

The Survival and Continuity of Islamic Boarding School in the Era of Changes

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Abstract

The fast change requires the ability of Islamic boarding schools to respond fast, rightly, and adaptively. Using qualitative phenomenology, this study tries to see the changes faced by the Islamic Boarding School of Nurul Islam Jember. The result of this study is that the adaptation of changes is made by the model of safeguarding and conserving the positive local values (localities) and is helpful for the Islamic boarding school. As an agent of change, the Islamic boarding school of Nurul Islam participates in society's change actively. Besides that, the canceling of personality is to prepare santri to have the religious and non-religion knowledge to be an Islamic human who can apply their knowledge. The personality built by the Islamic boarding school of Nurul Islam can face and respond to the changes without ignoring morals (Akhlak). The Islamic boarding school of Nurul Islam tries to integrate the formal and Islamic boarding school systems to build capable generations. The Islamic boarding school with soft skills and the formal school with life skills will be the solution to adaptive education in the era of changes.

Keywords: Social Change, the Continuity of Islamic Boarding School, Adaptive Change

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Boarding School is the oldest Islamic educational institution born and grew from the indigenous Indonesian culture (Alam, 2018). Islamic boarding schools grow on the initiative and support of the community and are driven by strong community demands and needs. Although historically, it is not known when the first *pesantren* existed in Indonesia, according to some historians, *pesantren* in Indonesia have existed since the time of Wali Songo (Islam & Aziz, 2020). It is no exaggeration to say that the *pesantren* education that has developed to date with its various models is always in harmony with the soul, spirit, and personality of the Indonesian nation, which is predominantly Muslim (Sulton, 2006).

The position of *pesantren*, which continues to survive until now, can be seen from Horikoshi's (1987) study in West Java on the role of Kiai in social change, which is called "true entrepreneurs" starting from the mediator's conception, Kiai's success in playing his

role depends on his charismatic qualities. Furthermore, Dhofier (2011), through what he calls the term "Islamic boarding school tradition". Describe and observe how the changes that occur in the pesantren and traditional Islam in Java, which in modern Indonesia, still show their vitality as a social, cultural, and religious force that has helped shape the building of contemporary Indonesian culture. Furthermore, Steenbrink (1994) in saying that the modernization carried out by pesantren "refuses while following," where in its implementation, the madrasa education system adopts the positive sides of the legacy of Dutch colonial education, especially methodological aspects and general material, which is integrated with Islamic religious education, as a characteristic surau and pesantren education. Therefore, Azra (1997) describes Islamic boarding schools in his writings: "Pesantren: Continuity and Change" that the sustainability of pesantren lies in the aspect of 'traditionalism' (read: habituation through the basic values of pesantren), then making substantial changes to the learning system and institutions to adapt to the needs of the times that continue to develop.

Pesantren Nurul Islam is a boarding school that emphasizes the quality aspect of education. The quality of stabilization in the education sector can be seen from the accreditation value of formal education institutions that get an "A" score. In addition, in the industry of strengthening religious values, Pondok Pesantren Nurul Islam has the vision to build the religious quality of students from an early age. The program offered at the Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School lies in the integration pattern between religious and general education. Experts in religion and science. The products offered are, of course with the character of the pesantren—the recitation of the yellow book with the nature of an-Aaliyah aswajaan. In addition, to strengthen the capabilities of Islamic boarding schools, it also facilitates formal student institutions from primary institutions to universities.

Using a qualitative-phenomenological approach, this study tries to see the dynamics of change faced by Pesantren Nurul Islam in the face of the times. Data analysis techniques adopt the procedure introduced by Miles and Huberman (1984).

DISCUSSION

Islamic Boarding School of Nurul Islam: Adaptive Model of Change

The durability and continuity of the *pesantren* education system, when analyzed with the functional, structural theory initiated by Talcott Parsons in Ritzer (2004), suggests that for the social organization system to survive, the system must have four things called AGIL: Adaptation is the system must adapt to the environment and adapt the environment to needs. Goal attainment (has a goal) is a system that must define and achieve its primary objectives. Integration (integration), a plan must regulate the relationship between the parts and components. Latency (pattern maintenance), i.e., a system must equip, maintain and improve the cultural patterns that create and sustain motivation (Ritzer, 2004).

The resilience of the *pesantren* education system can be understood as following the social science theory in an organization's culture (Musaddad, 2021). Therefore, the large *pesantren* and have endurance and continuity perform the four systems of functions above. If not, it is inevitable that *pesantren* education does not have a strong resistance and will even be evicted as an Islamic educational institution or become public education. In other words, leaving one of the system's functions above, *pesantren* education does not have resilience and follows the times. This is what is termed in the *pesantren* world, which reads: *al-muhafazhah 'ala alqadim al-salih wa al-akhsu bi al-jadid al-aslah* (maintaining and preserving old values that are still positive and taking new, more positive values).

