# Islamic Boarding Schools and Renewal, Directions and Implications

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**Abstract:** The goal of this paper is to look at the Future of Islamic Boarding Schools and their Implications. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach in conjunction with library research, by collecting books and other sources related to research objects. The findings discussed in this paper, along with their implications for Islamic boarding school and renewal. The Islamic boarding school education system comes first. Second, consider the Islamic boarding school's reaction to reforms. Third, there was a fight in the Islamic boarding school. Fourth, consider the scope and implications of Islamic boarding school renewal.

Keywords: Boarding School, Direction, Implication, Islamic, Renewal

#### A. Introduction

Islamic boarding schools are among Indonesia's oldest Islamic educational institutions, with a symbiotic functional relationship with Islamic teachings. The Islamic values upheld and spread by the Islamic boarding school eventually became an indelible part of Indonesian Islamic society's culture. Islamic boarding school appear to be at the forefront of developing Islamic values and tolerance with Indonesian culture in this context. If the Islamic boarding school's large capital is properly managed, the Islamic boarding school will become a major power and center of Muslim civilization in Indonesia. Furthermore, Islamic boarding school have a close relationship with the surrounding community.

Traditional educational institutions, such as Islamic boarding schools. It is referred to as "traditional" because it has been in existence for hundreds of years and has become an integral part of the life systems of the majority of Indonesian Islamic communities (Mastuhu, 1994). As a result, Madjid (1997) refers to Islamic boarding school as indigenous educational institutions that produce authentic Indonesian cultural products. In contrast to the colonial legacies of formal schools (such as elementary, junior high, and high school).

Furthermore, the term "traditional" is used because Islamic boarding school are generally managed and developed by traditional Islamic groups (*Nahdlatul Ulama*) based in rural areas. Traditional groups are still strong, with local customs and traditions. They take a cultural contextual approach to understanding religious texts. As a result, it is not surprising that traditional Islamic figures prefer to adapt,

assimilate, and inculturate local culture (Paisun, 2010), rather than branding heresy as modernists do (Asror, 2007).

Traditional groups are also inextricably linked to classical Islamic treasures known as the yellow book. To this day, this yellow book is the primary source studied and studied in Islamic boarding schools. The *bandongan* and *sorogan* methods of learning are commonly used in Islamic boarding schools. Students in the *bandongan* system (Nafi' et. al., 2007) cannot take an active role and must simply listen and write down what the kyai says, with no room for questions or discussion. In the *sorogan* method, students meet the kyai one by one, enclosing their own study books. In this case, the students usually read on their own while the kyai corrects their reading and explains the contents of the book being read in greater detail (Mastuki, 2003). This method is then referred to as traditional, and it is regarded as ineffective in the educational system. Islamic boarding school are not only religious educational institutions, but many of them are also social institutions and community empowerment centers, as well as centers for community economic development (Raihani, 2010). Islamic boarding school, to borrow Geertz's phrase, serve as "cultural brokers" for the community in this capacity (Azra, 1999).

On the other hand, the existence of Islamic boarding schools is highly dependent on community support, while Islamic boarding school must also provide answers to problems of intellectual, spiritual, social, cultural, political, and other needs that society requires. Islamic boarding schools have existed since the 16th century and play an increasingly important role in the lives of Indonesian Muslims today. Islamic boarding school are increasingly respected and reckoned with due to their unique tradition and religious values based on Islamic teachings, as well as the progress of their graduates who appear as charismatic and credible national figures.

The existence of Islamic boarding schools today is clearly due to the community's belief in them as a place for learning religious knowledge as well as cultivating morals and noble values as taught by Islam. In fact, as they have evolved, Islamic boarding school are no longer just a place to study religious sciences, but are now able to combine with the advancement of science as a requirement of the times. This strong belief is what keeps the Islamic boarding school alive today. Furthermore, the existence of strongly held norms by Islamic boarding school, which in several ways differ from other institutions, confirms Islamic boarding school as religious educational institutions capable of surviving in the face of change (Haedari, 2010).

In other areas, the existence of a connected link between Islamic boarding school and administrators appears to have strengthened Islamic boarding school as an institution that upholds scientific traditions while also understanding the importance of disseminating scientific ideas. When social capital is properly honed and developed, Islamic boarding school can truly be realized as the center of Islamic civilization.

