

Modernization of Women's Education in Social Change in The Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura, Riau 1927-1950

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Abstract

This study explores the modernization of women's education in the Siak Sultanate during the early 20th century, focusing on the *Sultanah Latifah* School and *Madrasatun Nisa'*. The research addresses how women's education became a medium for social transformation within traditional Malay society amid colonial influence, Islamic reform, and local educational awareness. It investigates the social context and development of women's education in Siak Sri Indrapura, employing a qualitative historical method. Data were collected through archival research, oral history, and field observations. *Sultanah Latifah* School, initiated by Sultan Syarif Kasim II, adopted a Western-oriented curriculum including reading, writing, arithmetic, Dutch, etiquette, and Islamic studies. In contrast, *Madrasatun Nisa'* emphasized Islamic modernist teachings, such as Arabic, women's jurisprudence (*fiqh*), ethics, and reformist thought. These institutions represented a significant shift in traditional female roles, fostering public engagement and intellectual development. The findings highlight that both schools blended local customs, Islamic values, and modern pedagogy, marking a pioneering effort in localized women's educational reform. This modernization promoted not only religious and cultural continuity but also opened avenues for broader societal participation by women. The study concludes that the Siak Sultanate played a key role in advancing women's education within a framework respectful of tradition yet oriented toward progress. It emphasizes the need to preserve such historical educational models and to further explore the legacy of female graduates in shaping modern society. The integration of regional history into educational curricula is also recommended to enrich contemporary understanding.

Keywords: *Modernization, Women's Education, Social Change, Sultanate of Siak, Riau.*

Introduction

The discussion related to the Modernisation of Women's Education in Social Change in The Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura, Riau 1927-1950, in the context of studying the History of Women's Education. This discussion uses a Sociological approach because this research will discuss the social structure of society that influences modernizing women's education. Sartono Kartodirjo explains that a sociological approach can help reveal the values underlying historical figures' behavior, status and lifestyle, belief systems that underlie life patterns, and so on (Sartono Kartodirjo, 1992).

The modernization theory, using the concept of modernity, is used to analyze the object of study of the Modernization of Women's Education in Social Change in the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura. Modernization theory will explain the process of social and economic changes that occur in traditional societies towards modern societies; using the concept of modernity will explain the characteristics of modern society, such as rationality, secularism, and individualism.

According to J.W. School, modernization is a transformation process that changes society in all aspects, including social, political, cultural, and economic aspects (J.W. School, 1991). The modernization that School refers to only changes that have to do with science. School also argues that with modernization comes Westernization because modern society's development occurs due to Western culture's influence.

Modernizing women's education, particularly Madrasatun Nisa's specialization in Islamic religious studies, complemented the previous women's home school, Sultanah Latifah School. In this case, *Madrasatun Nisa'* is a modernization of women's education in the Siak Sultanate. According to Max Weber, the essence of modernization lies in the change from traditional to rationality. Namely, there has been a change from teaching, initially only a band organ or slogan, to teaching full of discussions, assignments, and questions and answers. Sartono Kartodirjo adds that changes in the modernization process will undergo crystallization or institutionalization, such as the emergence of new institutions.

During the leadership of Sultan Syarif Kasim II, education began to develop in the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura. This can be seen from the fact that Sultan Syarif Kasim II began his education when he was 12 years old, and in 1904, he was sent to Batavia to study Islamic law and learned from Sayed Husein Al-Habsyi. He received Islamic law education and attended Prof Snouck Hurgronje's Legal and Constitutional Education course at the Institut Beck en Volten in Batavia. When he was 12 years old, his father died, this, of course, left a shortage of thrones in the Sultanate of Siak, and Sultan Syarif Kasim II was only officially appointed as the 12th Sultan in the Sultanate of Siak when he was 21 years old and had completed his education in Batavia (Dinas Sosial Provinsi Riau, 2024)