Pesantren is very clear when looking at the function of *pesantren* which is positioned as a religious educational institution (Islamic) that remains the center of *tafaqqub fi al-din*, which functions to maintain, develop and utilize Islamic sciences. The adaptation of Nurul Islam Islamic boarding school to the community as an educational institution and its distribution has contributed a lot to forming a religious society.

Habibah, as a resident of Antirogo village and a cleric at the Nurul Islam Islamic boarding school, said that the role of *pesantren* with its various components is a provision in the process of development and social change that leads to a society with character and becoming a complete human being (*insân al-kâmil*). Islamic boarding schools have a role in developing the character of science, both culturally, starting from the construction of the *kyai* tradition, reciting the yellow book, to the construction of knowledge and practice (Supriyanto et al, 2022; Soebahar, 2013).

As an institution of civilization, it is time for *pesantren* to pay attention to the demands of the developing era. In addition, to maintain or preserve good, positive, and beneficial local values of *pesantren*, it is also time to adapt them if they do not destroy localities. Therefore, as agents of change, *pesantren* are educational institutions from and for the community or community-based institutions, so *pesantren* are required to actively participate in social change in the community all around (Siradj et al, 1999; Qomar, 2002).

Personality Development: Response to Change

The achievement of the goals (goal attainment) of *pesantren* is very clear, from the historical perspective; the purpose of *pesantren* education at the beginning of its development is to develop the religion of Islam, and to understand more the teachings of Islam, especially in the fields of *fiqh*, Arabic, interpretation, hadith, and *tasawuf* (Mudzhar, 2008).

Technically, *pesantren* is a place where *santri* lives (Kholili, 2021). This understanding shows the most important characteristic of *pesantren*: a total educational environment. This means that all activities in *pesantren* environment have educational value. *Pesantren* is a place to learn more deeply and further about Islamic religious knowledge which is taught systematically (Hakam et al, 2022; Zaenuri & Yusuf, 2021), directly from Arabic-language sources, and based on classical books written by great *ulama'* who are taught more times in *pesantren*.

Pesantren is an educational institution that provides round-the-clock teaching (24 hours). In *pesantren*, this has become the daily agenda. For 24 hours every day, from day to day, month to month, year to year, the *kyai* along with all *ustadz* and *ustadzah* always guide, teach, and educate their *santri* both by exemplary in the way of life (simple, *tawakkal*, always sincere, grateful, philanthropists, and so on), exemplary in the discipline of worship (discipline of praying five times in congregation, discipline of fasting), as well as by teaching

The purpose of *pesantren* education, in general, is for *tafaqqub fiddin*, and of course, *pesantren* will strive to achieve this goal. Likewise, the educational goal of Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School is to produce *tafuqqub fiddin* Muslim individuals. These Muslim individuals follow the teachings of Allah Swt. and practice these teachings in various aspects of their lives. The formation of a cultured society (civil society) is when Islamic boarding schools are committed to religious values because with religion, people can step on a clear straight. The vision and mission of Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School Jember formulate its vision, which is to produce intelligent and moral *santri* with the mission of: 1) increasing confidence in *Ablussunnah wal Jama'ah*; 2) forming a noble

personality; 3) improving and fostering the spirit of learning; and 4) increased awareness as social beings that are religious, national and state.

Kyai Muhyiddin, as leader of the Nurul Islam Islamic boarding school, said that the integration of religious and non-religious knowledge so that the graduates produced a complete and unified personality in which elements of faith and knowledge are combined in a balanced way. It further said:

"The boarding school that he is currently managing is an Islamic educational institution that in the implementation of its education carries out a process of fostering knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to religious aspects (*tafaqquh fi al-din*). The institution adopts religious and general knowledge to balance intellectual and spiritual or between worldly life and *ukhrawi*. With the hope, it can provide a complete education for its students to answer all the challenges of the times without leaving religious teachings. (Kyai Muhyiddin; 2021)"

Besides that, the *Pesantren* Nurul Islam is an educational institution focusing on quality improvement. The concept of Nuris' superior MA is a boarding school, all students must live in boarding school dormitories. Nuris' Superior MA was brewed up for the religious curriculum in MPKiS NURIS (Management of Santri Yellow Book Development). In the field of nahwu studied Alfiyah, in the field of Fiqh studied the book of Fathul Qorib, in the field of Usul Fiqh studied al-Waraqat by Imam Haramain al-Juwaini, in the field of ulumul hadith studied Mandlumah Baiquniyah and in the field of aswaja studied al-Hujjaj al-Qath'iyah by Kyai Muhyiddin Abdusshomad.

