



Transformation of Pesantren as Humanistic and Futuristic Educational Institutions

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Abstract : *The aims of this research is to find an pesantren model that is resilient in the transformation of humanistic educational institutions and to analyze pesantren innovation in its mutual development to realize futuristic education. Using a qualitative research approach with a case study type, primary and secondary research data sources, data collection techniques using in-depht interviews, participant observation and documentation, data validity checking techniques using triangulation and data analyze using tree interactive models. The result of the research show thst the Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung is model pesantren in Banyuwangi distric wich able to maintain diniyah education as a fearless pesantrenthe midst of its efforts to carry out institutional transformation that still considers humanism with independence, tolerance and high moral education in curriculum integration according to the need of service users and graduate users through early education, muadalah and ma'had aly. Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung also innovates in futuristic educational activities through the motto that the pesantren is market to meet all the needs of society by providing education from early childhood to tertiary education, all of which is quality oriented, as evidenced by the achievement of its accreditation rankng and the graph of the number of students which continuous to increase, showing the high level of public trust, as Juran's concept of continuous quality improvement with a trilogy of planning, controlling and improving quality, coaching of education politic, so that Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung is currently recognized as the largest pesantren in Banyuwangi district is an anti thesis to the opinion of some people who say that pesantren are educational institutions that are not future oriented, outdated because not innovative.*

Keywords : *Pesantren; Educational Institutions; Humanistic; Futuristic.*

Article History : Received: December 2023 Revised: January 2024 Accepted: January 2024



INTRODUCTION

The pesantren is globally recognized as an educational institution that shapes the character of its students to be polite, humble, and independent within the framework of moral education exemplified by the kyai (spiritual leader) as the head of the pesantren. This is achieved through Sufi behavior with the implementation of attitudes such as tolerance, balance, moderation, and inclusivity (Muali et al., 2021). Despite the current influence of digital technology on changes in educational systems and cultural outputs, pesantren has proven capable of maintaining orthodox behavior, reflected in attitudes of tolerance, mutual respect, politeness, proficiency in reading religious texts, and understanding their meanings. However, there is heterodoxy emerging due to digitalization, seen in students imitating trending idols, bullying cases, and a phenomenon of students becoming less obedient to rules and unable to read religious texts (Mundiri & Nawiro, 2019).

As the center for Islamic religious education in Indonesia, pesantren's role goes beyond knowledge transfer; it involves instilling Islamic values, character building, and nurturing the personalities of its students (Mu'is et al., 2022). Therefore, in the resilience of pesantren, maintaining moral education as its core is crucial, even while adapting to technological advancements to remain attractive and relevant to society. Pesantren Nurul Jadid Probolinggo, for example, practices the trinity of education for the soul, body, and heart, inspired by Hasan al-Bana's philosophy. This is manifested in shaping students' character through the trinity of attitudes: awareness, education and learning activities, and adherence to rules (Baharun & Maryam, 2019).

Islam, seen as a religion of compassion in the pesantren, is systematically integrated into multicultural education. It teaches love, respect for cultural differences, languages, and socio-economic backgrounds, promoting coexistence while upholding human values and human rights (Huda, 2018). Pesantren's role in fostering pluralism aligns with the nation's diversity in religion and beliefs, countering radicalism and terrorism amid globalization.

As a multicultural educational institution in Indonesia, pesantren, following Gus Dur's concept, should apply diverse educational approaches tailored to local cultures without sacrificing its Indonesian identity. This aligns with Nurcholis Majid's idea of multicultural education, aiming to realize the potential and develop values to maintain its existence. Therefore, a transformative concept is needed for pesantren to preserve its characteristic religious education system while being adaptive in developing integrated general education with pesantren values (Setyazi, 2022).

The exemplary education taught in pesantren is not only by kyai and students but also by teachers and students in schools managed by pesantren. This includes symbolic interactions reflected in personalities with values such as integrity, simplicity, and dedication, as observed in SMA Nurul Jadid (Wardi et al., 2023). These values reinforce pesantren's status as a high-moral education institution.