In 1917, Sultan Syarif Kasim II established an elementary school to compensate for the *Dutch Hollandsche Inlandsche School* (HIS), which, at that time, the Dutch only accepted students from certain circles. Then the Sultan had the initiative to establish a school. He founded a school based on Islam and then named *Madrasah Taufiqiyah Al-Hasyimiyah*. However, the school was only specialized for boys because, according to Sultan Syarif Kasim II, physical strength must be balanced with the strength of mental development and education of the people, so from the assets he had, he founded a folk school that was only specialized for boys. Sultan Syarif Kasim II firmly refused to recognize the Siak Sultanate as part of the Dutch colonial government, even though the predecessor leaders of the Siak Sultanate had entered into agreements with the Dutch, including the 1824 London Agreement (Dinas Sosial Provinsi Riau, 2024). Women's education developed in the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura during the leadership of Sultan Syarif Kasim II because it was pioneered by an empress named Syarifah Latifah, commonly called Tengku Agung, and also Empress Tengku Maharatu. These two empresses were determined to develop women's education in the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura (Wilaela, 2014).

In 1927, the Empress of Sultan Syarif Kasim II, Empress Syarifah Latifah, established the first special school for women in Riau, precisely around the Sultanate of Siak. The school was named Sultanah Latifah School, which was inaugurated in 1926 (Wilaela, 2015). The reason for Empress Tengku Agung in establishing education for

women in the Sultanate of Siak was to avoid the tradition of *pingitan* or the tradition of confinement that applies to girls (Wilalea, 2016). At that time, the tradition of *pingitan* or confinement was still applicable to Siak women, thus making Siak women unable to progress in their education. Therefore, the Empress established a madrasa to modernize this tradition so that all women in Siak could pursue an education equal to that of boys. However, not long after the establishment of the school, Empress Syarifah Latifah died in 1929, and the second empress, Tengku Maharatu, continued her struggle to continue developing women's education. Apart from managing Sultanah Latifah School (Wilaela, 2014), she established a girls' dormitory and kindergarten and initiated another girls' school called Madrasatun Nisa' or Madrasah Annisa (Wilalea et al., 2018).

The author, in conducting this research, uses Primary Sources in the form of Manuscripts or Historical Records related to Women's Education in the Sultanate of Siak, such as Madrasatun Nisa' Student Diplomas, Sultanah Latifah School Teacher Salary Slips, Agreements and Regulations for the establishment of Madrasah Perempuan, Madrasah Perempuan Lesson Schedules, and Records of the establishment of Madrasah Perempuan in the Sultanate of Siak. The author uses previous research, such as books, articles, and interviews, as secondary sources.

Discussion

The Social Situation Context of Women's Education in Siak

In the educational aspect, before the educational institutions or schools established by the Dutch were present, Riau had already established traditional schools by studying in *surau-surau* and religious colleges, learning how to read the Qur'an, knowing the science of Islam, and learning to write and read Malay in Arabic letters. Reading Arabic Malay letters is very easy to develop because people are delighted to read *Syair-Syair*, which is written in Arabic Malay. In addition to religious learning, there is learning related to physical or agility training called *pencak silat* and character education (Marleily, n.d.).

Traditional education is the basic education in understanding religious knowledge because the Malay tribe is powerful in customs and traditions related to religion. These strong customs certainly impacted education, especially for girls, so much so that when the Dutch arrived throughout Riau, there was no single girls' school (Meisjes). Even though the Dutch government had established several village and government schools, strong customs still did not allow girls to progress (Marleily, n.d.).

In 1915, the Dutch Government established a Dutch-language school, namely HIS (Hollands Inlandsche School), in Siak with the permission of Sultan Syarif Kasim II. The HIS school did not limit its students in the sense that the school was not only intended for noble children, but the cost of education at HIS made children who came from ordinary people certainly unable to enter it. The school managed by the Dutch Government is also not by religious shari'a and customs for Malays because children who go to school at HIS use Dutch, thus making them forget their regional language, namely Malay, not only in the field of language, which is influenced by the Dutch, the association and way of dressing HIS students seem far from religion and Malay culture, this makes the sultan heavy-hearted to see Malay culture replaced by Dutch culture which is undoubtedly not by religious shari'a and customs (Himmatun Aliyah, n.d.).