MPKiS NURIS is also tasked with controlling the development of each Nuris "Superior" MA student so that all students can read the yellow book. In addition, to hone science skills, M-SAINS (Madrasah SCIENCE) MA Nuris "Superior" was formed which developed the sciences of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, and Robotics. Therefore, to develop the quality of Madrasah Aliyah, the institution has launched the "Go International" program. As a result, several Nuris Superior MA graduates were sent to the country. The Go International program was continued by dispatching NSEP (Nuris Student Exchange Programme) participants in the context of scientific and cultural exchange.

In strengthening the quality of religion in this institution, the MHQ tahfidz al-Qur'an Program (Madrasah Huffadzul Qur'an) was developed to make students love the Koran. When viewed from the context of the above ideas, the purposes of Islamic boarding school education are two; first, the specific goal is to prepare students to have religious and non-religious knowledge, and second, the general goal is to guide students to become human beings with Islamic personalities who can practice their knowledge. This is called the character of independent living, which comes from its value system. The personality system formed by Islamic boarding schools is to become human beings who make *santri* have Islamic personalities and can apply their knowledge and morals.

Institutional Integration: The Efforts of *Pesantren* Modernization

The essence of education is to lead students to explore their potential. Therefore, teaching and learning activities and processes in education are the growth and development of students following their potential nature. In developing the potential in students, it is understood that a good education must address three human domains, namely the cognitive (intellectual) domain, the affective (emotional) domain, and the psychomotor

domain (Mustakim, 2019). No educational process is considered perfect if it leaves one of the three domains. Education that tends to the cognitive domain will produce an intellectually genius generation but emotionally dry and low quality.

Kyai Muhyiddin explained that in transforming educational institutions, Nurul Islam Islamic boarding school used the concept of "*Almuhafadzoh Alal Qodimil Sholih Wal Abdu Fil Jadidil Aslab*" [maintaining a good old culture and adopting a new, better culture]. For this reason, integration with formal institutions.

Imam Subachi said that the new trend of Islamic boarding schools in the context of renovating the new system was seen in the boarding school education system, which was starting to become familiar with the scientific method so that it was more open to developments outside of itself, diversified programs and activities and could function as a center for community development.

So, the effort to integrate Nurul Islam Islamic boarding school education with formal education is one of the modernization concepts carried out by Islamic boarding schools to meet future demands in the global era because only superior humans will be able to survive (the survival of the fittest). So, the efforts made by this Islamic boarding school are a description of provisions for competition in life in the future.

Haryono, as the head of SMK Nurul Islam, said that cognitive knowledge and emotional awareness only cannot explore the potential of reality optimally but must be followed by cultivating the psychomotor realm. With the knowledge and awareness created by the possession of intellectual knowledge and having the desire to act due to an emotional impulse, however, real action cannot be realized due to the lack of cultivation of the psychomotor domain. Cultivation of the psychomotor domain is related to developing an ethos of honesty, hard work, professionalism, politeness, and social in the form of discipline and real exercises.

Thus, Islamic education, in the process, includes an intensive program of intellectual improvement and revives the spiritual aspect, which can eventually become the capital to live in the nation's culture, which is always evolving along with the progress of human civilization (Hakam et al, 2022).

The existence of *pesantren* has been tested in every dynamic of the changing times (Mufarokah et al, 2022). However, this does not mean that *pesantren* can remain silent or be indifferent to globalization. On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools must respond by re-evaluating and reorienting according to the community's needs and the times.

Formal Institution like SMK Nurul Islam education is more directed to the world of work and is required to engage directly in contact with the outside world. Of course, in addition to the knowledge needed to explore further the business world or the world of technology, they must also have character skills to filter out negative influences from the outside world. Moreover, the graph is increasing every year in the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency. So it is a must for Islamic boarding schools or people who care about education to realize formal schools based on technology that produce graduates with *IMTAQ* and *IPTEK*.

A formal educational institution, based on *pesantren* has advantages in terms of human resource development compared to outside *pesantren*, which tend to emphasize less moral education. The advantages of *pesantren* are that formal institutions based on *pesantren* develop three values at once, namely character (moral), spirituality, and knowledge and skills (Azra, 1997; Islam & Aziz, 2020). Formal institution based on *Pesantren* is a school that combines the formal education system in schools and

the *pesantren* education system (Komarudin et al, 2022). Students study and live together in the institution for 24 hours (Jamaludin, 2021).