#### **B.** Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach by collecting books related to the object of research or library research. This study was carried out to gather research data by reading scientific journals, reference books, and publication materials from the library (Winchester, & Salji, 2016). The documentation method is the most appropriate and straightforward method of data collection. The documentation method involves collecting information about things or variables in the form of notes, transcripts, newspapers, magazines, inscriptions, minutes, leggers, agendas, and so on (LeCompte, & Schensul, 1999). So, the documentation method was used to collect data from written sources.

A data analysis technique is a method of calculating and testing the proposed hypothesis in order to answer the problem formulation (Kothari, 2004). The hypothesis is a temporary solution that must be tested for accuracy. However, because the authors' research was a literature review, we used content analysis data techniques. This study uses books or documents to draw conclusions, and it includes both deductive and inductive content studies (Linneberg, & Korsgaard, 2019). We began this study by conducting a data survey to gather information from previous work. Then, go through the existing literature and thoroughly study it, we then critically and analytically expressed our ideas (Hart, 2018).

### C. Results and Discussion

### 1. The Educational System in Islamic boarding school

Islamic boarding schools are educational institutions that are also traditional institutions because Islamic boarding school are generally managed and developed by traditional Islamic groups. As a result, it is not surprising that traditional Islamic figures prefer to adapt, assimilate, and inculturate local culture (Basyir, 2018). The term "traditional" is always associated with classical Islamic treasures, also known as the yellow book. To this day, this yellow book is the primary source studied and studied in Islamic boarding schools. The bandongan and sorogan learning methods are commonly used in Islamic boarding schools (Nafi', 2007).

Islamic boarding school can be interpreted as a learning environment (Puad and Ashton, 2021). Islamic boarding schools, according to Hariyadi (2016), are religious education and learning institutions that are generally non-classical in nature, where a kiai teaches Islamic religious knowledge to students based on books written in Arabic by medieval scholars, and the students usually live in Islamic boarding schools. Thus, in an Islamic educational institution known as an Islamic boarding school, at least the following elements are present: *kiai, santri*, mosques as places of residence for education, huts or dormitories as student residences, and classic books as sources or study materials.

According to the findings of various studies on Islamic boarding schools, the elements of the Islamic boarding school education system are as follows (Mastuhu, 1994): First, actors; *kiai*, *ustadz*, student, and administrators; two hardware facilities;

mosque, *kiai's* house, *ustadz's* house and dormitory, Islamic boarding school, school building or madrasah land for sports, agriculture or animal husbandry, tombs, and so on; three software facilities; goals, curriculum, books, assessments, rules, libraries, documentation centers, and information, teaching methods, skills.

The goal of establishing an Islamic boarding school is to guide students to become human beings with Islamic personalities who, with their religious knowledge, can become Islamic preachers in the surrounding community through their knowledge and deeds, and to prepare students to become pious people in religious knowledge taught by *kiai* concerned and practice it in society (Hamzah, et. al., 2020).

Meanwhile, in the *wetonan* or *bandongan* method, a class of 5 to 500 students listen to a teacher read, translate, explain, and frequently review Islamic books in Arabic. Each student concentrates on his or her own book and takes notes on the meaning and description of difficult words (Dhofier, 1985).

The *bandongan* system's class group is called *halaqah*, which means a circle of students or a group of students who study under the supervision of a teacher. To accommodate the growing number of *halaqah* activities, special spaces were built around the mosque to accommodate the growing number of students and the fields of knowledge they teach (Yunus, 1985). The *halaqah* system is typically used for high-level student.

Kafrawi proposed five patterns of Islamic boarding schools based on the findings of a 1973 Jakarta LP3ES study with a sample from the Bogor area: Pattern I consisted of only two elements: mosques and clerics' homes. Islamic boarding schools like this are still simple in nature, with the kyai teaching from the mosque or their own home. Students in this pattern only come from the area surrounding the Islamic boarding school, but they have studied religion continuously and systematically. *Weton* and *sorogan* are the teaching methods. Pattern II consists of three components: mosques, clerics' homes, and boarding houses for students from other areas. Mosques, clerics' houses, boarding schools, and madrassas are the four elements of Pattern III. This pattern of Islamic boarding schools already has a classical system in place, with boarding students receiving education at madrasas. Madrasa students may come from the Islamic boarding school area itself. The kyai also teaches the *weton* system, in addition to madrasahs. Madrasa teachers are commonly referred to as religious teachers or *ustadz*.

