

The Legal Politics of the Aceh Governor's Policy Regarding Religious Activities in Public Sphere: David Easton's Political Theory perspective

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Abstract: This article examines the phenomenon which caused the issuance and the formation of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter concerning the recitation prohibition other than the Aqidah of Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah. This article employs the empirical legal studies approach and the analysis of David Easton's system theory. This article finds that the Aceh Governor's Circular Letter was motivated by the emergence of the recitation phenomenon in the Aceh region, which teachings are considered apart from the Ahlussunnah wal Jamā'ah aqidah. This Circular Letter is also based on the existence of the Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 demands and Aceh Ulama Consultative Council (MPU) support. The history of diversity, socio-religious practices, and education that developed in Aceh also contributed to the Aceh Governor Circular Letter promulgation. The Aceh Governor policy in David Easton's political theory is called the output sub-system (*output*). This policy has produced both positive and negative impacts. The negative impact of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter then becomes feedback for stakeholders to formulate new policies that could accommodate and protect all groups.

Keywords: *Ahlussunna wal Jamā'ah; MPU Aceh; Aceh Governor Circular Letter; David Easton's political system.*

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji fenomena yang melatarinya Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh tentang larangan pengajian selain aqidah Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah beserta proses pembentukannya. Menggunakan pendekatan *empirical legal studies* dan analisis teori sistem David Easton diperoleh temuan sebagai berikut. Pertama, lahirnya Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh dilatarbelakangi oleh munculnya fenomena pengajian di wilayah Aceh yang mengajarkan paham yang diyakini berada di luar aqidah Ahlussunnah wal Jamā'ah. Selain itu, ia juga didasarkan pada adanya tuntutan (*demand*) dari Qanun Aceh Nomor 8 Tahun 2014 serta dukungan dari Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama (MPU) Aceh. Sejarah keberagamaan, praktik sosial keagamaan, dan pendidikan yang berkembang di Aceh juga ikut melatarinya

Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh ini. Kedua, lahirnya kebijakan (*policy*) Gubernur Aceh tersebut dalam teori politik David Easton disebut sebagai subsistem keluaran (*output*). Kebijakan ini dalam faktanya telah melahirkan dampak positif dan negatif sekaligus. Dampak negatif dari Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh tersebut kemudian menjadi umpan balik (*feedback*) bagi para pemangku kepentingan untuk merumuskan kebijakan baru yang bisa mengakomodasi dan melindungi semua kalangan.

Kata kunci: *Ahlussunna wal Jama'ah; MPU Aceh; Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh; sistem politik David Easton.*

Introduction

At the end of 2019, the Aceh Governor issued Circular Letter (SE) Number 450/21770 Concerning the Prohibition of Holding Recitations Apart from *I'tiqād Ahlussunna wal-Jamā'ah* which originates from the Syafi'i law school.¹ The Circular Letter is addressed to all heads of government agencies, such as district heads/mayors throughout Aceh, SKPA heads, and regional ministerial/non-ministerial regional heads of the Aceh Government.² This circular Letter was born as a response of the Aceh government to the recommendation of a coordination meeting from Acehnese clerics and umara on 4th to 5th December 2019 at the Grand Nanggroe Aceh hotel.³

¹ Subur Dani, "Pemerintah Aceh Larang Pengajian Selain Itikad Ahlulsunnah Waljamaah Mazhab Syafiiyah,"

<https://Aceh.Tribunnews.Com/2019/12/28/Pemerintah-Aceb-Larang-Pengajian-Selain-Itikad-Ahlussunnah-Waljamaah-Mazhab-Syafiiyah>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

² Agus Setyadi, "Pemprov Aceh Larang Pengajian Selain Ahlusunah Waljamaah-Mazhab Syafi'iyah," <https://News.Detik.Com/Berita/d-4840094/Pemprov-Aceb-Larang-Pengajian-Selain-Ahlusunah-Waljamaah-Mazhab-Syafiiyah>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

³ Fahzian Aldevan, "Aceh Larang Pengajian Selain Ahlussunah Waljamaah," <https://Wnn.Tagar.Id/Aceb-Larang-Pengajian-Selain-Ahlussunnah-Waljamaah>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

The Circular Letter issuance caused various reactions and interpretations in society.⁴ Some people support the Circular Letter,⁵ while others reject it.⁶ Departing from a different understanding, at the beginning of 2020, a group of masses calling themselves *Ahlussunna wal Jama'ah* dismissed the recitation, which was held regularly at the Al-Makmur Mosque, better known as the Oman Mosque.⁷ This recitation presented Ustaz Farhan, who was considered to be Wahhabi.⁸ This school is classified as deviant according to the Fatwa of the Aceh Ulama Consultative Assembly (MPU) Number 4 of 2007 concerning Guidelines for Identifying Heretical Schools and the Aceh MPU Fatwa Number 9 of 2014 concerning Understanding, Thought, Practice and Broadcasting of Islam in Aceh. Regarding the anti-Wahhabi phenomenon in Aceh, the Aceh MPU has an active role in conducting studies and issuing various fatwas.⁹

According to Khairil Miswar, on the one hand, it is true that the fatwas and decrees of the Aceh MPU, as well as the policies adopted by the Aceh government, are acceptable to completely eradicate heretical beliefs and beliefs in Aceh. However, the Aceh MPU must first explain clearly and in detail what is meant by *I'tiqad Ahlu'ssunna wal-Jama'ah* so that the people of Aceh understand and do not take wrong actions. This explanation is very important because adherents of deviant schools can also claim to be *Ahlussunna wal Jama'ah* adherents

⁴ Zikrullah, "PCNU Banda Aceh Dukung Surat Edaran Plt Gubernur Terkait Larangan Pengajian Selain Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah," <https://Mediaaceh.Co/2020/01/02/Pcnu-Banda-Aceb-Dukung-Surat-Edaran-Plt-Gubernur-Terkait-Larangan-Pengajian-Selain-Ahlussunnab-Wal-Jamaah/>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

⁵ Fikar W. Eda, "Senator Aceh Dukung Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh, Wajib Terapkan Ahlussunnah Waljamaah."