In the midst of the transformation of educational institutions in the era of Society 5.0, pesantren understands the need to utilize digital technology to enhance service quality and school profitability. This involves refining educational systems, learning methods, and learning resources, especially considering the millennial generation's affinity for digital technology. E-learning is a crucial part of this transformation to create a futuristic educational environment, aligned with the goals of Society 5.0 (Fauzi et al., 2018).

Pesantren should also leverage social media in its institutional transformation to make the public aware of its educational goals, activities, and achievements, including online religious classes. This is essential to counter the lingering stigma associating pesantren with radicalism and terrorism. By promoting its principles of *hablun minallah* (relationship with God) and *hablun min-nas* (relationship with humans), pesantren asserts itself as a strategic educational institution, a moral stronghold against radicalism and terrorism (Halim, 2017).

The spirit of pesantren in teaching nationalism, based on the principle that love for the homeland is part of faith (Bisri, 2019), aligns with the historical role of pesantren in the struggle for independence. Pesantren's existence and innovation in education meet the national education goals outlined in the 2003 Law: to strengthen faith and piety, educate, enhance character and personality, and realize noble morals. Pesantren's involvement in solving social problems arising from conflicts further emphasizes its role in society (Mukhibat, 2016).

In conclusion, pesantren is not only a subject of study due to its intrinsic value but stands out as an exemplary Indonesian educational institution, demonstrating both humanistic and futuristic transformations. This makes it a model and reference for other educational institutions in maintaining their distinctive characteristics and innovating education to meet the demands of the times. Therefore, this research aims to discover a resilient pesantren model in humanistic educational transformation and analyze pesantren's innovations in developing its quality towards a futuristic education.

METHOD

This section should be clearly and concisely written. It provides practical information concerning the research methods, procedures, tools, materials, or instruments. The method section describes how the study was conducted. Such a description enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of methods and the reliability and validity of the results. Please bear in mind that readers must be able to recreate your study from the level of detail that you give. This section should not exceed 10% (for qualitative research) or 15% (for quantitative research) of the manuscript.

The research approach used is a qualitative approach with a case study design, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. The research location is Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung, a pesantren in Banyuwangi regency that consistently undergoes educational institutional transformation with the concept of continuity and change. This has garnered interest from communities across Indonesia and has started to attract global attention. Data

collection techniques include in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data validity is ensured through triangulation, and data analysis follows an interactive three-model approach, beginning with data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Islamic Education as the Soul of Pesantren

Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung, established since January 15, 1951, manages Islamic education institutionalized under the name Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiriyyah. One interesting finding in this research is the policy set by KH. Mukhtar Syafa'at, the founder and first leader of this pesantren, emphasizing that Islamic education is the soul or essence of the pesantren. Therefore, all students are required to undergo Islamic education. In this pesantren, the number of students in the madrasah diniyah is equivalent to the number of santri, unlike general education students in the madrasah or school also managed by the pesantren. This education is tailored to students' interests and talents. This policy remains in effect until now as part of the hidden curriculum. Islamic education in this pesantren consists of three levels: Ula equivalent to elementary school, Wustha equivalent to junior high school, and Ulya equivalent to senior high school.

The realization of Islamic education as the soul of the pesantren involves educational personnel, including pesantren leaders assisted by male and female teachers who are entrusted by the kyai (spiritual leader). The implementation of madrasah diniyah learning activities is centralized, although in this pesantren with around 8000 students, their residence is not only at the central pesantren but also in several prominent dormitories nearby. The implementation takes place during the day from 13:00 to 16:30 and at night from 19:00 to 22:00 WIB in the educational building of Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung. This is because Islamic education symbolizes the pesantren's teaching of Islam-oriented moral character cultivation, serving as a moral fortress for the nation (Fauzi et al., 2018).

Another piece of evidence indicating that Islamic education is the soul of the pesantren is seen in its curriculum, which includes almost 100% of tafaquh fid-din subjects with sources from the Quran, hadith, and classical Islamic texts. However, the pesantren is also adaptive, transforming the learning process by setting standards for class promotion or graduation based on the ability to memorize summarized material in the form of poems (nadham) or summaries of classical texts. Other criteria include the ability to read classical texts, grasp their meanings, and exhibit noble character as an implementation of quality assurance (Soebahar, 2023). This adaptability is reflected in the pesantren's consistent success as the overall champion in inter-pesantren competitions organized by the Rabithah Ma'ahid Islamiyah (RMI) in Banyuwangi regency, as achieved this year.



