations in North Sumatra. In the wake of the reform era, it becomes evident that the development of the HMI’s Medan branch manifests distinct characteristics that align with the universal patterns observed in the broader Islamic student movement within Indonesia.

METHOD

The author of this study adopted a qualitative research methodology, employing a literature review approach (Hasan et al., 2023, p. 7). This approach entailed a comprehensive examination and analysis of an extensive collection of books, journals, and scholarly articles relevant to the research topic. Moreover, supplementary data from reputable internet and print media sources were utilized to support the investigation further. The study employed a literature review technique to investigate the development of the Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) organization in Medan during the post-reform era, spanning from 1998 to the present.

The sources utilized by the author comprised writings that specifically addressed the development of Islamic student organizations (HMI) in Medan following the Reform era, encompassing books, articles, and journals. Consequently, the credibility of these sources does not necessitate questioning, as they originate from HMI members themselves.

This research on Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam aimed to investigate its background, development, and the organization’s role in Medan from 1998 to the present. This study utilized a combination of literature review and field research. The literature review involved gathering data from various relevant sources and literature related to the organizational issues under investigation.

Moreover, the field study encompassed interviews with individuals with connections or information about the Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam organization to acquire oral data. The study sought the desired information from diverse sources, encompassing written materials and interviews conducted with members of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam from the Medan branch. The primary emphasis of this research lies in examining the organizational development of Himpunan
Mahasiswa Islam in Medan, with a particular focus on the period following the reform era, spanning from 1998 to the present. The ultimate objective was to employ the findings derived from these sources to address the pivotal research questions posed in this scholarly journal.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The History of HMI Medan Branch

The conception of establishing HMI in Medan, North Sumatra, originated from the thoughts and main ideas of Lafran Pane. This initiative was driven by the collective aspiration to make a tangible contribution to defending Indonesian independence. Consequently, a group of Muslim students took independent action with the spirit of nation-building in collaboration with the community. Based on the research conducted by Suwandi et al., the HMI Medan branch played a significant role in advancing youth empowerment in the city of Medan.

The shared role and spirit united the potential of Muslim students in Medan, and HMI served as an organizational platform to accommodate innovative ideas in various aspects of life, infused with an Islamic touch. The historical foundation of this role can be traced back to a group of students from the Faculty of Medicine at USU and UISU, namely OK. Rachmad Bakri, Deliar Noer, Ahmad Soepomo, and Amir Husein collectively decided to establish the HMI Medan branch.

The official inauguration of HMI Medan took place on November 10, 1952, in the UISU auditorium. Upon its inception, the establishment of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) aimed to defend Indonesian independence, and the Medan branch of HMI also emerged to actively participate in the nation's struggle for independence while supporting student movements. In that period, HMI established its presence within the organizational landscape by fostering strong connections with student communities across universities in Medan. This endeavor proved fruitful, as the UISU student council became the initial chapter to affiliate with HMI Medan, followed by the Faculty of Medicine at USU, the Faculty of Law at USU, and the HKBP Nomensen University.

Subsequently, the initial steps in developing the HMI Medan branch were taken, which solidified its position as a student organization at the University of North Sumatra in Medan. Additionally, efforts were made to elevate the quality of its members by adhering to constitutional regulations and bylaws. Like any newly established organization, Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam faced several challenges and encountered various problems. It assumed a significant role as a struggling organization and provided a platform for nurturing potential activists through its cadres. HMI Medan branch took practical measures by implementing programs aligned with the organization's constitution and objectives. The ultimate aim was to cultivate academically proficient, creative, and dedicated individuals who embody Islamic values and are committed to realizing a just and prosperous society guided by the blessings of Allah SWT.
The establishment of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) in Medan signified the deliberate and conscientious efforts of Islamic activist figures and leaders to unite and collaborate to guide Muslim students toward deepening their faith and devotion to Allah SWT. As an organization, HMI played a pivotal role in serving as a platform for the consolidation and channeling of the aspirations of Muslim students in Medan. Moreover, HMI sought to actualize the ideals enunciated during the proclamation of independence on August 17, 1945, by dedicately endeavoring to establish a just and prosperous society, both in spiritual and material dimensions, guided by the blessings of Allah SWT. These efforts were conducted within the framework of the unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, anchored on the principles of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. As a dynamic city, Medan manifests a vibrant demographic composition encompassing diverse ethnicities, nationalities, and educational backgrounds, thus mirroring the richness of diversity within HMI's Komisariat Faculty of Literature. The coexistence of various ethnic groups and differing academic levels in Medan is a prime illustration of the city's multifaceted nature (Irawadi, 2008).