<https://Aceh.Tribunnews.Com/2020/01/01/Senator-Aceb-Dukung-Surat-Edaran-Gubernur-Aceb-Wajib-Terapkan-Ahlussunnab-Waljamaah>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

⁶ "MUI Minta Aceh Cabut Larangan Pengajian Selain Mazhab Syafi'i," <https://Www.Republika.Co.Id/Berita/Q3ctg3366/Mui-Minta-Aceb-Cabut-Larangan-Pengajian-Selain-Mazhab-Syafi'i>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

⁷ Aldevan, "Aceh Larang Pengajian Selain Ahlussunnah Waljamaah."

⁸ Hamdani, "Mungkinkah Masjid Sebagai Tempat Penyebaran Ajaran Seasat," <https://Www.Kompasiana.Com/Cangkoiburong/5e3ad47f097f36739f163fc2/>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

⁹ Abd. Razak et al., "Ulama And Fatwa (Pros and Cons of the Circular Letter of the Aceh Governor and MPU Decree)," *Jurnal Ar-Raniry, International Journal of Islamic Studies* Vol. 8, no. 1 (Juni 2021), pp. 12–30.

because the people of Aceh do not fully understand what *I'tiqād Ahlussunna wal Jama'ah* is. Without adequate knowledge about *I'tiqād Ahlussunna wal Jama'ah*, the public can't recognize adherents of deviant schools in Aceh.¹⁰

The community's rejection of the recitation filled by Ustadz Farhan, accused of being a Wahhabi, was based on the Circular Letter of the Aceh Governor Number 450/21770, which prohibits the performance of recitations other than those with the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah orientation. Anarchist disbandment of recitations is no longer a new thing in Aceh. Several similar incidents were recorded, including Ustadz Firanda Andirja's recitation at the Al-Fitrah Keutapang Mosque in Banda Aceh (06/13/2019) and the disbandment of Ustadz Farhan's recitation at the Baitul Muqarrabin Punge Blang Cut Mosque Banda Aceh on Sunday (12/15/2019). All of these disbanding activities used the Wahhabi issue and were carried out by a group of Muslims acting on behalf of *Ahlussunna wal Jama'ah* (*Aswaja*).¹¹ It is believed that the Aceh Governor Circular Letter has reduced the rights of citizens, which are protected by the constitution. The Head of the Aceh Ombudsman gave an opinion that the Circular Letter should be revoked because it has the potential to create intolerance among religious adherents and has the potential to enter into the realm of maladministration.¹²

The circular Letter issued by the Aceh Governor related to the construction and protection of *aqidah* and enforcing Islamic law in Aceh contains four points. *First*, about the duties and authority of the Aceh Ulema Consultative Council (MPU). *Second*, about strengthening the implementation of Islamic Shari'a along with Islamic values and culture of peace in community life with *I'tiqād Ahlu'ssunna wal Jama'ah*, which is sourced from the law of the Shafi'i school while still respecting

¹⁰ Khairil Miswar, "Wahhābī Dalam Perspektif HUDA Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Kehidupan Sosial Keagamaan Di Aceh," *Tadabbur: Jurnal Peradaban Islam* Vol. 2, no. 1 (2020), pp. 1–27.

¹¹ Muhammad Yusran Hadi, "Isu Wahabi Dan Ukhuwah Islamiyah," <https://www.kiblat.net/2020/03/09/Isu-Wahabi-Dan-Ukhuwah-Islamiyah/>, accessed on 14th of April 2020.

¹² Miswari, Muhammad Nur, Faisal Akbar Nasution, Mirza Nasution and Chairul Bariah, "Kedudukan Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh Nomor 450/21770 Tentang Larangan Mengadakan Pengajian Selain Dari I'tiqad Ahlussunnah Waljamaah Yang Bersumber Dari Mazhab Syafi'iyah Terhadap Qanun Nomor 8 Tahun 2014 Tentang Pokok-Pokok Syariat Islam," *IURIS STUDIA: Jurnal Kajian Hukum* Vol. 2, (2021), pp. 241–256.

other schools. *Third*, about maintaining the religious atmosphere of the Acehnese community in worship so that *I'tiqād* does not develop apart from *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*/other than the Syafi'i school. *Fourth*, about the prohibition to hold the recitation other than those originating from *I'tiqād Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* and other than the Syafi'i school. The Circular also contains an appeal to study organizers to consult with MPU Aceh as well as to the heads of SKPA and the Regents/Mayors to supervise, evaluate, and re-data the names of lecturers of studies in their respective institutions. This Circular of the Aceh Governor is considered to bring a negative precedent for the development of the dynamics of religious harmony in Aceh, especially the freedom to understand and practice the understanding of Islam in various schools.¹³

The Aceh Government's authority in making policies is established by the Aceh People's Legislative Council (DPRA) and based on the Aceh Ulama Consultative Council (MPU) suggestions. However, the formation of this Circular Letter issued by the Aceh Governor is not a policy regulation originating from a co-administration task, nor is it a discretion, where discretion itself means the freedom to decide for oneself about everything in the conditions one is faced.¹⁴ Circular Letters are only official documents, so they must be supervised by the Ombudsman, DPRA, and the State Administrative Court as the institution with authority in public services.¹⁵

In the implementation of the circular letters', it must follow the legislation principles of *lex superior derogate legi inferior* and *lex specialis derogate legi generalis*. This principle means that higher rules let alone special ones, cannot be overridden by the rules below them because circular letters are not included in the legal system hierarchy in

¹³ Zulkarnain, "Circular Letter of Aceh's Governor (Ad Interim) Number 450/21770/2019: Amid Fanaticism and Its Controversy (Content Analysis)," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* Vol. 20, (2020), pp. 175–189.