Mosques, clerics' houses, huts/dormitories, madrasas, and workshops are the five elements of Pattern IV. There are also places for skill training, such as animal husbandry, folk crafts, cooperative figures, rice fields and fields, and so on. Fifth; Pattern V consists of nine elements, including mosques, clerics' houses, boarding schools, madrassas, skill places, universities, meeting halls, sports venues, and public schools. The pattern of Islamic boarding schools such as this is a boarding school that has evolved and can be referred to as a modern boarding school. Other buildings besides the ones mentioned above include a library, public kitchen, dining room, administrative office, shop, guest accommodation (student parents and general

guests), operation room, and so on. There are also general or general vocational schools among the Islamic boarding school, such as SMK, SMA, and so on.

### 2. Islamic Boarding School Renewal

Renewal of Islamic boarding school (Assegaf, 2010) is necessary in light of the advancement of world culture and civilization (Azra, 1999). Modernization, accompanied by increasingly rapid technological developments, necessitates the adaptation of Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools must undergo significant reforms in terms of curriculum, learning methods, and other areas in order to survive. Unfortunately, the idea of reforming the Islamic boarding school did not depart from the Islamic boarding school's internal awareness to make changes. The renewal of the Islamic boarding school, on the other hand, was a reaction to the modern Dutch education system introduced in the second half of the nineteenth century and the modern Islamic education model managed by the reformers.

However, historical records show that the response of Islamic boarding school as traditional educational institutions to the Dutch modern education system was arguably slow, if not non-existent. This is understandable given that, according to Islamic boarding school indoctrination, the Dutch are infidels and enemies of Islam. Everything that comes from the infidels is regarded as evil. As a result, it is not surprising that public schools founded by the Dutch are not well received by the community. The community continues to believe that traditional Islamic boarding schools are the best option for their children's education. People do not want their children to be educated by or in educational institutions owned by infidels.

The powerful impetus for change in the Islamic boarding school came from Islamic modern educational institutions. In this case, to use Karel Stenbrink's words, Islamic boarding schools "reject and imitate" the reformist education system. In this position, Islamic boarding school reject the reformers' various religious understandings and assumptions. Islamic boarding school, on the other hand, follow and carry out the reformers' steps, such as in the tiered system, curriculum, and classical system, at the same time and within certain limits. This accommodating and adaptable attitude is carried out not only to ensure the survival of the Islamic boarding school, but also to improve the intellectual capacity of the students (Zahro, 2004).

Thus, Islamic boarding school's sluggish response to modernity does not imply that Islamic boarding school are anti-progress. Islamic boarding school, on the other hand, prefer a cautious policy; Islamic boarding schools are not in a rush to transform traditional education into a model of modern Islamic education as managed by reformists. This attitude is consistent with a well-known rule in Islamic boarding schools: *Al-Muhafdzah ala al-Qadimi al-Shalih wa al-Akhdzu bi al-Jadid al-Ashlah* (Preserving good old traditions and adopting new, better traditions). As a result, it is understandable that, despite many reforms implemented by an Islamic boarding school, the old education system, such as *bandongan* and *sorogan*, is still in place.

In the context of Islamic boarding schools, particularly in Java, Surakarta's Mambaul Ulum Islamic boarding school is regarded as a pioneer of Islamic boarding

school renewal, namely by incorporating general subject matter into Islamic boarding school education. In the curriculum, general material includes learning about Latin letters, arithmetic, and algebra. The Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School did the same thing in 1916, establishing a "Salafiyah Madrasah". This madrasah incorporates not only religious education, but also general subjects such as arithmetic, Malay language, geography, and Latin letter writing into the curriculum. Many reforms to Islamic boarding school were implemented in this Islamic boarding school. The experience of living in a Islamic boarding school environment for many years, combined with some of the kyai's extensive knowledge, has sparked enthusiasm to always bring reforms to Islamic boarding school for the sake of improving and increasing the quality of graduates.

## 3. The Response of Islamic Boarding Schools in Renewal

Islamic boarding schools are a necessity in light of the advancement of world culture and civilization (Suridjo, 1996). In this case, borrowing from Karel Stembrik, Islamic boarding school tend to choose a policy of caution; Islamic boarding schools are not in a rush to transform traditional education into a modern model of Islamic Education as managed by reformists.