The Dutch government continued to differentiate between each group of people, so the establishment of HIS was against the wishes of Sultan Syarif Kasim II. Sultan Syarif Kasim II desired that all people could study at the HIS because the construction of the HIS was the source of funds given by the Sultan to the Dutch. So, the influence of this Western education made the Sultan finally open the thought of establishing his own Madrasah through religious Shari'a and customs (Himmatun Aliyah, n.d.). Sultan Syarif Kasim II is a leader who is very sensitive to education, especially for his people. Sultan Syarif Kasim II was a leader of the Sultanate of Siak who had an open mind because he had studied in Batavia, following the advice of the colonial government. He also received modern law and constitutional teaching at the *Beck en Volten Institute* under Prof. Dr. Snouck Hurgronje (Dinas Sosial Provinsi Riau, 2024).

Sultan Syarif Kasim II believed it was not enough to oppose Dutch colonialism by force of arms; it must be balanced with mental strength and education. In 1917, the Sultan established a Madrasah for boys named *Madrasah Taufiqiyah*. This madrasah was established for the nobility and all ordinary people inside and outside Siak who wanted to pursue education (Zaini, 2018). The Sultan established Madrasah Taufiqiyah to teach Islamic religious knowledge more deeply and instill a sense of nationalism in the community. So, at that time, many people could pursue education at the madrasa founded by the Sultan. Madrasah Taufiqiyah was able to attract much attention from the community. The positive aspects of the establishment of this Madrasah are many attractions; even though aristocrats founded this madrasah, Sultan Syarif Kasim II accepted all circles to study at the madrasah he founded, with the existence of madrasah also did not eliminate the traditions and teachings of Islamic values according to *shari'ah adat* for Malays.

Madrasah Taufiqiyah is only specifically for boys. This certainly has an inequality value between boys and girls; if boys freely pursue education, then this is very different from girls, so this is what makes women in Siak at that time still very limited in gaining knowledge; the girls also have limited time because of the tradition of securing or pingging that still applies. The limitations for girls became an attraction for the Empress of Sultan Syarif Kasim II, namely Empress Tengku Agung, who also founded a school for girls in Siak, namely Sultanah Latifah School, and continued with Madrasatun Nisa' which the second empress, Empress Tengku Maharatu, eventually managed.

The Development of Women's Education in the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura

The education of women pioneered by Empress Tengku Agung began with her visit to Medan to accompany Sultan Syarif Kasim II to face the Residents of East Sumatra. This visit was very influential for her. At that time, Medan was already very well known as a city that was advanced in education, not least for its women, who were very different from the women in Riau because, at that time, women in Riau did

not pursue education on an equal basis with boys, especially in the Kingdom of Siak (Wilaela, 2014). As an Empress, Tengku Agung wanted to make a change for her people; seeing the inequality in the Siak area made Empress Tengku Agung express her desire to Sultan Syarif Kasim II to establish Education for Women. Given that in the 1920s, there was not a single women's school in Riau, in this case, of course, Sultan Syarif Kasim II supported his wife's wishes because this was also a form of resistance to the Dutch East Indies government. Sultan Syarif Kasim II, who was the last leader of the Siak Sultanate, had a very open mind regarding the world of education, mainly because he had studied in Batavia, namely at the Beek en Volten Institute (*Nieuwe Schiedamsche Courant*, n.d.). This certainly had a significant effect on his government regarding education, so the Sultan supported the Empress in establishing a special school for women in Siak.

Sultanah Latifah School, or the equivalent of Volksschool (Sekolah Rakyat), was officially established in 1927. The school building was erected in 1929, and the reason 'School' in Latifah School was a common thing used at that time because school names and implementation followed the system of Western schools and were not a traditional education (Wilalea et al., 2018). H.A. Hijmans Van Anrooij's 'Nota Omtrent Het Rijk van Siak' states that the most obvious example of a lack of sources is related to the existence of the Hollandsch Inlandsch School (HIS) in Siak Sri Indrapura, and the Government Inlandsch School, or second-class Malay School which is often equated with the Volksschool or Village School. Resource vacancies were also evident at Sultanah Latifah School and Madrasatun Nisa (Wilalea, 2016). Regarding the number of teachers who taught at the Dutch Native School, there were seven teachers, including 3 Europeans and 1 Native School with 3 Native teachers and one more native girls' school (*Haarlem's Dagblad*, 1931).