¹⁴ Nur Wahyuni Utami, "Perluasan Pengaturan Diskresi Dalam Undang-Undang Nomor 11 Tahun 2020 Tentang Cipta Kerja," *Jurnal Legislasi Indonesia* Vol. 19, no. 4 (Desember 2022), pp. 531–547.

¹⁵ Muhammad Nur Miswari, "Kedudukan Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh Nomor 450/21770 Tentang Larangan Mengadakan Pengajian Selain Dari I'tiqad Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah Yang Bersumber Dari Mazhab Syafi'iyah Terhadap Qanun Nomor 8 Tahun 2014 Tentang Pokok-Pokok Syariat Islam" (2020).

Indonesia.¹⁶ This principle confirms that the legal force of a circular letter only applies to the person concerned. In this case, circular letters are usually addressed to regional heads to follow up on them. However, in practice, they are often not followed up, so a binding regulation is a necessary, and its enforcement can be forced.¹⁷

Circular Letters are official documents that contain notifications, explanations, and/or instructions on how to carry out certain matters that are considered important and urgent and are recognized as a form of the official document within the regional government.¹⁸ Circular letters have the same legal status as operational guidelines, technical guidelines, official notes, announcements, and guidelines, so circular letter can be categorized as policy rules (*beleidregel*).¹⁹ Regarding this circular Letter, Jimmy Asshidique classified it into policy rules or *quasi legislation*. Policy regulations or policies, according to R.M. Girindro Pringgogidgo, is a decision that is written regulatory or a written/oral decision that is closely related to power or authority of discretionary power or principles of *freies ermesen*. *Freies ermesen* is a means of an effort to exercise authority without having to be bound by statutory provisions.²⁰ *Freies ermesens*' use occurs because of the imperfections and limitations of laws and regulations, which generally do not fully regulate concrete and detailed matters. Therefore, the government must adopt a policy based on its initiative. This is because government administration agencies/officials may not refuse to provide services to

¹⁶ Husni dan Mahdi Syahbandir Taqiyuddin Faranis, “Kedudukan Surat Edaran Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia Di Aceh,” *Syah Kuala Law Journal* Vol. 1, (2017), pp. 40–61.

¹⁷ Candyna Mutiah Bepa, Syarifah Jihan Salma, and Yonna Aparacitta, “Efektivitas Instruksi Dan Surat Edaran Menteri Terhadap Kewajiban Penggunaan Aplikasi Peduli Lindungi,” *Jurnal Jurist-Diction* Vol. 5, no. 1 (January 31, 2022), pp. 35–52.

¹⁸ Cholida Hanum and Fakultas Syariah, “Analisis Yuridis Kedudukan Surat Edaran,” *Humani (Hukum Dan Masyarakat Madani)* Vol. 10, no. 2 (2020), pp. 138–153.

¹⁹ Agus Riyanto, “Eksistensi Dan Kedudukan Hukum Surat Edaran KAPOLRI Tentang Penanganan Ujaran Kebencian (Hate Speech),” *Jurnal Cabaya Keadilan* Vol. 3, (2015), pp. 1–13.

²⁰ Marcus Lukman, “Eksistensi Peraturan Kebijaksanaan Dalam Bidang Perencanaan Dan Pelaksanaan Rencana Pembangunan Di Daerah Serta Dampaknya Terhadap Pembangunan Materi Hukum Tertulis Nasional” *Dissertation*, Padjajaran University, West Java (1996), p. 205.

the public. After all, the law does not exist or exists but is not clear, as long as it is still within their authority.²¹

With the issuance of a Circular Letter by the Aceh Governor Number 450/21770 regarding the prohibition of holding recitations other than *I'tiqād Ahlussunnah wal Jamā'ah* originating from the Shafi'i school of law, this study attempts to analyze the factors behind the emergence of this circular Letter and how is the process of its formation? This study aims to understand the background and reasons behind the issuance of the Circular of the Aceh Governor Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Holding Recitations Other than *I'tiqād Ahlussunnah wal Jamā'ah* which originates from the Syafi'i school of law. In addition, this research is also intended to identify and analyze the process of forming the Aceh Governor Circular Letter No. 450/21770 from the perspective of David Easton's political system theory.

Unlike the previous studies, this article more specifically examines the existence of public policies regarding circular letters, which contain the policy-making process in a political system that caused to the issuance of Aceh Governor Circular Letter Number 450/21770. This qualitative research focuses on an empirical legal studies approach²² by collecting several recorded events to then be analyzed and given a general narrative in accordance with the phenomena found. This research focuses on the conceptual study of local law product (Circular Letter). The method used is a normative legal research method with a black-letter law approach²³ and empirical legal research methods with a statutory approach. In addition, to strengthen the conceptual study, this research is supported by literature studies (library research) by looking at a number of legal literature or other disciplines closely related to the topic being studied.

