

Educational Policy in Sabah Colonial Era

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Abstract

The colonial period in the state of Sabah is divided into three, namely the Borneo Chartered Company Administration Period (1881-1941), the Japanese Administration Period (1942-1945), and the British Colonial Period (1945-1963). Every era of this colonial era administration gave profit to the government in the state of Sabah at that time. The Borneo Chartered Administration period introduced British policies by adding more schools with English elements and likewise during the Japanese Administration period which began to eliminate the British influence in the state of Sabah by introducing Japanese elements such as Japanese patriotic songs, the Japanese language to elevate the Japanese nation itself. Seen the Japanese era in the state of Sabah was a bit of a mess due to the war so the development of education was slow and too little attention was given. The situation is improving and the government is taken over by the British Military Army (BMA) and begins to focus little by little on the aspect of educational rehabilitation in the state of Sabah. BMA started organizing long-term plans and was seen to be more structured in managing education in the state of Sabah. However, the situation is not so perfect because every government only wants to make a profit and is not the main aim of developing education. Therefore, education in the state of Sabah has been slow to receive development since before Malaysia was formed by the ruling government.

Keywords: Education, Sabah, Colonial, Education in Colonial era Sabah

Introduction

Sabah is famous for the "country under the wind" also known as North Borneo. Sabah is located on Borneo Island which is in the eastern part of Malaysia and is separated from the Malay Peninsula by the South China Sea. The early history of the state of Sabah is unknown before the arrival of Western influence because there are no written records, except for the records of Chinese writers who settled in the Kinabatangan River during the Yuan Dynasty in 1206 and the records of the rulers of the Sultanate of Brunei and Sulu. Sabah was once ruled by the Sultanate of Sulu according to Ariff (1970); Warren (1931); Tarling (1978); Sabah was also once ruled by the Sultanate of Brunei based on the accounts of (Sweeney, 1968; Hughes, 1940; Leys, 1968; Black, 1968). Sabah received Western influence after Alexander Dalrymple settled in Sabah, an officer of the British East India Company in Madras who sailed to Sulu and made several agreements with the Sultan of Sulu. Then Alexander Dalrymple got permission from Sultan Muizuddin Syah to make a settlement on Balambangan Island on September 12, 1762. Based on Dayu's account (2013), Balambangan Island was the first British settlement

on Borneo Island (Sabah). The position of this island is near Teluk Marudu which is about 21 km from Kudat in the north of the state of Sabah. At that time, the Western powers, especially the British, tried to control the trade routes of merchant ships from India and China. Dalrymple also opened and raised the British flag at Tanjung Periuk on Balambangan Island on January 22, 1763. The island was chosen because it was close to the trade route between China and Sulu. The island is also used as a base to fight against pirates in the waters of Singapore and China as well as a trading stopover base when they go back and forth to China. Because of Sabah's position, the British defended Sabah so that it would not fall into the hands of other powers, especially the Dutch. Sabah's position is very strategic as a port of call. Dalrymple's persistent and earnest efforts succeeded in persuading the Sultan of Sulu to hand over the northeastern area of Sabah (from Kimanis to Kinabatangan (Abai Channel)), Banggi Island, Palawan Island and Labuan) to the British Company on June 8, 1764 based on (Whelan's record, 1970; Irwin, 1986; Daily Express, 2001).

Issues in Educational Policy in Sabah Colonial Era

Colonial era education in the state of Sabah shows that the colonialists had no interest in the aspect of education. The beginning of the British settlement on Balambangan Island shows that they were originally interested in the position of the state of Sabah which was used as a port of call. The education sector is not the main goal to be developed and even less emphasized to the community. The main focus of the colonialists is to make a profit in the purely economic aspect. The economic pressure became more intense when there was an increase in the demand for tea in England and opium in the Southeast Asian market after the British took control of Bengal in 1760 (Encyclopedia of Malay History and Culture, 1998). Because of that, the colonial policy has delayed the public's awareness of the importance of education in the state of Sabah. Not only that, even the colonial policy in education has also become one of the factors in the society's slow acceptance of formal education. This situation has caused the educational achievement of the state of Sabah to be in a backward position compared to other states in Malaysia. This is compounded by the geographical factors of the state of Sabah which make it difficult for people to get formal education in government schools. Facilities and facilities that were slow to be developed by the colonialists during the colonial era have also weakened the people of Sabah to get education in schools. Therefore, the people in the state of Sabah are slow to accept the disclosure of the importance of education among them. Education is considered unable to change the future of the family, especially the poor and underprivileged. The colonial era in the state of Sabah has given the perception that education is not an important thing to develop.

