

The impact that
independence had
economically, socially,
and politically in
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Indonesia is a country that has been controlled by many different powers, from the Indian civilization in the early centuries AD to the Republic of Indonesia that exists today. The Indian civilization began with the rapid spread of Hinduism, and eventually, Buddhism, and lasted until the sixteenth century AD. Indian culture and customs were introduced, such as the system of government in a monarchy, the organization of military troops, architecture, religious practices and rituals, literature, music and dances. Muslim merchants in the sixteenth century began to establish trade links with Indonesia, India, and Persia, and eventually, the Hindu kings were influenced and converted to Islam. This transition allowed greater trade capabilities for Indonesia, however, some people rejected Islam and retreated to reclusive islands. Soon after Islam had spread throughout Indonesia, the Portuguese arrived and successfully began to propagate Christianity, however, they were unable to defeat the Islamic king of the time.

It was only in the eighteenth century that Dutch colonialism conquered the Islamic kingdom. This colonialism resulted in some public dissent, causing outbreaks of protest and rebellions against the Dutch. Britain was able to capture Indonesia from the Dutch for only a temporary amount of time, and in the end, Japan had control over Indonesia. This is, of course, right before Indonesia achieved its independence and formed a republic.

(History of Indonesia, <http://www.prica.org/indonesia/general/history.html#list>, March 18, 2003.

Through this basic outline of Indonesian history, it can be seen that the shifts in power that have occurred many times have impacted the people and the economy of Indonesia. Rebellions, protests, trade links, and quality of life are some of the aspects that were affected by the changes in political power. Even though all the changes in political power influenced the people and the economy in some way, independence is a very important part of Indonesian history since political power was not simply transferred to another nation or to a monarch, but rather to Indonesia itself, as a whole. Despite the times of trial and hardship immediately after independence was achieved, Indonesian independence eventually benefited the country economically, socially, and politically. Economic development is an important part of a country's growth in the world, and it was because of independence that Indonesia had the ability to use other countries for assistance in her economic rehabilitation.

During the period of Dutch colonialism, the Dutch used Indonesian resources and Indonesian land to benefit themselves, resulting in an extremely weak Indonesian economy. The colonialism left 93% of the population illiterate, only a hundred Indonesian physicians, less than a hundred Indonesian engineers, and only ten agricultural experts. (350 Years of Colonialism, <http://www.workers.org/indonesia/chap3.html>, March 19, 2003.)

With such few highly educated people in the country, ignorance was plentiful in Indonesia, during the colonial system and right after it was abolished. Inflation was on the rise, and with this kind of an economic system, it was evident that an independent Indonesia must be formed so that economic conditions could improve. Only Indonesians

themselves desired to improve their economic state in the world, and independence was necessary for this aspect of future Indonesian prosperity.

Economic rehabilitation could not commence with the Dutch still controlling Indonesia, and even when Japan occupied the land, economic rehabilitation could not take place. In general, occupation of a nation rarely benefits the nation, because the occupier uses the nation for its own benefits, and when it no longer controls the nation, this nation is left in a pitiful state to fend for itself. Thus, even Japanese rule was not benefiting Indonesia economically. When independence was achieved, the leading party was extremely clever in realizing that Indonesia could not commence economic rehabilitation on her own, but rather, needed help from other nations.

Therefore, the newly independent country managed to pay off her \$5 million debt to the United States and then acquired her credibility in the world, a necessary step towards economic prosperity. Other nations willingly agreed to help Indonesia's economic situation because of her credibility, and this, in turn, benefited the country greatly. Eventually, after independence had been achieved, Indonesia's inflation rates went down from 40% to 20%, and her income went up by 1000 U. S. dollars, showing an amazing improvement in her economy.

(Indonesia, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/countries/id/id_inc.html, March 20, 2003.)

Indonesia is now involved in much trade, and her economic prosperity continues to benefit the nation. It was independence that sparked this

eventual success, and without it, Indonesia would not be such an economically important country for trading as it is today.