However, in the book '*Citra Kabupaten Siak dalam Arsip*' published by the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia, there are several archives related to education in Siak, such as the existence of Hollandsch Inlandsch School (HIS), Madrasah Taufiqiyah, Latifah School, and Madrasatun Nisa.' In this case, it is proven in several historical records, such as several archives, that HIS exists in Siak. The archives that prove the

form of records regarding education in Siak include: The initial part of the Governor General's Decree for the construction of a government school Dutch Malay School in Siak Indrapura Besar, Bengkalis Afdeling 11 February 1918, The budget from the BOW for the construction of the Dutch-Pribumi School (HIS) playground in Siak Sri Indrapoera (including blueprints of the building design) November 1928, Letter of notification to the Chairman of Madrasah Taufiq Alhasyimiah 10 November 1930, Letter to Sultan Assaidis Syarif Kasim Abdul Jalil Syaifuddin regarding a request for financial assistance for education to Mecca 4 June 1933, Letter requesting the Sultan to establish Tarbiyatul Islami religious school 17 August 1933, Letter requesting assistance for Islamic Religious School in Kisaran Asahan to Sultan Syarif Kasim Abdul Jalil Syaifuddin 19 November 1934.

The Empress's work in developing women's education, namely Sultanah Latifah School, collaborated with Rahmah el Yunusiyah (Wati & Eliwatis, 2021), a woman who first established a madrasa for women in Tanah Minang, namely *Diniyah Putri Padang Panjang* which combined skills education and religious education. Eventually, on the advice of Sultan Syarif Kasim II, Tengku Agung's consort established a religious school called Madrasatun Nisa' (Wilaela, 2015). By collaborating with Rahmah El Yunusiyah, the students who had graduated from Madrasatun Nisa' received a scholarship from Sultan Syarif Kasim II to continue their education at *Diniyah Putri Padang Panjang*. A few weeks after *Madrasatun Nisa'* was inaugurated, Empress Tengku Agung passed away, precisely on 03 March 1929. However, according to the results of observations made by the author in obtaining contemporaneous archival records from the Siak Regency Library and Archives Service, Madrasatun Nisa' was officially established in 1933 in August.

In the Archive source obtained, there is a paragraph that reads, "*Pada 20 hari boelan Agustus 1933, maka patik telah memboeat Vergud ring boeat mendirikan Madersah tempat perempoean beladjar, maka berkat daulat Sri padoeka jang maha moelia maka berdirilah Madersah jang terseboet itoe bernama Madersatoennisak dengan dikepalai oleh anggota2 jaitoe seorang Voorzitter, Vice Voorzitter, Secretaris, Pennikmeester, 2 orang adviseur oegagama, dan*

6 orang commissarissen. Maka peladjaran2 jang diberikan dalam Madersah itoe adalah diseboetkan dalam statuten jang nanti patik akan sembahkan. Maka oleh hal jang demikian sekiranya kebawah doeli tiada berkeberatan patik pohonkanlah besluit pendirian Madersah jang terseboet itoe adanja. Ampun toankoe. Diatas nama anggota patik ketoea. (Ditandatagani) Siak Sri Indrapoera, 23 Oktober 1933. 'On the 20th day of August 1933, the patik has made a Vergud ring boeat to establish a Madersah where perempoean beladjar, then thanks to the sovereignty of Sri padoeka jang maha moelia, the Madersah was established and named Madersatoennisak with members headed by a Voorzitter, Vice Voorzitter, Secretaris, Pennikmeester, 2 religious advisors, and 6 commissarissen. So the lessons given in the Madersah itoe are set out in the statute which you will later certify. Therefore, in this case, if you have no objection to the patik pohonkanlah besluit establishment of the Madersah jeboet itoe adanja. Sorry toankoe. On behalf of the members of the patik ketoea. (Signed) Siak Sri Indrapoera, 23 October 1933,' (Kearsipan, n.d.).

