

# Education in the Netherlands East-Indies, Dirk Teeuwen MSc

## 1. Native primary and vocational education, Western primary education



P1. Pupils in a school of the Moerid Muhammadiyah Society, founded in 1914, at Jokyakarta 1924. The society had as an objective the establishment of Islamitic institutions: schools, hospitals, people's banks, libraries, etc.

The problem of education in the Netherlands East-Indies was a complicated one, because of the divergent needs and conditions of life of the heterogeneous populations. The standard of civilization presented all the intermediate shades displayed between the most primitive "savage" and the highest civilized groups of people.



P2. A class from a primary school for native girls, Batavia 1921. This school was established by the (Javanese) Budi Utomo Society.

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**The aim of the article is to give an impression of the serious efforts of the Dutch colonial government in the first half of the twentieth century to introduce a system of education for everybody. This article is based on the legislation from 1893, 1906 and 1915. The attention from the colonial Government authorities (Government for short or, in Dutch "Gouvernement") for the sake of education during the nineteenth century is outside the scope of this article. To make a long story short I (DT) shall name the colonial authorities "Government", "Gouvernement" in Dutch.**

**A reorganization of education for natives was carried through in 1906:**  
**a. the set-up of schools for native primary education in the industrial and commercial districts;**  
**b. the set-up of European schools, the so-called Dutch-vernacular schools.**

**ad a.**

**In general the native primary schools consisted of five scholastic years. A sixth year with a commercial-agricultural curriculum could be added. Also in 1906 municipal popular schools, so-called desa-schools, were established to satisfy the elementary wants of the rural population. Desa-schools were mainly founded to combat illiteracy. The curriculum of desa-schools (reading, writing, ciphering, hygiene, animals and plants, etc.) was simple and was worked off within three years.**

**Also a continuation in transitional classes, between the desa-schools (1. in survey A) and the native primary schools (2.) (4.) (5.), were established. The continuation classes gave the opportunity to pupils to attend a complete course of primary instruction.**

**The native second class schools claimed higher requirements. The duration of the courses were four to five years.**

**Ad b.**

**The European schools concurred with similar schools in the Netherlands. The education had to be in correspondence with similar institutes in Holland. These schools adapted the needs of colonial life, but also accepted the Dutch standards at the same time.**

**Western education was given in three different types of elementary schools: European, Dutch-Chinese and Dutch-vernacular. The curriculum lasted seven years and Dutch was introduced as a vehicle from the lowest classes onwards. The native language (Javanese, Sundanese, Chinese, etc.) was taught also. However, because of Dutch as a vehicle in Western secondary schools, the instruction in Dutch was one of the main branches.**

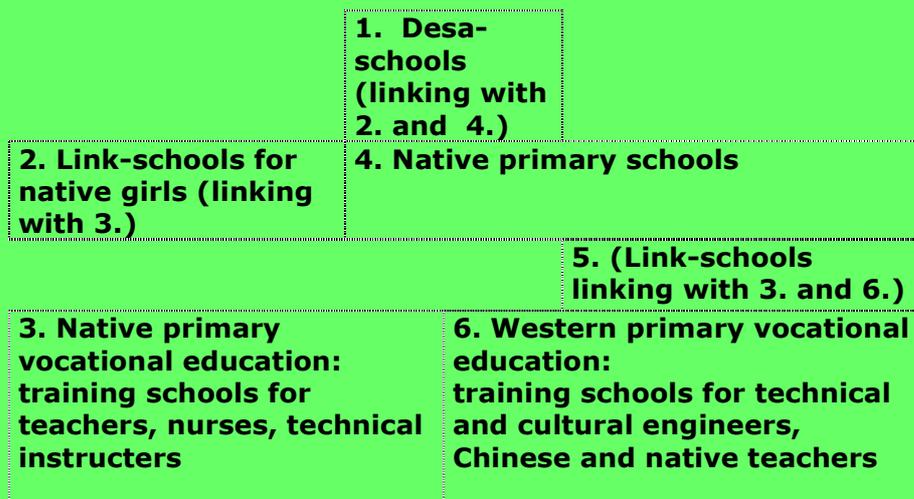
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3. The Kartini-school for native girls, Batavia 1924.

**Survey A**

**ad a. Primary and secondary native education (Malay-vernacular):**



**Note: 5. was linked also with Western secondary education in behalf of highly talented native students.**

**Ad b. Western Primary education:**



## 2. Western secondary education, Western universities and colleges

In the Netherlands East-Indies continued secondary instruction was imparted in a type of school, called General Secondary School. The General Secondary School consisted of several sections.

At first the Continued Primary Education, Mulo-section in Dutch, disposed over a curriculum lasting three years. (See "note" in survey A.) This Mulo-section gave admittance to a Superstructure, likewise lasting three years, where preparatory higher instruction was given.:

-section Aa, the oriental-literary section, where Javanese, Malay, Indian history of culture and art was taught.