Figure 1: Performance of Pesantren Darussalam

The image depicts the award presentation for the overall champion trophy by the chairman of RMI Banyuwangi to the management of Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung. This event takes place annually, rotating between different pesantrens in the Banyuwangi regency. This year's event was hosted at Pondok Pesantren Mansyaul Huda Paspan Glagah Banyuwangi, led by KH Mahmud Ali, held from January 12-14, 2024.

2. Transformation of Islamic Education

Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung's effort in innovating Islamic education is evident in the establishment of the Unit of Muadalah Education (Satuan Pendidikan Muadalah - SPM), authorized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This unit is part of Formal Islamic Education recognized by the government, allowing graduates to continue their studies to the next level using a diploma equivalent to formal education. This initiative strengthens the pesantren's existence in managing Islamic education as the soul of the pesantren and represents a transformation following the enactment of Law number 18 of 2019 concerning pesantrens, bringing positive exposure of pesantren education to a global audience and reinforcing its quality (Nasution et al., 2022).

The transformation of Islamic education at Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung is also reflected in the establishment of Ma'had Aly Darussalam, a higher education institution for madrasah diniyah established in 2017. This institution focuses on Sufism (tasawuf wa thariqatuhi) in emulating KH. Mukhtar Syafa'at, the founder of the pesantren, known for his Sufi personality (akhlak), and the continuous study of the book "Ihya' Ulumiddin" read in the morning and evening. The output is Islamic scholars who become Muslim intellectuals and leaders of Indonesian scholars, grounded in pesantren cultural values and local wisdom. Graduating from Ma'had Aly Darussalam requires students to create contextual studies on classical Islamic texts, particularly focusing on the success of the kyai in leading the pesantren and improving the quality of Islamic education. This is because the kyai, as the pesantren's leader, plays a crucial role in policy direction and development (M. Shodiq, 2013).

3. Teaching Humanistic Education

Independence is one of the humanistic values taught at Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung. Students are trained and accustomed to fulfilling all their needs independently, emphasizing high awareness, instilling a sense of responsibility, fostering discipline, and obedience to leaders and pesantren regulations, thereby shaping the personality of the students.



Figure 2: Congregational Prayer Obligations

The above image illustrates one of the mandatory activities for students at Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung, namely congregational prayer while wearing white robes. Congregational prayer is a core activity in the pesantren's regulations that must be adhered to, shaping discipline and responsibility among students. Wearing white robes during congregational prayer symbolizes the purity of the heart while worshiping Allah. The image shows that height, background, or social status do not determine the placement in the prayer rows, emphasizing equal opportunities for all students to be at the front row, reflecting the equality of students as learners. (Arifin, 2014)

Tolerance is also part of the humanistic education values at Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung, teaching and instilling attitudes of love, affection, respect, and support among students. These attitudes foster strong brotherhood among students, creating a bond even during holidays when they miss learning together with the kyai in the pesantren. This sense of brotherhood continues even after students are no longer studying at the pesantren, leading to the formation of alumni organizations based on their respective regions, facilitating coordination of activities that bring kyai together as a means of fostering relationships and later becoming a significant factor in why alumni entrust their sons and daughters to the pesantren. Here, the pesantren proves to be an educational institution that teaches the spirit of Islam as rahmatan lil-alamin, promoting brotherhood through tolerance, moderation, and equality (Huda, 2018).