So from this, the certainty in the establishment of Madrasatun Nisa has not been formalized with certainty between 1929, as written by previous researchers, and 1933, according to the results of the author's observations. However, what is certainly known in general is that after Empress Tengku Agung died, the management of Madrasah Perempuan was continued by Tengku Syarifah Fadlun, the younger sister of Empress Tengku Agung, who was married by Sultan Syarif Kasim II, and became Empress with the title Tengku Maharatu.

After the Death of Empress Tengku Agung, Empress Tengku Maharatu managed two schools, Latifah School and Madrasatun Nisa'. Tengku Maharatu also had the initiative to build a girls' dormitory for orphans and students from outside the area. As for the difference in the learning system of Latifah School and Madrasatun Nisa', if Latifah School only learns skills and household knowledge, then Madrasatun Nisa' has additional knowledge, namely general knowledge and religious knowledge. Madrasatun Nisa also provides morning or afternoon school for HIS children who want to pursue religious education.

The lessons at Madrasatun Nisa' consist of four classes, recorded in the contemporaneous Archives obtained by the author during the observation. In the Archives it is written:

Table 1. List of Madrasatun Nisa's lessons

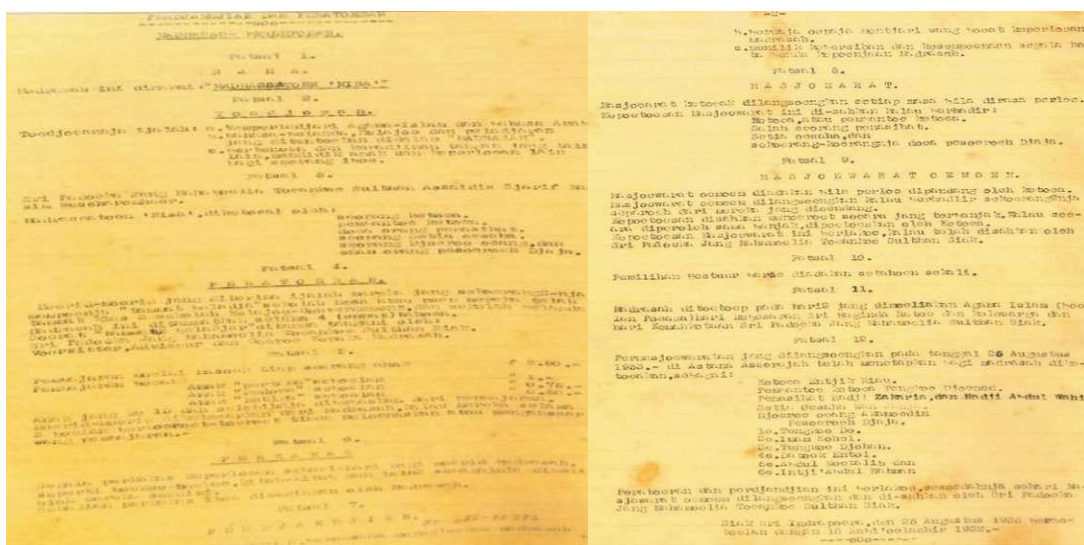
<u>MADRASATOEN'NISA'</u> <u>Retrieved from</u>				
First Class	Language	general knowledge		Religion
	Melayu, Arab, and Belanda	Berhitoeng, Ilmoe Boemi Hindia, drawing, promise, body movement.		Qoran, Tadj'wit, roekoen, and sjarat
Second Class	Language	General knowledge		Religion
	Idem	Idem		Idem added with Tawarich-Islam
Third Class	Language	General knowledge	Handymen	Religion
	Idem	Idem added with Ilmoe Boemi Eropa and Ilmoe Alam.	Bertenen crochet etc.	Idem
Fourth Class	Language	general knowledge		Religion
	Idem	Idem added to the knowledge of planting, hygiene, and cleanliness, educating children, and managing the household.		Idem

Source: Copy of Archives belonging to the Library & Archives Office of Siak Regency (2023)

The development of this curriculum is an effort made by Empress Tengku Maharatu to continue the struggle that Empress Tengku Agung initially managed. This curriculum change will attract the community's attention and encourage them to send their children to school, as the curriculum is certainly complete with religious and general knowledge.