²¹ Rolib Sitprus, "Konsep Freies Ermessen Dalam Akuntabilitas Administrasi Dan Hukum Atas Keputusan Administrasi Pejabat Pemerintahan," *Jurnal Law Pro Justitia* Vol. IV, no. 2 (Juni 2021), pp. 64–87.

²² Theodore Eisenberg, "Origins, Nature, and Promise of Empirical Legal Studies and a Response to Concerns, The.," *University of Illinois Law Review*, (2011), p. 1713.

²³ Michael Salter and Julie Mason, *Writing Law Dissertations: An Introduction and Guide to The Conduct Of Legal Resarch* (University of Central Lancashire: Pearson/Longman, 2007), p. 45.

There are two data used in this study that are primary and secondary data. The primary data comes from several regional legal products related to Islamic Sharia policies and the results of interviews with related parties. At the same time, secondary data is obtained from official documents, books related to research objects, and research results in the form of reports, theses, dissertations, and laws and regulations.²⁴

David Easton's Theory of Political Systems

David Easton is a political scientist who introduced the political systems theory. He initiated three elements in defining the political system. *First*, the political system values (by means of politics), means that the political system consists of an allocation of values. *Second*, its allocation is authoritative, means that value allocation through coercive authority. *Third*, the authoritative allocations are binding on the society as a whole, means that the allocation of values by force to all members of society.²⁵

Easton further stated that, in general, the political system carries out two main functions, namely, the input function (input) and the output function (output). The scope of the input function (input) includes demands and support from within the community. There are two types of demands, namely internal demands and external demands. Internal demands originate from the internal political system that arises as a result of the working situation of the political system, which allows demands for changes to the current political system. Meanwhile, external demands come from outside the political system, which is more likely to be identified.²⁶ Another part of the input is support which is a view or behavior toward the political system. In other words, the support form is not only in the concrete actions form but also in the form of statements and attitudes units or groups as well as the environment of the political system.²⁷

²⁴ Salter and Mason.

²⁵ Toni Andrianus Pito, Kemal Fasya, and Efrizal, *Mengenal Teori-Teori Politik: Dari Sistem Politik Sampai Korupsi*, 3rd ed. (Bandung: Nuansa Cendikia, 2013), 55.

²⁶ David Easton, *Kerangka Kerja Analisa Sistem Politik*, trans. Shat Simamora (Jakarta: Bina Aksara, 1998), p. 35.

²⁷ M Mas'ood, *Perbandingan Sistem Politik* (Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press, 2001), p. 34.

Input is the main support for the success of the political system. Without input, the political system will die or cannot work. However, if the input is too excessive, it will result in potential conflicts in the political system, thereby disrupting the stability of the political system. This process can be explained straightforwardly in the following figure:

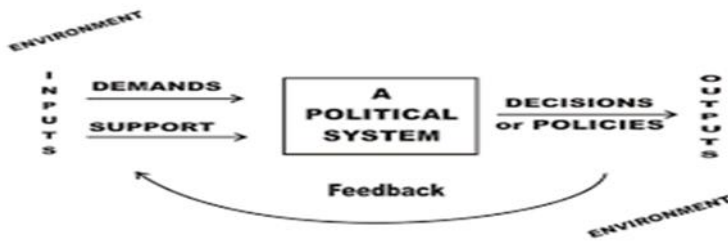


Figure 1.1 The Flow of the Political System²⁸

The previous image explanation can be formulated as follows. *First*, input (input subsystem) consists of demands (claim) and supports. *Second*, withinput (process subsystem) that consists of transforming processes, input becomes output, called the conversion process, which is understood as a black box. *Third*, output (output subsystem), namely the reaction or result of the conversion process that results in a decision or policy. *Fourth*, the environment (environmental subsystem) is the external elements that influence the political system, such as cultural, social, security, political, economic, and geographical elements. *Fifth*, feedback (feedback subsystem), is the implementation of decisions or policies effects, both positive and negative, a political system can generate that. This political system theory is used to analyze the issuance and formation of the Aceh Governor's Circular Letter concerning the Prohibition of Recitations other than *I'tiqad Ablussunnah wal Jamaah*.

The basis of Aceh Governor Circular Letter Number 450/21770 Establishment

Every good policy or regulation must have a legal basis, and local government is no exception. In line with what was stated by Jimly

²⁸ J.T Ishiyama, *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization* (USA: Wiley Blackwell, 2012), p. 25.

Ashiddiqie, that the formation and enforcement of a good regulation must be based on philosophical, sociological, and juridical aspects.²⁹ Thus, the legal basis for the formation of regulation can be divided into three, that are the philosophical, the sociological, and the juridical basis. The same thing also applies to the formation of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Reciting Other than *I'tiqād Ahlu'ssunnah wa'l Jama'ah*. The following is a description of the legal basis for the Circular Letter formation by the governor of Aceh.