The high moral education established at Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung is evident in the policy that the promotion or graduation of students in both Islamic education and general education managed by the pesantren, although different institutions, follows the same central policy. This policy is centralized from the head of the education and teaching department and evaluates students' cumulative compliance with pesantren leaders and regulations. The most severe consequence is when a student accumulates violations and receives a severe sanction, such as expulsion from the pesantren. In such cases, the student

is automatically expelled from both the Islamic education institution and the general education institution managed by the pesantren. This highlights that moral education remains the top priority in pesantren integration, ensuring that regardless of the competencies possessed by the students, their essence remains rooted in noble character, as the general concept of pesantren education follows Sheikh Musthofa al-Gholayain's idea that education is the cultivation of noble character in the soul of youth (Ulva Badi' Rohmawati, 2022). Therefore, the exemplification of instilling noble character in the pesantren is prioritized by sowing the values of goodness through the Sufi practices of the kyai as the pesantren leader, serving as role models (Ahmad Jais, 2023).

4. Pesantren as a Market

The concept of "market" symbolizes the availability of community needs; hence, pesantren is considered a market (is market) as the philosophy of education implementation at Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung. Currently, there are 14 formal education units managed by this pesantren, offering not only Islamic education but also general education and vocational education. This diversity makes it the largest pesantren in Banyuwangi regency. The range of education units managed by the pesantren includes PAUD Darussalam, SD Darussalam, SMP Darussalam, MTs al-Amiriyah, SPM Wustha, SMA Darussalam, SMK Darussalam, MA al-Amiriyah, SPM Ulya, IAI Darussalam, Ma'had Aly Darussalam, and the Darussalam Community Academy. This diversity classifies Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung as the "pesantren is market" because integrating education alone is not sufficient to meet users' needs; vocational education, educational moderation, and the transformation of pesantren quality are also essential for realizing a futuristic pesantren (Kirana, 2017).



Figure 3: List of pesantren Darussalam Education Units Blokagung

The image illustrates the fulfillment of community needs for educational services, emphasizing the implementation of quality management at the pesantren as a service provider. Therefore, Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung, following the Juran concept, plans, executes, and controls quality to maintain and increase the community's interest in its educational services (Aimah, 2021). The philosophy of "pesantren is market" is part of the transformation of this pesantren, realizing it as a futuristic educational institution.

5. Leadership Coaching

Futuristic education at Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung is also reflected in leadership coaching by kyai and ustadz to students through entrusting them with roles as managers of the pesantren, madrasah, schools, and organizations under its management. Additionally, leadership training is provided by experts and direct examples set by the pesantren leaders. The involvement of some pesantren leaders in public and political leadership roles is part of the pattern where pesantren provides discourse and examples in leadership coaching. Figures such as KH. Ahmad Hisyam Syafa'at, who served as the Chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama Branch Executive Board from 2005-2019, KH. Ahmad Munib Syafa'at as a member of the Banyuwangi Regency Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) from 2014-2024, KH. Abdul Malik Syafa'at as the Chairman of the PKB Banyuwangi Branch from 2021-2026, and Ning Nihayatul Wafiroh as a member of the Indonesian Parliament (DPR RI) from 2014-2024. This presentation emphasizes that politics and education are unified, and pesantren, as a replica of life, imparts not only knowledge but also life skills, including students' ability to engage in politics when they enter society (Mukodi, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The research results indicate that Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung is a model pesantren in Banyuwangi regency that has successfully maintained Islamic education as the core identity of the pesantren. Despite its efforts to undergo institutional transformation, the pesantren continues to consider humanistic values such as independence, tolerance, and high moral education in the integration of its curriculum, catering to the needs of service users and graduates through Muadalah and Ma'had Aly Islamic education. Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung has also innovated in futuristic education activities by adopting the motto "pesantren is a market" to meet the diverse educational needs of the community, offering education from early childhood to higher education, all oriented towards quality. This is evident in its accreditation rankings and the continuously increasing number of students, reflecting a high level of community trust. This achievement aligns with the concept of Juran's trilogy of planning, control, and quality improvement, including political education coaching. As a result, Pesantren Darussalam Blokagung is recognized as the largest pesantren in Banyuwangi regency, challenging the perception held by some communities that pesantrens are not forward-thinking or innovative.

The conclusion above serves as the basis for the author's recommendation to future researchers with relevant themes to delve deeper into the role of pesantrens as futuristic educational institutions. Their existence carries weight in the competition among educational institutions in the era of Society 5.0, both nationally and globally. Despite this, they must maintain their identity as educational institutions that prioritize high moral education.

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