In addition to the archives of the women's education curriculum, there are contemporaneous archives in the form of agreements and regulations of women's madrasas. The agreements and regulations contain as many as 12 articles. The first article is the name of the madrasa, 'Madrasatoen Nisa,' the second article contains the purpose of the establishment of the madrasa, the third article contains the leadership of the madrasa, the fourth article is a regulation, the fifth article is learning, the sixth article contains what tools are in the madrasa, the seventh article is an agreement, the eighth article is a deliberation, the ninth article is a general deliberation, The tenth article contains the election of the new Bestuur (power) held once a year, the eleventh article contains the days when the madrasah is closed, such as the days of religious greatness (fasting month), the day of greatness of His Majesty the Queen and family, and the day of His Majesty the Glorious Sultan of Siak, the twelfth article contains the deliberation held on 25 August 1933 which determines the written names as Madrasah administrators.

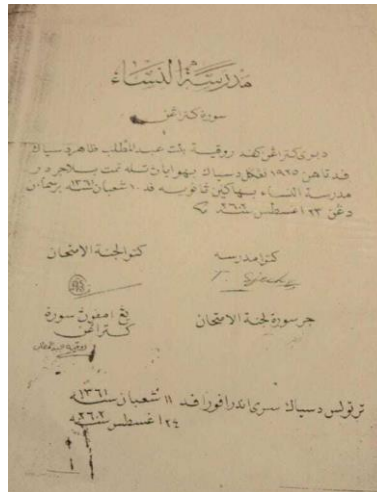
This archive of agreements and regulations was signed and ratified by the Sultan on 25 August 1933, which is a strong historical record to prove that Madrasatun Nisa was established in 1933. This was exactly seven years after Latifah School, a household school, and then continued with Madrasatun Nisa as a religious school for women only but also included a school for girls.



Source: Copy of archives belonging to the Library and Archives Office of Siak Regency

Figure 1. Women's Madrassah Rules and Agreements

In addition to the evidence of historical records in the form of agreements and regulations for the establishment of a female madrasa under the name Madrasatoen Nisa, there is evidence related to the Madrasatoen Nisa diploma, which is written in Malay Arabic writing, if translated into Indonesian it is, 'Madrasatun Nisa' Certificate, given to Ruqoyah binti Abdul Muthalib, in Siak in 1925 dated in Siak that she has graduated from Madrasatun Nisa' part of Tsanawiyah on 10 Sya'ban in conjunction with 23 August, signed by the Head of Madrasah, Written in Siak Sri Indrapura '.



Source: Wilela et al. *Prosopography of Women Educators in Riau (1927-2016)*. (Pekanbaru, Riau: CV. Asa Riau, 2018). Page. 42.

Figure 2. Madrasatun Nisa' student certificate

This archive source belongs to one of the Madrasatun Nisa students who, at that time, had studied at the school founded by the Sultan and the Empress for children, especially women. This is undoubtedly evidence of the development of education for girls, not only boys, but also equality in the field of education, and madrasas which were initially only formed in folk schools that only studied domestic science, became developed with a curriculum of religious learning and general learning, this became a level of competition with the schools established by the Dutch East Indies government at that time.

The existence of educational equality between boys and girls became an attraction for the community to send their children to the school founded by the Sultan so the school founded by the Dutch became a minimal interest; this was a form of resistance

against the colonizer, as for something that causes the school founded by the Dutch to be an indicator of minimal interest because the Education Politics (*onderwijspolitiek*) of the Dutch East Indies Government to HIS has caused 8000 HIS students to be damaged. After all, these children have forgotten their language, namely Malay, and some of their behavior and how they dress and socialize with children of government schools, such as he, are seen as not by custom and religion (Wilaela, p. 127).