Someone with life skills without a mature mental attitude may not be enthusiastic about working and creating just because of his unpreparedness in facing challenges and obstacles. However, people who have been provided with adequate soft skill education will face these challenges and obstacles with various creative alternative solutions (Sarwadi & Sari, 2019).

For the development of soft skills, the coaching and education model that is applied should use authentic learning, where students are faced with real problems so that they are familiar with various problems in life (Wulandary, 2020). When they are used to being faced with various life problems, they eventually become creative people in finding solutions to problems. Judging from reality, Islamic boarding schools are one of the educational institutions whose educational patterns are identical to authentic learning.

In developing the curriculum, the leader (*kiai*) plays a role and participates in decision-making by forming a curriculum development team. The steps taken by the *kiai* are as follows: *First*, the *kiai* encourages the curriculum development team to analyze community needs related to the local curriculum while maintaining scientific knowledge. This step was taken by the *kiai* to measure the involvement of *pesantren* alumni in the community. Alumni profiles reflect community needs so an analysis of community needs is important in curriculum development. *Second*, the *kiai* directs the development team to formulate an integrative and adaptive local curriculum that follows the situation, conditions, and infrastructure of the *pesantren*.

This step was taken by the *kiai* because no matter how good the content of the local curriculum is, if it cannot be implemented because it is not following the environment and the *pesantren* facilities and infrastructure, then it will not be beneficial for the continuity of the teaching and learning process in the *pesantren*. *Third*, the *kiai* determines the development of a local curriculum for the development team to be implemented through extracurricular programs. Extracurricular activities at Nuris 1 Jember Islamic Boarding School include: (1) Madrasah Science/M-Science, (2) Arts, Religion, and Sports, and (3) Development of Arabic and English, (4) MHQ (Huffadzul Qur'an Madrasah), and (5) MPKiS (Yellow Book Development Management); and (6) the Go International Program and NSEP (Nuris Student Exchange Program). This step was taken by the *kiai* because there are already many national curricula in madrasahs from the ministry of religion so that local curriculum content to develop the potential of students and superior characteristics of Islamic boarding schools can be carried out through extracurricular activities. *Fourth*, the *kiai* guides the development team to evaluate the implementation of the local curriculum holistically and comprehensively, starting from planning, implementation, and the results that have been achieved and determining a follow-up plan from the evaluation results.

This step was taken by the curriculum *kiai* who had decided that it had to be carried out properly, starting from the planning and implementation to the results, because bad results could occur due to non-optimal implementation, not optimal implementation due to wrong planning (Mustakim, 2019). Besides that, periodic evaluation is carried out to adjust to the social changes. So, the substantive findings of this research are the roles and strategies of the *kiai* in developing the local curriculum in Islamic boarding schools based on integrative and negative characteristics. Therefore, a murshid plays an important role, in the form of legitimacy of the kyai in social change (Geertz, 1960, 1983).

The phenomenon of the increasing number of Islamic boarding schools establishing *SMK*, *MA*, *SMA*, and others is a positive thing because Islamic boarding schools are a sub-culture of the community, having to respond to the needs of the community in general; all of these is accompanied by good management so that the quality of the formal institution in the *pesantren* is not inferior with a formal institution outside the *pesantren*. The combination of the formal institution and Islamic Boarding Schools, each of which has its privileges, will give birth to truly reliable generations in their fields (Muharramah, 2018). Islamic boarding schools with the advantages of soft skills and formal institutions with the advantages of life skills will be educational solutions that are adaptive to the times.

CONCLUSION

In Indonesia's context of national education, *pesantren* is a sub-system of national education. As one of the providers of (traditional) Islamic education in Indonesia on the one hand and in its capacity as a sub-system of national education on the other, Islamic boarding schools have carried out one of the functions and objectives of National Education, namely educating the nation's life through various activities that it carries out. The vital role of the academic tradition of *pesantren* refers to a complete learning process, which displays a figure of a *pesantren* graduate who has broad insight, a mature personality, and a high ability to carry out social engineering, making *pesantren* still exist following the times. From the explanation above, it is concluded as follows; first, adapting to changes with a model of maintaining or preserving local values that are positive and beneficial for *pesantren*. As agents of change, *pesantren* actively participate in social change in the surrounding community. Second, personality development aims to prepare students to have religious and non-religious knowledge to become individuals with Islamic personalities who can practice their knowledge. The personality system formed by the Nurul Islam Boarding School can face and respond to changes without denying the moral aspect. Third, integrate the formal and Islamic boarding school systems to produce genuinely reliable generations in their fields. Islamic boarding schools with the advantages of soft skills and vocational schools with the advantages of life skills will be educational solutions that are adaptive to the times.

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