1. Philosophical Foundation

The philosophical foundation is the formulation of a rule or legislation that gets justification and follows the ideals, norms, and views of the community's life. These ideals include the ideals of truth, the ideals of justice, and the ideals of decency.³⁰ Furthermore, Jimly Asshiddiqie explained that the philosophical basis of laws and regulations always contains ideal legal norms (ideal norms) by a society. In that direction, the noble ideals of community and state life will be directed and achieved.³¹ The philosophical foundation that underlies the formation of Aceh Governor's Circular Letter Number 450/21770 is to strengthen the implementation of Islamic shari'a along with Islamic values and Acehnese culture in community life with *I'tiqād Ahlu'ssunnah wa'l Jama'ah* which is sourced from the law of the Shafi' school and still respect the followers of other schools in Aceh intending to unite the people (*umma*).³² This means that the philosophical aspect that forms the basis of the formation of the circular letter is the people's unity by strengthening the implementation of Islamic shari'a along with Islamic values and Acehnese culture in the life of the Acehnese community with *I'tiqād Ahlu'ssunnah wa'l Jama'ah*. All of that is intended to maintain peace, calmness, comfort, and tranquility in worship for

²⁹ Jimly Asshiddiqie, *Perihal Undang-Undang* (Jakarta: Konstitusi Press, 2006), pp. 234-244.

³⁰ Ida Zuraida, *Teknik Penyusunan Peraturan Daerah Tentang Pajak Daerah Dan Retribusi Daerah* (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2014), p. 14.

³¹ Asshiddiqie, *Perihal Undang-Undang*, p. 234.

³² Interview with Mr. Sulaiman, Head of Religion and Role of Ulama Bureau of Privileges and People's Welfare (Isra), Aceh Regional Secretariat, on 21st of April 2021.

the Acehnese community. it is also intended to fulfill the ambition to realize the Islamic shari'a implementation in a perfect manner (*keaffah*).³³

2. Sociological Basis

The sociological basis implies that a statutory regulation must follow the community's general belief or legal awareness. Therefore, the law formed must follow "the law that lives in society."³⁴ This is also in line with what was conveyed by Jimly Asshiddiqie that every legal norm contained in law must reflect the demands of the community's own needs for legal norms that are following the reality of community legal awareness.³⁵

Sociologically, the Aceh Governor's Circular Letter issuance refers to the practice of the Shafi'i school of thought, which has lived and developed in Aceh for a long time.³⁶ This has become the sociological basis for making the circular letter to maintain the religious atmosphere of the majority of the people of Aceh in worship and practice by prioritizing the practice of *I'tiqad Ahlu'ssunna wa'l-Jama'ah* of the old Shafi'i school which have been adopted and practiced by the Aceh people and has also been taught to their children from an early age. The Syafi'i school of thought has also become Aceh's official school of thought.³⁷ However, the people of Aceh still respect Muslims who practice the teachings of other well-known schools (*mu'tabar*),³⁸ such as the Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali schools. Those three schools of thought have become unofficial schools of thought for the people of Aceh but have lived and become *'urf* for the people of Aceh as a whole.³⁹

³³ Interview with Tgk. Muhibbuthabary, Second Deputy Chairman of MPU Aceh, on 29th of April 2021.

³⁴ Zuraida, *Teknik Penyusunan Peraturan Daerah Tentang Pajak Daerah Dan Retribusi Daerah*.

³⁵ Asshiddiqie, *Perihal Undang-Undang*, p. 240.

³⁶ Interview with Tgk. Faisal Ali, First Deputy Chairman of MPU Aceh, on 4th of May 2021.

³⁷ Interview with Tgk. Radhuan, Secretary General of The Aceh Regional Party (PDA), on 29th of April 2021.

³⁸ Interview with Tgk. Anwar Usman, Deputy Chairman of Aceh Dayah Ulama Association (HUDA), on 7th of May 2021.

³⁹ Interview with Tgk. Muhibbuthabary, 2nd Deputy Chairman of MPU Aceh.

3. Juridical Foundation

Jimly Asshiddiqie explained that the juridical basis implies that every rule or statutory regulation must have a legal basis based on the law or legality contained in other higher provisions. In every law formulation, this juridical basis must be placed in the preamble "Remembering."⁴⁰

Juridically, the formation of the circular letter refers to Law Number 44 of 1999 concerning the Implementation of Privileges for the Province of the Special Region of Aceh and Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning Principles of Islamic Shari'a. In addition, the Aceh Governor Circular Letter is also based on several laws and regulations as stated in the circular letter. they are Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Aceh Government, Aceh Qanun Number 2 of 2009 concerning the Ulama Consultative Council, and Qanun Aceh Number 8 of 2015 concerning Guidance and Protection of Aqidah.

This means that from a juridical perspective, the Circular Letter of the Aceh Governor Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Reciting Other than *I'tiqād Ahlu'ssunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* has a strong juridical basis. It is based on several statutory regulations formed and enforced in Aceh. The function of the circular letter is as a policy regulation in the context of affirming and redacting the laws and regulations or *qanuns* enacted in Aceh. In another sense, this circular letter is a form of implementation of Law Number 44 of 1999 concerning the Administration of Privileges for the Province of the Special Region of Aceh and Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia. Qanun Number 8 of 2015 concerning Protection and Fostering *Aqidah* is related to Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning Principles of Islamic Shari'a.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Asshiddiqie, *Perihal Undang-Undang*.

⁴¹ Interview with Frizal, Head of Sub-division of Pergub and Kepgub Office of the Legal Bureau, Regional Secretary of Aceh on 21st of April 2021.