Literatur Review

Previous study by Long (1978) studied the development of education in the state of Sabah. His study focused on the development of education before Malaysia was formed until the birth of the nation of Malaysia in 1963. This past study is very helpful in this article to provide knowledge especially about the policies of the state government in relation to the development of education as recommended by the Education Board. The main principles that become the pattern of development in the state of Sabah were also explained in previous studies. In addition, previous studies also show useful data such as the increase in the number of children attending primary school. In addition, this past study is also very useful because it provides information such as vocational lessons that started in the state of Sabah since 1948,

namely the Menggatal School of Carpentry, which was established to train native children in carpentry and handicrafts.

There is a study by Sansalu (2013) titled History of Education Development in Sabah 1881-1981 that helps in this article. A study that contains the background of the state of Sabah, traditional education, the development of education in the era of chartered companies and continued until the development of education in the colonial era helped a lot in this study. Sansalu (2012) study also touches on the development of Chinese schools (1881-1963) up to the education policies in the state of Sabah (1881-1981). The focus of the past researcher's discussion is more on the history of development and the driving factors for the transformation of education among the people of Sabah before and after the arrival of western influence and then after the establishment of Malaysia. This focus is in line with the theme of education by focusing the discussion on the development of primary and secondary school education in Sabah. This past study is also very helpful in this study by providing information such as changes in education, especially from the aspect of increasing the number of schools, teachers and students as well as changes in terms of curriculum and government policy. There is also in this past study discussing the diversity of school types, school trends and the medium of instruction used.

Research Metodology

This study fully uses qualitative methods that use document and manuscript analysis methods. Critical observation and analysis of records or documents is used and is very important to ensure the validity of the data taken. The documents used in this study were obtained from the Sabah state branch of the National Archives, Sabah Foundation Research Library, Universiti Malaysia Sabah Main Library, Universiti Malaya Main Library and Sabah State Main Library. Books, journals, and scientific studies related to education in the state of Sabah are also used to help strengthen the findings of this study.

Findings

The findings of this study will be divided into three, namely the development of education during the North Borneo Chartered Company 1881-1942, the development of education after the Japanese war in 1946-1963 and the development of Chinese schools in 1881-1963.

Education in Sabah during the time of the North Borneo Chartered Company (1881-1942)

Cecila (1989), there are only a few notes about education in Sabah before 1881 but during the administration of the Borneo Chartered Company systematic education began. Dayu (2013) also stated that in 1881, the beginning of formal education among indigenous Muslim and non-Muslim children, which was as soon as the SBBU government. The first British governor, William Hood Treacher, built an Islamic religious school in Sandakan at the end of 1881. W.H. Treacher, who was the first governor, has injected awareness that the study of the Quran is important for the people in the islands and coastal areas. Therefore, efforts to implement religious schools have been taken.

However, based on Long (1978), this religious school was not well received because of the suspicion of Muslims, and the the founder was Muslim. Parents doubted that the construction of the school was solely aimed at Christianizing their children. Catholic missionary schools opened in 1887. These schools accepted students from all races. In 1891, two missionary schools were opened in Sandakan, one of which was run by Protestant missionaries and the

other was dedicated to female students. At the beginning of this century there were seven missionary primary schools. Missionary bodies active in the field of education are Society of Proposition of the Gospel (S.P.G.), Mill Hill Mission (M.H.M.), Basel Mission and Seventh Day Adventists (S.D.A.).

As the establishment of schools accelerated in 1909, the Department of Education was established to ensure that all government aid to schools was used properly, more precisely to overcome schools funded by private bodies, namely Christian missionaries and the community. Chinese. Basically, it is the Department of Education that carries out supervision work but in practice, this department is placed under the administration known as the Department for the Protection of Chinese Affairs. This has caused the growth of schools in rural areas to stagnate. As a result, the native people who are the majority population in rural areas have been abandoned.