Currently, the government still preserves the Madrasatun Nisa' building as historical evidence related to education for women. It is used as an archive storage place called Kutab or Syari'ah Library. The historical building of the former Madrasatun Nisa' officially became Kitab in 2017 as a cultural heritage and archive storage place of the Siak Sultanate, which is managed directly by the government of the Library and Archives Office of Siak Sri Indrapura Regency, Riau Province.



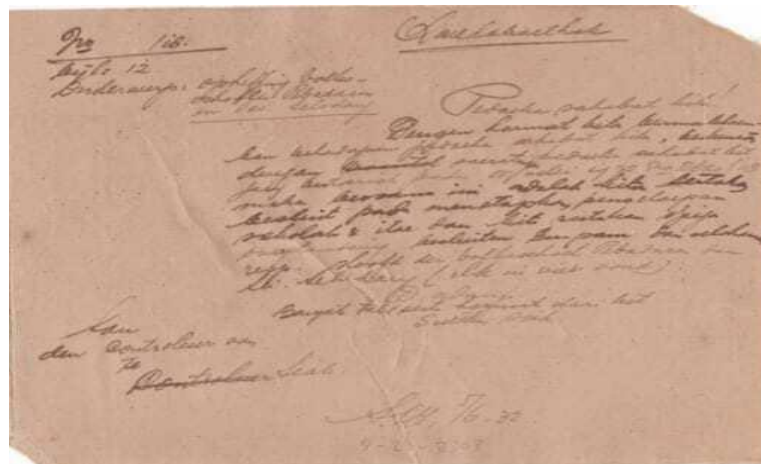
Source: *Personal Documents*

Figure 3. Kutab Building/Formal Madrasatun Nisa' Building

This Madrasatun Nisa building still says it was founded after May 1929. However, according to sources obtained by the author during observation, the writing on this board still has an error in the year. The Siak Regency Library and Archives Service have not updated it. Pak Andika revealed this as an employee of the DPAD of Siak Regency who was in charge of Kutab. He conveyed that there was an error because this was only revealed after the Madrasatun Nisa' Archives were found, and while Madrasatun Nisa' is believed to have been established in 1933, with a record of contemporaneous Archives written (Andika, 2023).

As for the Latifah School building, there is no historical evidence of a building like Madrasatun Nisa'. However, the historical record of the existence of Latifah School is only in the form of salary slips of teachers who, at that time, taught at Latifah School. Pak Andika also revealed this as an employee of DPAD Siak district because he was in charge of maintaining the Latifah School and Madrasatun Nisa Archives.

As for some of the Salary Slip Archives found by the author from the sourcebook Bibliography Annotated Manuscripts of the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura, the archives related to the Sultanah Latifah School are, salary request letters and requests for auxiliary teachers to Sultan Abdul Djalil Saifoedin, the archive numbered 152-K09-028 was written on 16 April 1929, the author of the letter is the head teacher at Sultanah Latifah School, he has been appointed at the school from 01 May 1928 according to letter number 57 with a salary of 55f. He requested that the salary he had not received since May 1928 be paid immediately; in addition, he requested that his salary be increased by 25f because the current salary was insufficient for various reasons.

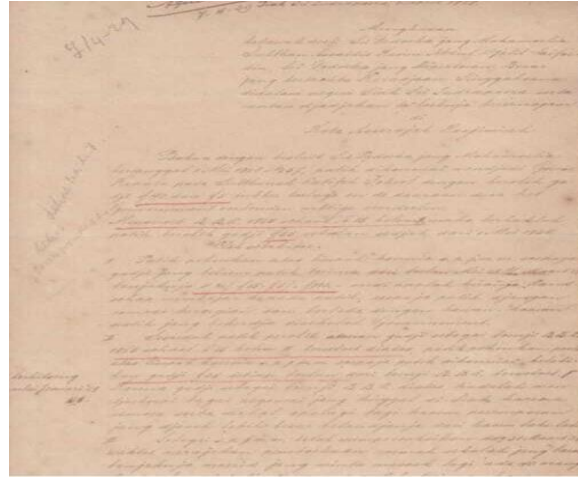


Source: Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture, *Annotated Bibliography of Manuscripts of the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura*, (Jakarta, 2018), pp. 184.