Peace is something that many nations strive for, and this peace was achieved once Indonesia gained its independence. During the time of Dutch colonialism, most of the people living in Indonesia were middle-class workers and not highly educated. Lack of education decreases intellectual capacity, which is necessary for skills in diplomacy. Unfortunately, it was the lack of Indonesian independence that caused the vast amount of ignorance in Indonesia at that time, since education was not readily available under colonialism, stemming from a poor economic situation as mentioned in the above argument.

This ignorance then led to the complete lack of diplomacy when the Indonesian people were fighting for their freedom, therefore, during the fight for independence by the Indonesians, violence was abundant. In December, 1912, the objective of the political party Partai Indonesia was to strive for complete independence of Indonesia, however, it was not successful and the violence performed resulted in the exile of all three leaders of the party by the colonial government. Thomas Matulesy staged a revolt against the Dutch colonialism from 1816-1818, and Prince Diponegoro of Mataram led the Java War from 1825-1830. These were three other fierce struggles for freedom.

From 1945-1950, the final struggles for independence took place, with much violence against British, Dutch, and Japanese troops. Instead of using some diplomacy and intellectual tactics to gain independence, only fighting and

violence were used. (The War for Independence, <http://www.gimonca.com/sejarah/sejarah08>.

html, March 20, 2003. It can be seen that ignorance can lead to violence, especially when this ignorance is used to solve political problems, which require sound decision-making skills. An example of ignorance resulting in violence is most definitely when suicide bombers make ignorant decisions to follow their leaders and kill innocent people. If the suicide bombers in the September 11th mission, for example, had been educated people, they would have realized that killing thousands of innocent Americans is not a jihad and is not what Islam condones.

This kind of ignorance existed in Indonesia during the colonial times, because the Indonesians did not have the opportunity to educate themselves while being ruled under a foreign nation. This is part of the reason for only violence and the utter lack of diplomacy that took place during the struggle for independence. Looking deeper into the subject, it can be seen that the lack of Indonesian independence itself caused this violence by preventing most Indonesian people from the opportunity to get highly educated, thus one can say that colonialism caused ignorance, which in turn, caused violence. Therefore, through the use of Indonesian independence bringing about a stronger economy and more educated people, peace within the nation was possible.

Peace also came about because independence itself had been achieved and because people were beginning to possess the intellectual ability to accomplish goals and solve problems without using only violence. Therefore,

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this argument stems from the first argument and proves that the social benefit of relative peace that Indonesia experienced after independence was attained was partly due to the economic benefit of the country, as ignorance decreased drastically. Upon achieving independence, rebellions, nationalist movements, and struggles against dominating nations ceased to occur, because there was no need for this violence now that Indonesia had reached its ultimate goal of freedom. Quality of life for people increased greatly and there was less public dissent towards the governing body for Indonesia. (350 Years of Colonialism, [http://www.](http://www.workers.org/indonesia/chap3.html)

[workers.org/indonesia/chap3.html](http://www.workers.org/indonesia/chap3.html), March 19, 2003. In fact, from the time after Indonesian independence to the year 2000, the lifespan has increased by 20 years and illiteracy has decreased by 30%, indicating a rapidly improving quality of life for the citizens of Indonesia.

(Indonesia, [http://www.pbs.](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/countries/id/id_well.html)

[org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/countries/id/id_well.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/countries/id/id_well.html), March 20, 2003.

) It was independence that was the major factor in allowing Indonesia to become a relatively peaceful nation within itself, and to allow its people to live higher quality lives. The political system of Indonesia, a vital aspect that affects everybody living in the country, improved greatly once independence was achieved, as it was more representative of the entire population. During the times of Dutch colonialism, the Dutch controlled Indonesia without taking heed to the needs and opinions of the Indonesian people. The decisions that were made for Indonesia were based solely on how one nation could use Indonesia to benefit its people, the Dutch.