The world of Islamic boarding schools appears as a parameter, a factor that thickly colors the life of the larger community, but it remains unchanged and appears unaffected by the dynamics of the surrounding community's development. At the very least, when people imagine changes in themselves, those changes can only be comprehended on a large scale. There are no fixed and unchanging social phenomena in this world, similarly, Islamic boarding school. However, the overall picture reveals that Islamic boarding school are difficult to talk to about change, difficult to understand the world view, and thus people are hesitant to talk about it (Raharjo, 1995).

Renewal is a fairly fundamental change in education, affecting both targets and policies, as well as the educational system's fundamental foundation. There are three types of renewal orientations. First, accepting modern secular education as it has generally developed in the west and attempting to "Islamize" it, i.e. infusing it with key Islamic concepts. This approach has two goals: to shape the character of students with Islamic values in life and society, and to enable modern educated experts to name their respective fields of study with Islamic values on higher devices, and to change the content and orientation of their studies as needed.

According to Amini and Daulay (2022), there are three aspects to the renewal of Islamic boarding school: 1) methods, which range from the *sorogan* and *wetonan* methods to the classical method; 2) the content of the material, which has begun to adapt new materials in addition to continuing to study the yellow book; 3) management, specifically the transition from sole *kiai* leadership to democratization of collective leadership. Based on the three variables mentioned above, the response of Islamic boarding school to the renewal of Islamic education and the socio-economic changes that have occurred in Indonesian society since the turn of the century can be

divided into four components: 1) renewal of the substance of Islamic boarding school education by incorporating general and vocational subjects; 2) renewal of methodologies, such as classical systems, levels; and 3) institutional renewal, such as Islamic boarding school leadership, diaspora, and diaspora (Azra, 1999).

There are symptoms and tendencies of several Islamic boarding school to be open to science and modern issues with renewal. The indicators that can be seen are that Islamic boarding school are beginning to enter and become acquainted with foreign languages such as English. This is balanced by the emphasis on Arabic, which is no longer solely on learning the grammar, but also on how to master Arabic both orally and in writing. Aside from that, it is time for the Islamic boarding school world to integrate science and methodology (general sciences and Islamic sciences), which have previously been considered non-compromise or dichotomous. There will be checks and balances once integration has occurred. The goal here is to strike a balance between classical Islam's material treasures, such as the same emphasis on *fiqh*, creed, interpretation, hadith, Arabic, and others, and considerations between Islamic knowledge and general knowledge.

### 4. Direction of Islamic Boarding School Renewal

Islamic boarding school's changes do not obliterate old traditions, but rather add something new to allow old traditions and conditions to be maintained while accepting new ones. The Islamic boarding school's response to this wave of renewal was not based on mature scientific (rational and empirical facts), but rather on political factors, emotions, and fanaticism, so that the Islamic boarding school's establishment became unstable or easily changed in zig-zag lines; the Islamic boarding school's response to this wave of renewal has strengthened the tendency and strengthened economic orientation and material calculations, such as the entry of schools and tertiary institutions (Qomar, 2014).

### 5. Implications of Islamic Boarding School Reform

Efforts to reform the Islamic boarding school education system, as well as the negative influence of modernity at this point, have implications for and contribute to the fading of Islamic boarding school values such as simplicity, independence, wara'ness, and others that Islamic boarding school residents have upheld. Furthermore, as Salehudin (2007) discovered, the renewal of Islamic boarding schools resulted in a weakening of students' mastery of religious sciences due to the increasing number of general subjects imposed on students. This could be due to pragmatic and materialistic values infiltrating Islamic boarding school.

Several steps that may be worth considering for the future progress of Islamic boarding school include (Sutinah and Maulani, 2017); First, let's talk about leadership. We are confident that we will never sue for centralized leadership in Islamic boarding school because that is the specialty of Islamic boarding school, particularly Islamic boarding schools, and because Islamic boarding school are typically founded on the kyai's personal efforts. What must be done is to implement reforms in accordance with

the kyai. Renewal can be accomplished, for example, through the arrangement of Islamic boarding school management and serious planning for future generations under the kyai. This is done to ensure that the Islamic boarding school continue to exist if the kyai dies at any point. Because the death of the kyai frequently causes a Islamic boarding school with thousands of students to gradually dim and die. As a result, in the future, this must be anticipated with well-planned steps. With this expectation, the sustainability of Islamic boarding schools can be maintained despite the large capital invested.