The Formation Process of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter No. 450/21770 in David Easton's Political System Perspective

In his political systems theory, David Easton states that a political system is a whole components that are interconnected.⁴² In general, the political system performs two main functions: the input function (input) and the output function (output). *First*, input (input subsystem) consists of demands (claim) and supports. *Second*, withinput (process subsystem) consists of transforming processes of input into output, called the conversion process, which is understood as a black box. *Third*, output (output subsystem), is the reaction or result of the conversion process that results in decisions or policies. *Fourth*, environment (environmental subsystem), is the external elements that influence the political system, such as cultural, social, security, political, economic, and geographical elements. *Fifth*, feedback (feedback subsystem), is the effect of implementing positive or negative decisions or policies that a political system can generate.⁴³

The forming process of the Aceh Governor Circular Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Reciting Other Than *I'tiqād Ahlu'sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*, when analyzed using David Easton's political system theory, can be explained by the following diagram:

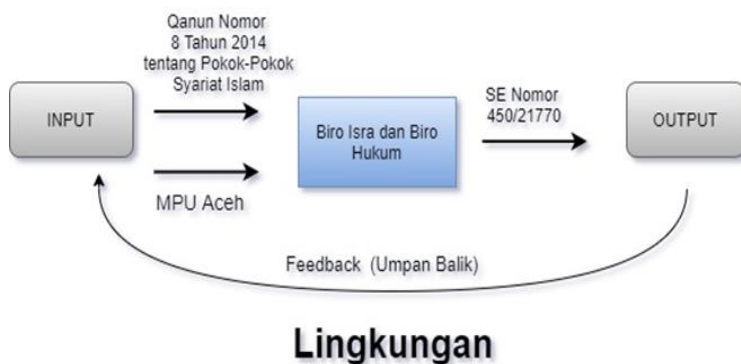


Figure 1.2. David Easton's Political Systems Theory Analysis Diagram

⁴² Easton, *Kerangka Kerja Analisa Sistem Politik*.

⁴³ Ronald H. Chilcote, *Teori Perbandingan Politik, Penelusuran Pradigma* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2010).

1. Input (input subsystem)

The input subsystem (input) consists of demands and support. Both of them influence each other. The demands can come from outside the political system environment (external) and from within the political system (internal). Demands will not be met without strong support. They can even fall before processing. Support can be given by various parties, both individuals and groups, to support the demands that have been formulated so that they can be processed further. The demands and supports that become the input subsystem can be explained as follows.

- a. Demands: The Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2019 concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia

The Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning Principles of Islamic Shari'at has regulated the obligation to practice the *aqidah* following the Al-Quran and hadith for every Acehnese Muslim people. The mention of the *aqidah* in the Qanun refers to the *aqidah* of *Ablu'ssunna wa'l-Jama'ah*.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, the implementation of worship prioritizes the practice of the Shafi'i school of thought.⁴⁵ However, the worship practice following the Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali schools is still permissible.⁴⁶ Likewise, it is also permissible to carry out worship by following religious understandings or organizations following the Al-Qur'an and hadith legally recognized by the state.⁴⁷ The government, as implementing policies at the provincial, district, and city levels in Aceh, is given the mandate by the Qanun to work together with the community in developing and strengthening the faith field for every Muslim in the province of Aceh. In Article 125 concerning Islamic Sharia, Law Number 11 of 2006 gives Aceh the authority to manage five fields, one of which is the field of *aqidah*. Based on Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh, various Qanuns

⁴⁴ Article 1 paragraph (16) and Article 11 paragraph (2) of Qanun Aceh Number 8 of 2014 concerning The Principle of Islamic Sharia.

⁴⁵ Article 14 paragraph (2) of Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning The Principles of Islamic Sharia.

⁴⁶ Article 14 paragraph (4) of Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning The Principles of Islamic Sharia.

⁴⁷ Article 14 paragraph (5) of Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning The Principles of Islamic Sharia.

were established in Aceh, including Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia and Qanun Number 8 of 2015 concerning the Development and Protection of *Aqidah*. From a legal point of view, the field of *aqidah* is one of the fields given authority by the central government to the Aceh government to enforce Islamic sharia in Aceh. Meanwhile, in terms of the goal, it is to maintain inter-religious life, namely between Muslims and other believer adherents in Aceh.⁴⁸

In the draft Qanun Number 8 of 2014 Concerning Principles of Islamic Shari'a discussion, there was a lengthy discussion when the Shafi'i school and *I'tiqād Ahlussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* were to be included in the Qanun. Related to this, Commission G gave authority to a team of experts to draft a new article that could protect all parties. This implies that there is indeed a desire from a group of people to protect and preserve the Shafi'i school of thought with *I'tiqād Ahlussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* in the life and practice of the diversity of the people of Aceh. Even so, it does not rule out the possibility of practicing Islamic teachings from other schools of thought in Aceh.⁴⁹ The Qanun aims to protect minority and majority groups at the same time. As for the practice of worship, people can follow any recognized school of thought. Thus, the Aceh Qanun gives the right and authority to the Aceh Governor to build and strengthen the field of *aqidah* for every Muslim in the province, and that is the basis for issuing a Circular Letter concerning the Prohibition of Reciting Other Than *I'tiqād Ahlussunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah*.⁵⁰

Thus, the demand that underlies the establishment of the Aceh Governor's Circular Letter concerning the Prohibition of Recitation other than *I'tiqād Ahlussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* is Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 Concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia. Apart from that, the birth of the Aceh Governor's Circular Letter was also strengthened by the phenomenon of several new recitations spread in Aceh in general and in the Aceh Government

⁴⁸ Interview with Tgk. Mutiara Fahmi, One of the Expert Staff for Drafting Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 and Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2015, on April 27, 2021.

⁴⁹ Tgk. Mutiara Fahmi.

⁵⁰ Tgk. Faisal Ali, First Deputy Chairman of MPU Aceh.

agencies in particular who were suspected of having Wahhabi views.