In 1911 records show that primary education uses English and Chinese as the medium of instruction. This covers lessons from Grade 1 to Grade 6. At that time it was found that there were 13 missionary schools that used English as the medium of communication and eight private primary schools whose medium of studied was Chinese. The first government school established in Kota Kinabalu was in 1915. The purpose of its establishment was to train the sons of important people or officials to enable them to participate actively in the administration of the state when they have finished school. This school is called the Bumiputera Children's Training School. This school offers a three-year course to the children of bumiputera chiefs who come from all over the state and are between the ages of nine and 25. According to Tregonning (1965) They followed a course based on the syllabus issued by the Department of Education of the Straits Settlements. Unfortunately due to the decline in the number of students and the lack of support from the native leaders themselves, the school was closed in 1930, (Baker, 1965).

The first primary school to use Malaysian as the medium of instruction was established in 1921 in Kota Belud and Papar, Menumbok and Keningau in 1922. By 1926, lessons in primary schools were using Malaysian, Chinese and Dusun (Kadazan). The good goal of establishing these schools to provide education to the bumiputera was not achieved because these schools did not get a good response (Long, 1978). Although Christian and Chinese religious schools grew, that is, there were 111 schools with 8700 students in 1940, but it was still not enough to meet the growing needs. Throughout the administration of the Borneo Chartered Company, education was left behind in terms of quality despite having produced students who inherited loyalty to their race. This is because the opportunity to exchange ideas is not there and the government is more focused on economic development efforts than supporting the development of education.

In 1932, the total domestic revenue was 2,850,918 but the expenditure on education was only 22,294 which was 0.78%. Likewise in 1940, the total domestic revenue was 3,517,000 but the expenditure was only 43,003 which is only 1.2%. The situation was not that much different in 1941, that is, the total domestic revenue was 3,833,610, but the expenditure on education was only 49,791, which is only 1.3%. This has proven that the Chartered Company government is not working hard to develop the education system in the state of Sabah. The purpose of providing education to local children is only to meet the needs of their

subordinates who know how to read, write and count. This situation is the same in Malaya in the 20th century. Therefore, it is not surprising that during the Chartered Company's rule there was no effort to establish secondary schools for the bumiputera. Long (1978), English lessons in schools that use Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction are not taught seriously and are said to be never taught.

The Development of education after the Japanese war in 1942-1945

In this period, government schools and schools built by Christian missionaries and Chinese people were stopped. Its school buildings are used by the government to spread Japanese language lessons. This is by force with the aim of eliminating all western influence. Malay schools were maintained but could not operate properly due to factors such as abandoned school buildings and many missing school equipment. Sansalu (2013) stated that almost all vernacular schools, missionary schools and private schools built by British colonialists, Christian church bodies and Chinese people were damaged. The Japanese government had to open and reorganize any schools that were not damaged by the war. The schools were organized and re-administered under the Japanese military administration by introducing an education system known as "Ko Min Gakko" which means "free national school", in accordance with the policy of Japanization or Niponization policy. This education system was introduced to create the prosperity of Greater Asia under the Japanese colonial rule.

Japanese education policy at the time strictly prohibited the use of English in schools and burned all English textbooks. On the other hand, Japanese is used in schools to replace English, Chinese but Malay is encouraged and continues to be taught in schools. The retention of the teaching of the Malay language aims to win the hearts of the local population because the Malay language was already used as the medium of communication in primary schools during the SBBU administration.

The Japanese government issued many instructions to teachers to follow the way of teaching as implemented in Japan. All matters related to the people of Southeast Asia are placed under the administration of Greater East Asia as a desire to build the idea of "Asia for Asian Nations" and the Japanese nation to act as "the protector, leader and light of Asia". In order to make the idea a success, the Japanese language was enforced and used as the medium of instruction in schools, while all forms of Western influence were eliminated.

Although the use of Malay continues to be maintained in all primary schools, students are also instructed to learn Japanese. Local children from indigenous Muslim tribes such as Brunei, Bajau, Irranun, Kadayan and others as well as non-Muslim indigenous children such as Dusun, Murut, Rungus and Kadazan were forced to learn to read and write in Japanese and sing patriotic songs. Japan every morning assembly at school. Learning at school during the Japanese rule was free and according to the curriculum, schedule and calendar of schools in Japan. All teachers and students are forced to learn Japanese every day, while learning English and Chinese is strictly forbidden. As a result, Chinese schools and any schools that use English as the medium of guide cannot operate and are simply neglected. This caused school management at that time to be less than satisfactory due to the system change from English and Chinese to Japanese. The school building is also limited and abandoned and most of the equipment is damaged. The implementation was messy, due to the war they could not concentrate on developing the schools.