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(350 Years of Colonialism, <http://www.workers.org/indonesia/chap3.tml>, March 19, 2003.) Once independence was achieved for Indonesia, a constitution was developed that limited the amount of power the President would have.

The constitution also promoted a much more democratic system than the previous colonialism, therefore, it included the opinions of the general population as well. Since a government is set up to run a country in the way the country's citizens would like it to be run, an improved political situation would definitely be when the country includes its population in the decisions it makes to benefit itself. In the 1945 Constitution, it is stated that "sovereignty shall be vested in the people and shall be exercised in full", proving that this constitution was definitely leaning towards a political system that would include the citizens of Indonesia in the decisions affecting the country. It is also stated in the constitution that "all citizens have equal status before the law and in government", that "every citizen has the right to work and to live in human dignity", and that every citizen has the "freedom of association and assembly, of verbal and (of) written expression". The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, [http://menic.](http://menic.utexas.edu/asnic/countries/indonesia/ConstIndonesia.html)

[utexas.edu/asnic/countries/indonesia/ConstIndonesia.html](http://menic.utexas.edu/asnic/countries/indonesia/ConstIndonesia.html), March 20, 2003.) Since the citizens of Indonesia was satisfied, after independence, that their views were being taken very seriously by the government and that they were being used to make decisions affecting the country, this put the citizens at ease in that finally, after three hundred and fifty years of colonialism, they were able to have some say in how their country should be governed. This was a key factor that led to increased amounts of peace <https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-that-independence-had-economically-socially-and-politically-in-indonesia-essay/>

within the country, since there was now no anxiety to have their views heard. Therefore, from all three arguments that have been put forth so far, peace was not only a benefit because of Indonesian independence in 1945, but more specifically, a benefit that stemmed from the economic prosperity and the more representative political system that was able to take place after independence was achieved.

It is extremely important that a majority of the citizens of a country are happy with the political system that is used in their country, because this system must be admired by the majority for there to be peace and ease within the country. Independence brought about a political system that was far more superior to the previous colonial system, in that it was viewed upon in a much better light by the Indonesian citizens. Therefore, independence was beneficial to Indonesia in the political aspect as well. As it can be seen from the three arguments, independence for Indonesia did benefit the country economically, socially, and politically. It can be argued, however, that despite the fact that independence did affect each aspect individually, the economical, social, and political aspects of the country supported each other through the transition from colonialism to a republic.

This support derived from independence benefited Indonesia. Once independence was achieved, the economy of Indonesia began to improve and the population started to become more educated. Having this educated population led to peace within the nation, since problems could be resolved using diplomacy and intellectual abilities rather than fighting. On the other hand, peace was also attained because there were no more struggles and no more violence needed after independence had been attained.

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Peace within the nation also came about because the opinions of the citizens were being taken into consideration in the political system. The country benefited politically because colonialism was abolished and a more democratic constitution was put into place. The peace within the nation, in turn, supported the economic development and the new political system and did not stunt the growth of these two aspects. Therefore, the economical, social, and political aspects of Indonesia supported each other after independence was achieved, and helped these aspects of the country develop after the initiation by the achievement of independence.

This support was necessary for the continuation of economical development and the preservation of peace, and thus benefited Indonesia greatly. The independence that Indonesia finally managed to attain after three hundred and fifty years of colonial domination had a huge impact on the society and this impact definitely benefited the country economically, socially, and politically. Even though these benefits were not evident immediately after independence was achieved, through time, the economy of Indonesia improved, violence subsided, and public dissent towards the political system diminished. Such a stark improvement in Indonesia's success gives it credibility in the world today, and, as proven by the arguments in this report, Indonesia's path to achievement began with its independence.

References <https://www.workers.org/indonesia/chap3.html> <http://www.gimonca.com/sejarah/sejarah08.shtml> http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/countries/id/id_inc.html