- b. Supports: There was support from the Aceh Ulama Consultative Assembly (MPU), the Aceh *Dayah* Ulama Association (HUDA), and the Nanggroe Aceh Ulema Council (MUNA)

The Aceh MPU's existence as the Government of Aceh partner has the function of establishing a fatwa which can be one of the considerations for local government policies.⁵¹ In carrying out this function, the Aceh MPU has the duty and authority to issue fatwas (both requested and unsolicited) related to governance, development, community development, and economic issues. In addition, the MPU also has the task of guiding differences of opinion in society regarding religious issues.⁵² In addition, the Aceh MPU also has the authority to determine and decide whether a school or understanding is following *Ahlussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* or not. Based on these functions and duties, on 22th-24th August 2011, the Aceh MPU issued Fatwa Number 4 of 2011 concerning Criteria for *Aqidah Ahlussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah*. This fatwa is based on the consideration of the growing number of thought schools claiming to be *Ahlussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* adherents so that the people of Aceh do not experience confusion in understanding the beliefs and criteria of *Ahlussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah*. First Deputy Chairman of MPU Aceh, Tgk. Faisal Ali said that the Aceh MPU supported the Circular Letter. He says, "as long as it is for the good of the people, MPU Aceh would support it."⁵³

The Aceh Governor Circular Letter not only gained support from the clerical institutions, officially established by the Aceh government based on the mandate of the Law on Governance of Aceh, but also from clerical institutions within the functional scope of Aceh, such as the Aceh *Dayah* Ulema Association (HUDA) and the Aceh Ulema Council. Nanggroe Aceh Ulama (MUNA). One of the Deputy Chairpersons of the

⁵¹ Article 138 paragraph (1), paragraph (2), paragraph (3) and Article 139 paragraph (1) of Law Number 11 of 2006 Concerning the Aceh Governance.

⁵² Article 140 (1) Law Number 11 of 2006 Concerning the Aceh Governance.

⁵³ Interview with Tgk Faisal Ali, First Deputy Chairman of MPU Aceh.

Aceh *Dayah* Ulama Association (HUDA) stated: “HUDA supports this Circular Letter because it is to avoid divisions and things that we don't want in today's global era.”⁵⁴ The same thing was also conveyed by the Deputy Chairman of PB MUNA (Nanggroe Aceh Ulama Council) that MUNA strongly supports this Circular Letter.⁵⁵ Thus it can be said that the Aceh MPU, the Aceh *Dayah* Ulama Association (HUDA), and the Nanggroe Aceh Ulama Council (MUNA) have become supporting institutions (supports) establishment of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter and that the Letter of the Aceh Governor is a manifestation or implementation of Qanun Number 8 of 2014 and Qanun Number 8 of 2015 Concerning the Protection and Fostering of *Aqidah*.

2. Withinput: The process of converting the political suprastructure and political infrastructure

Process subsystem or conversion process known as the black box in the political system consists of two elements, namely: political supra-structure elements (executive, legislative, judicial) and political infrastructure elements (political parties, interest groups, community leaders, community members, mass media, bureaucratic structures, procedures, political mechanisms, attitudes and behavior of decision/policymakers and others).

Suprastructure elements and political infrastructure interact with each other in one place to turn inputs into outputs. There is a demand in Qanun Number 8 of 2014 Concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia and support by the Aceh MPU, and also by looking at the phenomenon of reciting new understandings that are spreading in Aceh, especially in the Aceh Government agencies, this has become the basis for the Aceh Governor to form a Circular Letter concerning Prohibition of reciting other than *Itiqad Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah*. The input mechanism consists of demands in Qanun Number 8 of 2014 Concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia and support of MPU Aceh as political infrastructure and superstructure. The Aceh Governor then conveyed this matter to the

⁵⁴ Interview with Tgk Anwar Usman, Deputy Chairman of the Aceh Dayah Ulama Association (HUDA).

⁵⁵ Interview with Tgk. Tarmizi M. Daud, Deputy Chairman of the Nanggroe Aceh Ulama Council (MUNA), on 7 May 2021.

Aceh People's Privileges and Welfare Bureau (*Isra*)⁵⁶ to compile the material and contents of the Circular Letter. The material is then submitted to the Legal Bureau for review, correction, synchronization, and harmonization. The review results from the Legal Bureau then resulted a final document to be initialed and signed by the governor.⁵⁷ In Easton's political theory, all of these processes are called conversion processes or process subsystems, which will resulted output subsystems (output).

3. Output: output subsystem

Easton's theory states that the output subsystem (output) results from the conversion process, either in the form of a policy or decision. Policies or decisions issued by the government, which result from the conversion process from inputs, are then socialized and applied to all elements of society. Every policy or decision that is applied to society is the result of a political process and system that has consequences, both positive (according to the wishes of policymakers and formulators) and negative consequences (bringing unexpected negative impacts). Based on the anxiety due to the emergence of the phenomenon of recitation from new schools or understandings in Aceh in general and in Aceh Government agencies in particular, Circular Letter Number 450/21770 concerning Prohibition of Reciting Other than *I'tiqād Ahlussunna wa'l-Jama'ah* was established. The Aceh Governor Circular Letter is a policy also called the output subsystem (output). It is the result of a conversion carried out by the *Isra* Bureau and the Legal Bureau after going through an input mechanism consisting of Qanun Number 8 of 2014 Concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia demands, support from the Aceh MPU and Islamic clerical institutions in Aceh and there is a phenomenon or the emergence of many recitations from new understandings or groups in Aceh which are considered not to be *Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah*.