Therefore, it can be concluded that throughout the Japanese administration, the development of education was a mess due to the ongoing war. Every activity and ideal that Japan exclaims is just propaganda to get the support of the local community. After Japan surrendered at the end of 1945, the British Military Army (BMA) took over the government in Sabah.

The Development of Education in the British Colonial Period (1945-1963)

When BMA administered Sabah, education management was placed under the leadership of Major E.R. Perry who was assisted by two police officers with the rank of captain. They were tasked with restoring the chaotic state of education management during the Japanese rule. In October 1945, when the BMA came to power, the educational headquarters was placed on Labuan Island. The office was then moved to Jesselton in February 1946 temporarily staying in the SPG church body building.

This era is divided into two time periods namely 1945-1946, and 1946-1963. The first period i.e. 1945-1946 was the period of British military rule in Sabah while the second period i.e. 1946-1963 was the period of administration by the Colonial Office. Currently the demand to send children to school is very encouraging compared to the days of the Chartered Company. This in particular, according to Larson (1974) is a result of the experience during the Japanese rule which made it compulsory to learn the Japanese language.

In 1946, Sabah officially got a Director of Education and for the first time it got a five-year education plan covering the years 1947 to 1952. The headquarters in Labuan was moved to Jesselton (now known as Kota Kinabalu). The office has issued a study policy. This policy is divided into short-term and long-term plans. The purpose of the long-term plan is:-

- i) to eliminate ignorance and illiteracy to improve the level of education, health and agricultural knowledge.
- ii) to provide primary school education for a year to all children within the school environment.

This six-year primary education focuses on health, agriculture and English, in addition to providing assistance to voluntary bodies in the field of education. At the end of the plan in 1952, Kent College was established in Tuaran, about 34 km from Kota Kinabalu and 20 students were recruited for the first year of study. These teachers are trained to teach in primary schools.

Short-term plan is a temporary action that needs to be rushed. The main purpose of this plan is to accelerate the development of education, especially at the primary school level. In this program girls have been given the opportunity to gain knowledge. This was a new change after the war. For example, in 1949, out of a total of 3,811 students, 463 of them were female students (Larson, 1974). Girls are also needed as the main source of potential local teachers.

In this era, the government provides assistance to schools that are administered by voluntary organizations and missionaries to advance education in Sabah. Therefore, the government encourages these bodies to continue carrying out activities on the condition that these bodies follow the government's policies and instructions such as following the syllabus and supervision of their schools closely (Long, 1978). The government's loose policy to promote

the development of education, has created four different school systems in the state in 1953, namely, Native Voluntary Schools, Christian Religious Schools, Chinese Schools and Government Malay Schools. Native Voluntary Schools are schools that are financed by the people or the people of the village themselves. This school exists as a result of parents' awareness of their children's education.

These four school systems are independent and there is no interrelationship with each other in the system, except for the cursory attention given by the government. Uniformity does not exist in terms of quality and retention, causing difficulties for students who want to move from one system to another or from primary school to secondary school.

Therefore, in 1956, two Sabah Education Boards and Local Education Committees were established and education laws in Sabah were also established. Among the duties of the Sabah Education Board are:

- i) Report and advise the Governor on lessons. the rules to be presented and all matters considered important in the education of the colony, especially in relation to the establishment of independent schools.
- ii) appoint one of the acting committees (equivalent to a committee) from time to time if deemed necessary.
- iii) Do any other tasks stipulated in the lesson ordinance.

Following the readjustment in policy and the establishment of the Sabah Education Board in 1960, the government intends to fully take over the responsibility to transform the Voluntary schools of State children into government schools. However, this plan took more than fifteen years because of the problem of trained teachers. Until 1962, training courses were conducted by the government for the teachers of the Children's Voluntary School to improve the quality of education.

The Age of the Malaysian Government (After 1963)

Cecilia (1998) stated that Sabah put hope to achieve the appropriate level of education when the state of Sabah achieved independence through the formation of Malaysia in 1963. This is because during the eighty-two years under foreign rule, it was proven that the value and level of education as well as the total number of getting an education opportunity is the worst when compared to the condition of the colonial states near Sabah. In 1983, there was a great awareness between the Education system in the Peninsula and in Sabah. The state government has launched a four-pronged plan in relation to the Federal Government to overcome the inherited weaknesses. The existing facilities have been expanded and improved. Free primary education for all children who are eligible for school is a priority goal. Facilities for secondary education are also expanded throughout the state of Sabah. For examples in Kota Kinabalu, there were early secondary schools such as (SK Likas, 1966; SMK Putatan, 1967; SMK Sanzac, 1969; SM Menggatal, 1970). Having realized the existence of differences between the Peninsular and Sabah, the step taken was to integrate the Education system through the establishment of the first Malay secondary class in Sabah, which was Maktab Sabah in Kota Kinabalu in 1968. Its establishment was an attempt to introduce the Malay secondary schooling system which is increasingly popular in Peninsular Malaysia. To implement this four-pronged plan, the Government has spent more than RM 234 million on Development, recurrent expenditure on administration and maintenance is as much as RM