**The Role of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) Cadres in Youth Leadership Development in Medan City**

The HMI cadres are vital in shaping and nurturing youth leadership within Medan City. Their active engagement in diverse activities and initiatives significantly contributes to the comprehensive development of aspiring young leaders. As emphasized by HMI, the qualities of an ideal individual form the bedrock for cadres to evolve into effective and responsible leaders. These qualities encompass moral solid character, integrity, critical thinking skills, social awareness, and a steadfast commitment to serving the community.

As devoted individuals committed to serving the nation, state, and religion, HMI cadres embody essential leadership qualities required by the community to confront societal challenges. Over the years, HMI has produced a multitude of leaders who have made significant contributions in the realms of politics and government. Examples include Bactiar Chamsyah (former Minister of Social Affairs, 25th period) and Irgan Khairul Mahfidz (Member of the Indonesian Parliament, 2009-2014 and 2014-2019). Moreover, HMI cadres have made significant contributions in the field of education, exemplified by Prof. Dr. H. M Yusuf Hanafiah (former Rector of the University of North Sumatra), Prof. Dr. Hj. Djanius Djamin, SH, MS (former Rector of the State University of Medan and former member of the Medan City Regional People's Representative Council for two terms), and the late Prof. Dr. Nur Ahmad Fadhil Lubis, MA (former Rector and Founder of IAIN SU, which transformed into UIN-SU Medan). Furthermore, Prof. Dr. Usman Pelly, the Chairman of the Foundation of the Islamic University of North Sumatra, and numerous other HMI alums have pursued successful careers in various fields, including economics, law, social sciences, culture, and religion. This demonstrates that HMI, with its ideology, can produce cadres who are needed
in all aspects of life, equipped with the five essential qualities of an ideal individual, contributing to regional development. This is evident not only in the central government but also at the local level, including Medan City (Simangunsong et al., 2019).

Since its inception on November 10, 1952, the HMI Medan branch has been governed by 48 general chairpersons from 1952 to 2023. Electing the branch’s general chairperson entails the active involvement and participation of neighboring commissariats within the Medan branch. This democratic election process ensures a fair representation of various perspectives and stakeholders in the leadership selection. The term of office for the general chairperson of the HMI Medan branch spans one year, following the stipulations outlined in the Articles of Association and Bylaws incorporated within the constitution of the HMI Medan branch (Irawadi, 2008, p. 100).

The branch conference serves as the highest deliberative assembly at the branch level. Apart from electing the general chairperson, it also serves as a platform for organizational consolidation to determine the future direction of the branch through the design of programs that the organization will implement in the upcoming year. The department is also accountable for overseeing the activities of all commissariats in universities where HMI commissariats have not yet been established. Initially, the organization was founded with only four commissariats, but this number has since expanded to 36 commissariats within the Medan branch.

**The General Policy of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) Medan Branch**

To effectively address the current challenges and circumstances faced by HMI Medan Branch and its affiliated chapters, several key working priorities have been identified as part of the general policy for the 2007-2008 term. These priorities serve as guiding principles for HMI Medan Branch in determining the direction of its organizational activities.

The priority is the enhancement of cadres. This entails improving the quality and capabilities of HMI members through comprehensive training and development programs. The goal is to produce competent and skilled individuals who can contribute effectively to the organization and society.

The second priority focuses on establishing and developing entrepreneurial and professional institutions. Within HMI Medan Branch, there is a recognition of the paramount importance of nurturing an entrepreneurial spirit and fostering professional growth among its members. Through essential resources and unwavering support, the organization endeavors to empower its members, enabling them to excel in their respective fields and make meaningful contributions to the broader community’s advancement.