4. Feedback: Feedback subsystem

Whether it has a positive or negative impact, every policy or decision will procure feedback that political policymakers and

⁵⁶ Interview with Tgk. Sulaiman, Head of Religious Affairs and the Role of Ulama Bureau of Privileges and People's Welfare (*Isra*), Aceh Regional Secretariat.

⁵⁷ Interview with Frizal, Head of Sub-division of Pergub and Kerpug Office of the Legal Bureau, Regional Secretary of Aceh.

formulators can reuse. This feedback will be used as input and then will be processed again in the political system, and so on, to form a cycle. The positive impact of the Governor Circular Letter Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Recitation other than *I'tiqād Ablussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* issuance is that there is a strengthening in the implementation of worship according to the Shaf'i school of thought, which adheres to *Ablussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* and at the same time minimizing recitation activities from new understandings or schools that are contrary to the *Ablussunnah wal Jamaah* beliefs. While the negative impact arising from Circular Letter Number 450/21770 is the emergence of disbandment and demonstrations of recitation activities allegedly carried out by those who do not follow *Ablussunnah wal Jamaah* teachings, such as the demonstration that took place at the Al-Makmur Lampriet Great Mosque, which was considered to be conducting recitations apart from *I'tiqād Ablussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah*. The negative impact of the Governor's Circular Letter is then used as new input by policymakers to generate output so that it can accommodate all the desires of various religious variants in Aceh.

5. Environment: Environmental subsystem

The environmental subsystem in a political system is strongly influenced by social, economic, political, cultural, and security conditions, as well as the geographic location which can control all political subsystems. Environmental influences are not only becomes inputs but can also encourage demands that can be automatically transformed into the political system. Conversely, without the influence of the environment, various demands may not function (turn off) so that they cannot enter the political system. Environmental influences in the conversion process will determine the quantity and quality of each policy or decision that will be issued. This implies that the influence of the environment in the political system can facilitate or hinder the conversion process and will indirectly affect the output in the political system.

There are three environmental subsystems in the formation of Circular Letter Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Recitation other than *I'tiqād Ablussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah*, that are the history, social religion, culture and education. *First*, from a historical perspective, during the Aceh Darussalam kingdom was under the Iskandar Muda sultanate, the Aceh region officially only allowed

worship practice according to the Shafi'i school of thought and was not allowed to practice religious teachings apart from it. A small proportion of Acehnese people practice schools other than Syafi'i and are only taught in individual homes.⁵⁸ Statewide, an arrangements regarding religious practice were entrusted to the Aceh government through Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning the Principles of Islamic Sharia and the function of the government to regulate this matter.

Second, from a socio-religious perspective. In the last few years, in Aceh, there has been a lot of violence in the name of religion. Socioritually, the implementation of Islamic law by the people of Aceh adheres to the Shafi'i school of thought; in the theological field, it refers to Al-Asya'ari; and in the moral field, it follows al-Ghazali's thoughts. When things were not following the standards mentioned, they are often considered to have deviated from society's general understanding. Issues often come to the surface are the existence of heretical schools, different views on understanding Islam, and the issue of *aqidah* silting. Some of these things have invited the government to take part in solving the problem of implementing religion in Aceh.

Third, in the terms of culture and education. Since long ago, every *dayah* or *pesantren* in Aceh has taught books concerning the Syafi'i school, and until now, these educational institutions have been using the Syafi'iyah curriculum.⁵⁹ Therefore, what has been inculcated since childhood for the young generation of Aceh since long ago is to adhere to the Syafi'i school in the implementation of Islamic law, in the field of theology refer to al-Asya'ari, and in the field of morality, refer to al-Ghazali's thinking.

Conclusion

This research generally has two conclusions. *First*, the issuance of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Reciting Other than *I'tiqād Ablussunna wa'l-Jamā'ah* originating from the law of the Shafi'i school is motivated by the emergence of the phenomenon of recitation in Aceh (in general) and

⁵⁸ Interview with Tgk. Sulaiman, Head of Religious Affairs and the Role of Ulama Bureau of Privileges and People's Welfare (Isra), Aceh Regional Secretariat.

⁵⁹ Interview with Tgk. Anwar Usman, Deputy Chairman of the Aceh Dayah Ulama Association (HUDA).

in Aceh government agencies (in especially) those who teach understandings apart from the *I'tiqād Ahlu'ssunna wa'l-Jamā'ah*.

Second, the formation of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter Number 450/21770 concerning the Prohibition of Reciting Other than *I'tiqād Ahlussunnah wa'l Jamā'ah* in David Easton's political system includes an input system, which consists of demand and support, conversion system, output system (output), feedback, and environment. The input system consists of demands in the form of Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 concerning Principles of Islamic Sharia and Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2015 concerning the Protection and Development of *Aqidah* and support originating from the Aceh Ulema Consultative Council (MPU). These demands and supports are then included in the conversion system, which is processed by the existing political suprastructure and infrastructure. The formulation results produce a policy as the output subsystem (output) in the form of a Circular Letter of the Aceh Governor Number 450/21770. The Governor of Aceh's policy of issuing Circular No. 450/21770 has had both positive and negative impacts. The negative impact of the Aceh Governor's Circular Letter becomes feedback that political policymakers and formulators can reuse as a new input. While the environmental subsystem that has influenced the formation of the Aceh Governor Circular Letter Number 450/21770 consists of the religious history of the Acehnese people, the socio-religious practices of the Acehnese people, and the education that has developed in Aceh.

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