Figure 4. Head Teacher Letter at Sultanah Latifah School

Although the written Archives are unclear, the book Bibliography Annotated Manuscripts of the Siak Sultanate, it is explained the contents written in the historical archive records, in addition to the Archives related to salary slips contained in the book Bibliography Annotated Manuscripts of the Siak Sultanate, there are other Archives related to education, such as the Archives regarding the Decree to close the School on

05 May 1923, which contains a decision letter to close schools due to several difficulties, text excerpt No. /18; Bijl: 12; Onderwerp: ophaling volkschool pebedaran en Dei Seladang; Qawl al-haq; Padoeka our friend.



Source: Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture, *Annotated Bibliography of Manuscripts of the Sultanate of Siak Sri Indrapura*, (Jakarta, 2018), pp. 168.

Figure 5. Decree to close schools due to some difficulties

Sultanah Latifah School and Madrasatun Nisa' founded by Empress Tengku Agung and its management continued by Empress Tengku Maharatu, who received full support from Sultan Syarif Kasim II, certainly provided good participation and achievement. Various types of activities show the participation of this women's Madrasah, such as the Khatam Qur'an activity at the Palace, which is an event of khatam Al-Qur'an of royal daughters totaling around 10 people; they are orphans who became the adopted children of Sultan Syarif Kasim II.



Source: Asserayah Hasimiyah Palace Collection.

Figure 6. Photo with royal princess during khatam qur'an event

The existence of this activity became a form of progress that developed and became valuable in the form of history. Sultan Syarif Kasim II was also very concerned about education for women. Of course, the Sultan supported all activities for girls in Siak, not just education for men, so something that had developed well during the leadership of Sultan Syarif Kasim II in paying attention to women's education became a form of fair leadership. The achievement of the establishment of the Palace School pioneered by the Empress, made the women in the future more open-minded to develop knowledge after Madrasatun Nisa' management was transferred to the government of the Republic of Indonesia and was no longer under the management of the Kingdom, then automatically the times at the beginning of independence opened a new page for women. This new page could make women educated at the school founded by the Empress, opening new education for other women in Riau.

From the beginning of independence until a decade of reform, women's education is a modern education based on religious knowledge, such as boarding schools, one of which is the Diniyah Putri boarding school. This is undoubtedly an achievement for the Empress as the first female figure in Riau in the era before independence had established a Palace school in Siak, and after independence, was able to produce alums who had a role and knowledge to develop education in Riau in general. The participation given to the development of women at that time was not only from the educational aspect but in the cultural aspect it also began to develop, such as the Zapin Dance, if previously the Zapin Dance could only be performed by men, then the development of the times for women could dance this dance, the Zapin Dance itself is a tradition and culture that exists in Siak, this dance is an acculturation of mixing cultures from Arabic, because the Sultan of Siak has Arabic and Malay descent, so this dance is used in the Siak Palace environment.

Conclusion

The study results explain that women's education in the Sultanate of Siak experienced many struggles carried out by Empress Tengku Agung and Empress

Tengku Maharatu. In breaking down a tradition that prevailed in society in the 20th century, traditions that made girls hindered and limited in getting an education, thus making the Empress tried to change the mindset of the community at that time.

This research reveals that academically, the learning in the schools or madrassas that were established were more like household schools with religious learning materials. The disadvantage is that there is no sustainability in managing the women's madrasa founded by the Empress. The empress figure has not been generally recognized for her role in establishing the first female education in Riau because the people in the Siak area better explicitly know this figure. In contrast, the people in other Riau areas are not so phenomenal towards the empress figure and her services.

The research results also revealed an error in the year count of the establishment of Madrasah Perempuan in Siak, namely *Madrasatun Nisa'*, which was originally written in 1929. Then, in the archive of contemporaneous records, it was written that *Madrasatun Nisa'* was established in 1933, in accordance with the archival records obtained, which contained regulations and agreements for the establishment of *Madrasah Perempuan*.

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