Second, there has been progress in the field of methodology. It is widely acknowledged that Islamic boarding school have a long history of transmitting classical scholarship. However, due to a lack of methodological improvisation, the transmission process frequently results in knowledge accumulation. What often happens in Islamic boarding schools, according to Bruinessen (1995), is a science that is considered something unanimous and cannot be added to. This paradigm should be examined carefully. In fact, the process of knowledge transmission can still be maintained because it connects the scientific chain as one of the traditions in ahlussunnah wal jama'ah.

Only a creative process, which must also be fostered in Islamic boarding school, is required for knowledge enrichment and scientific ijtihad to take place. As a result, the transmission process that occurs in Islamic boarding school is not taken for granted. Because when a transmission process is taken for granted, the ongoing teaching has an impact on poor creativity. And when the issue of *figh* is understood, which has been the main focus in Islamic boarding school teachings thus far, the impact of the application of *figh* in society will be disconnected from social reality. Aside from that, there will be a significant gap with current scientific technology, which is rapidly evolving and cannot be avoided. Third, and most commonly experienced, is a sense of disorientation. In the midst of the social reality that occurs, Islamic boarding school frequently lose their ability to define and position themselves. In this rapidly changing era, Islamic boarding schools frequently face a conflict between the need to maintain their identity and the need to absorb new cultures from outside. As a result, Islamic boarding school in this case are required to reorient their educational, religious, and social roles. As a result, the interactive relationship between Islamic boarding school and community must be maintained.

Fourth, there is the network of Islamic boarding school. In Indonesia, we know that there are thousands of Islamic boarding schools. It is not uncommon for a village to have more than one Islamic boarding school. The case that frequently occurs is that there is an Islamic boarding school that is rapidly developing, both in terms of education system, physical building, and number of students, but there is also a Islamic boarding school that is almost in suspended animation. When the network between Islamic boarding school is properly built, the existence of Islamic boarding school can truly become a center of civilization. This is most emphatically not a dream. Because, given the number of resources owned by Islamic boarding schools throughout Indonesia, this is not an impossible task.

The four things mentioned above appear to be well thought out by Islamic boarding school institutions so that their existence is more than just maintaining their existence; with adjustments, accommodations, and concessions provided by Islamic boarding school, they are able to develop themselves and even place themselves in an important position as the center of Islamic civilization in Indonesia.

#### D. Conclusion

The education system in Islamic boarding schools is undoubtedly being renewed, but this is heavily influenced by the pattern that will be maintained and the pattern that needs to be improved so that it is always in accordance with the needs of the Islamic ummah. As a result, it is hoped that reforms occurring in Islamic boarding schools will save students from Western cultures that are becoming increasingly accessible to students. There are symptoms and tendencies of several Islamic boarding school to be open to science and modern issues with renewal.

The beginning of enrollment in Islamic boarding schools and familiarity with foreign languages, such as English, are both indicators. This is balanced by an emphasis on Arabic that is no longer solely on learning the grammar, but also on how to master Arabic both orally and in writing. And there is a need to properly investigate and practice Islamic teachings. Changes have occurred not only in terms of fundamental values, but also in terms of fundamental values, as a result of the various networks of the Islamic boarding school education system. Islamic boarding school are currently engaged in an identity and openness struggle, which means that on the one hand, Islamic boarding school must rediscover their identity, while on the other hand, Islamic boarding school must openly cooperate with other systems outside Islamic boarding school, which do not always agree. As a result of this Islamic boarding school, Islamic education will continue to improve in terms of the institutional system, educators, and students.

What needs to be done now is to figure out how to restructure the social roles of Islamic boarding schools so that their existence can make a genuine contribution to the surrounding community. It is feared that without a real role, Islamic boarding school will lose their significance. As a result, reading and interpreting tradition in the form of *al-qadim al-shalih* will have implications for the importance of developing *al-jadid al-aslah*. This is very possible because the formulation of values such as independence, for example, necessitates the wisdom of Islamic boarding schools to always respond to change and make it a necessity to be lived.

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