30.4 million and expenditure on the Development of New schools, classrooms and teachers' houses is as much as RM 8.8 million. The impact of spending on these programs is satisfactory for the further development of education. In 1972, for the first time, almost 100% of children of the age range that should be in primary school attended school, whereas only 35% of this age group attended school in 1960. The total number of students in primary schooling was 133,769 people. Of that number, only 3,266 people are not in school. At the secondary school level, the increase in the number of students entering school has increased by 493%.

Table 1

Comparison of the Number of Schools and Students in a 10-year Period (1968 to 1978)

Level	1968		1978		Total increase in 10 years			
	Number of School	Number of Pupils	Number of School	Number of Pupils	Schools		Pupils	
					Total	%	Total	%
Primary	357	55016	713	106,623	356	99.7	51607	93.8
Secondary	38	9685	89	57,435	51	134.2	47750	493

Table 1 shows a comparison of the number of schools and students in 1968 and 1978. Table 1 shows the result that there is an increase in the number of primary schools in a period of 10 years which is 356 with a percentage of 99.7%. Likewise, the number of secondary schools has increased by 51 throughout the 10-year period. It was found that the number of secondary schools has increased by 134.2%. As for the number of students, there was an increase from 1968 to 1978. There were 93.8% of primary school students recorded within 10 years. Likewise for secondary school students, there was an increase in the number of students, which was 9,685 in 1968 to 47,750 in 1978.

Ross (1974) stated that in 1978, the Sabah state government helped Christian and Chinese religious schools in terms of teacher salaries, the purchase of school supplies and clerical expenses. An important impact on the development of education in this time is the single use of Bahasa Malaysia as the language of instruction in all schools that began in 1970. This step has united all education systems under one common language of instruction and produced students who speak one language. The same.

Sabah (1974) stated that despite the existence of new improvements and changes in the education system, one major problem faced by the state is the problem of dropping out of education. The dropout rate every year is estimated at 9000 people. These figures show that this dropout problem requires reasonable and appropriate solution measures. Most dropout problems exist in rural areas that suffer from a lack of facilities (infrastructure) as well as parents' economic pressure.

Table 1 also shows parents' awareness of the importance of education illustrated by the increasing number of students in primary schools over time. Dropout conditions found in rural areas have a direct relationship with rural economic pressure. Table 1 also proves that the high percentage of failure at the secondary school level in Sabah requires research on the education system and investment of energy in plans to advance education in Sabah.

In addition, until 1968, there were educational institutions that were actively established to facilitate the children of the state of Sabah. Yayasan Sabah has channeled various assistance such as scholarships, hostels to ensure that the children of the state of Sabah have facilities to continue their studies. The proof is the increase in schools since 1968 which clearly shows that they were developed for the purpose of accommodating students entering the school.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it was found that the development of education during the Chartered Company is actually idle. But the fault cannot be placed solely on the government because the government at that time was more concerned with business and looking after their interests only. Coincidentally, Christian missionary organizations, with their religious goals, actively fill the gaps in education. The government encourages their activities because this can help ease the government's burden in humanitarian responsibilities. Although learning English was made the goal of education in the colonial era state of Sabah, but they also acknowledged that the local language needed to be learned. As a result of the educational activities at this level, the rate of people who could read and write in the census in 1921 was 69 people in every thousand and in 1931 this position improved further, which was 90 people in every thousand. The first school was built in Jesselton to train the children of Bumiputera Chiefs in 1915 and his tenure was not very long. Actually the purpose of this school is not very clear other than to give them an education and enable them to replace their parents. If the Chartered Company is honest, the school can be developed in the same way as Maktab Melayu in Kuala Kangsar, Perak where the children of big people and Malay Kings are trained with the aim of producing intelligent Malays who will fill government positions and also potential successors of administrators Malay.

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