The third priority is organizational modernization. HMI Medan Branch acknowledges the necessity of adapting to the evolving landscape of the modern world. This entails embracing
technological advancements, enhancing administrative processes, and improving communication channels to ensure the organization's efficient and effective functioning.

Lastly, the focus lies on augmenting the role of HMI in effectively addressing student-related matters, nurturing a sense of unity among Muslims, and actively contributing to the nation-building process. The HMI Medan Branch is committed to engaging in various activities and initiatives to promote student welfare, reinforce Islamic values, and uphold the principles of nationalism.

By prioritizing these specific areas of work, the HMI Medan Branch endeavored to establish itself as a dynamic and forward-thinking organization, proficient in tackling present challenges and making significant contributions to the development of its members and society (Sabri, 2014, p. 330).

1. Regeneration Development

Cadre Improvement represents an intrinsic organizational policy directed toward elevating the caliber of cadres within the organization. The underlying purpose is to ensure the ongoing optimization and efficacy of the cadre system. In this particular period, the cadre improvement takes shape through the following manifestations:

a) Improving the Training Management Body (BPL) involves enhancing the quality and quantity of instructors.

b) Promoting an intellectual culture enhances the quality of HMI cadres.

c) The regular and continuous implementation of training activities.

d) Conducting monitoring and in-depth studies on the system, curriculum methods, syllabus, and training management.

2. The establishment and development of entrepreneurship institutions and professional development

The establishment and development of entrepreneurship institutions and professional development (EIPD) represent intermediate policies to fulfill students' needs, interests, and welfare. The Islamic Student Health Institute (LKMI) is identified as one of the existing institutions necessitating further development. Moreover, to provide alternative platforms for members to realize their potential in specific domains, it is considered imperative to establish additional institutions in the future (Sabri, 2014, p. 331).

3. Organizational modernization

Organizational modernization is a policy aimed at creating a healthy organization capable of adapting to various changes and challenges. The efforts to modernize the organization in HMI Medan branch have been carried out through several implemented agendas: First, the enforcement of mechanisms and the improvement of organizational performance should be carried out by the governing organizational framework by instilling a spirit of professionalism,
accountability, and participation. Second, there is a need to improve and provide the necessary facilities and infrastructure to support the organization's functioning.

4. Increasing the role of HMI in student affairs, community, and national affairs

The HMI can undertake diverse strategic roles and function as a catalyst for rejuvenation by effectively responding to external societal conditions through various actions, including discourse development, social engagement, advocacy, and supportive measures. The implementation of this policy stems from the perception that the movement established by HMI has demonstrated limited societal impact and a tendency to prioritize short-term interests. In response to this concern, HMI has opted for a proactive approach to engage with the community, foster long-term development, and advocate for sustainable causes that benefit the broader society. HMI endeavors to bridge the gap between its activities and the community's needs through active engagement in these domains, ensuring a more inclusive and impactful presence.

CONCLUSION

The history of the development of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) in Medan City, established in 1952, has witnessed rapid progress in cadre development and the expansion of its commissariats. Currently, the Medan branch comprises 36 commissariats, whereas initially, there were only four. The development of the Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam organization has encountered diverse challenges and necessitated corresponding solutions under each leadership, aligning with the management's policies and the prevailing issues faced by the organization.

The organization has demonstrated continuous growth concerning cadre development and recruiting new members in Medan City. This growth has facilitated the maintenance of stability in its structure and leadership up to the present time. The endorsement from former members of HMI, occupying critical positions within the government, has significantly contributed to supporting the activities of HMI in the Medan branch. Numerous former members have been actively engaged in reform and renewal since 1998, further enhancing the organization's endeavors.

Their active participation has played a pivotal role in ensuring HMI's continuous advancement and pertinence, addressing both the demands and aspirations of its members and the broader community. The presence of former HMI members in prominent government positions has fostered a favorable environment for the organization's endeavors, enabling it to effectively contribute to social and political transformations in Medan and beyond. The symbiotic relationship between HMI and the government has bolstered the organization's influence and significance in the local context, consolidating its position as a vital social and political transformation agent.
REFERENCES