-section Ab, The western-classical section, comprising latin and antique cultural history.

-section B, the mathematical and physical sections.

These schools, which were adapted to the wants of the homeborn students (specially natives and Chinamen) were organized on the the same level as the Dutch schools for Continued and Preparatory Higher Education (in Dutch: Hogere Burgerschool HBS and Gymnasium) in the Netherlands East-Indies and in Holland and as such they also gave admittance to the Universities in Holland.

### Survey B Secondary education

<b>1. Continued Primary Education (Mulo), see "note" in survey A (linking with Superstructures 2,3,4)</b>		
<b>Superstructures I</b>		
<b>2. Section Aa</b>	<b>3. Section Ab</b>	<b>4. Section B</b>
Oriental literature	Western-classical education	mathematics and physics
In Dutch: oosters-literair	In Dutch: westerse klassieken	In Dutch: wis- en natuurkunde
Preparatory higher instruction	Preparatory higher instruction	Preparatory higher instruction
Linking with 5	Linking with 5	Linking with 5
<b>Superstructures II</b>		
<b>5. Continued and Preparatory Higher Education (HBS; grammar schoolgymnasium, in Dutch gymnasium) in the Netherlands East-Indies and in Holland</b>		
Linking with 6		
<b>6. Universities in the Netherlands East-Indies and in Holland</b>		
In Dutch: universiteiten and hogescholen (hogescholen: a typical Dutch phenomenon, mostly specialized academic education in technics, law or economics)		

There were three institutions giving university training in the Netherlands East-Indies: a technical -, a law - and a medical school. These faculties had adopted the scientific standard as similar faculties in Holland.

The University for Technics / Technische Hogeschool in Bandoeng had a course lasting four years. In 1928 the school was frequented by 75 students (50 Europeans, 20 Natives, 5 Chinese). The University for Law / Rechtshogeschool in Weltevreden, Jakarta /Batavia had a course lasting five years. In 1928 the number of students amounted to 138 (40 Europeans, 75 Natives, 23 Chinese). The University for the Study of Medicine/ Medische Hogeschool with a seven-years' course was opened in Weltevreden in 1927. The opening of this High School resulted in the abolishment of one of the two professional schools for doctors. The number of students in the two medical schools (Weltevreden and Surabaya / Soerabaya) amounted to 46 (14 Europeans, 17 Natives, 15 Chinese).

### **3. Professional schools.**

Linked with primary schools / link schools (see survey A) and with continued primary education (see survey C) there were a number of schools in the Netherlands East-Indies, which offered the opportunity to pupils of all nationalities to train themselves for social professions: the training of civil officers, teachers as well as medical, veterinary, commercial, technical education, etc.

We take elementary technical training for an example. With possibilities for economic development in view professional schools for natives were established since 1909. The aim was to give natives the opportunity of learning a handicraft: (limited) general education, carpentry, fitting, forging, professional drawing. The pupils could easily find employment. Native craft schools were established also in centres where industrial arts already existed. Artisans were trained locally in these schools, allowing them to find employment in their own region or to open private workshops in the neighbourhood.

The following is an enumeration of this kind of technical and professional schools established in the Netherlands East-Indies around 1930. There were five public technical / professional schools (duration four years) as well as twenty-nine native and branch schools (duration three or two years). Clerical organizations and private enterprises, such as sugar mills, organized seventeen private professional schools (duration mostly three years).

**Survey C Professional schools, continued instruction**

**1. Continued primary education (Mulo); linking with secondary vocational education**  
~~2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9~~

- Secondary vocational education**
- 2. Native medical instruction**
  - 3. Secondary agricultural instruction**
  - 4. Training of civil servants**
  - 5. Native law**
  - 6. Veterinary college**
  - 7. Training of teachers**
  - 8. Nautical training**
  - 9. Secondary technical instruction**

**Survey D Summary**

<p><b>Secondary vocational instruction (7)</b></p>		<p><b>-Secondary Superstructures, HBS and grammar schools, etc. (8a)</b>  <b>- Universities (8b)</b></p>
	<p><b>Primary Continued Education, Mulo (6) linking with 7, 8a</b></p>	
<p><b>Primary vocational education, native (4a) and western (4b)</b></p>		<p><b>Western primary education (5)</b>  <b>-native schools</b>  <b>-European schools</b>  <b>-Chinese schools</b></p>
<p><b>Link-schools (3b) linking with 4a, 4b, 6</b></p>		<p><b>linking with 6 and 8a</b></p>
<p><b>Link-schools for native girls (3a) linking with 4a</b></p>		
<p><b>Native primary education (2)</b></p>		
<p><b>Desa-schools (1) Linking with 2 in continuation classes</b></p>		

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**Ending**