# CHALLENGES OF *SALAFIYAH* ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS: A CRITICAL REFLECTION

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*The Salafiyah Islamic boarding school, rooted in the cultural history of the archipelago, has consistently maintained its educational system and teaching methods from the past to the present. Despite their inclination towards maintaining a traditional conservative approach, Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools have effectively produced accomplished graduates in diverse sectors, showcasing their proficiency in educational management. Nevertheless, Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools continue to encounter deficiencies in various areas, despite their demonstrated efficacy in educational administration. Hence, the objective of this study is to ascertain the obstacles encountered by Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in the context of the contemporary day. In addition, this research also seeks to investigate the measures taken to enhance its presence, enabling it to serve as a paradigm and a prominent educational establishment.*

**Keywords**: Challenges, Islamic Boarding Schools, *Salafiyah*, Transformation.

Before the archipelago experienced the colonial period, Islamic boarding school learning methods already existed. Historically, valid and reliable information has not been found about when Islamic boarding schools were founded. Some opinions state that Islamic boarding schools began to develop and exist since the spread of Islam first arrived in the archipelago, while others argue that Islamic boarding schools appeared during the spread of the Walisongo preaching (Ainusyamsi, 2021). If we look at and examine the history of education and learning in Java before Islam, there were ancient Javanese learning institutions that implemented an educational approach similar to Islamic boarding schools. This institution is known as Pawiyatan, where teachers/kyai teach knowledge to students or students. From these historical records, it can be concluded that Islamic boarding schools are the oldest learning institutions in Indonesia and reflect a learning system rooted in typical Indonesian culture.

Judging from its historical development, we understand that the establishment of Islamic boarding schools cannot be separated from the entry and spread of Islam to the archipelago. The role of Islamic boarding schools in the spread of Islam is illustrated in several da'wah activities carried out by Walisongo on the island of Java (Chotimah, 2018). The connection between the formation of Islamic boarding schools and the process of spreading Islam is not only recorded in academic texts that can be analyzed by experts, but is also reflected in various Islamic historical sites spread across the archipelago. Almost all areas of Islamic civilization can be associated with the existence of Islamic boarding schools.

The education system implemented by Islamic boarding schools has attracted the attention of observers of Islamic education in Indonesia. One example is the view of Nurcholish Madjid who stated that if Indonesia had not experienced colonialism, then the development of the education system in Indonesia would follow the model or pattern

developed by Islamic boarding school education. This view refers to the experience of Western countries, where most of the leading universities started as educational institutions that initially focused on religious aspects only. (Fiqh, 2022)

In other words, the establishment of Islamic boarding schools is based on the experience and practice of the Indonesian Islamic community in spreading Islamic teachings and has its own very unique characteristics. Islamic boarding schools are basically traditional Islamic learning dormitories where *santri* or students live and study together under the guidance of a kiai. The student dormitory is located in the Islamic boarding school environment, where the kiai live, and the main facilities are a prayer room, *langgar*, or mosque which functions as a place of worship, study room, and as a center for other religious activities. This environment is usually surrounded by a fence or wall to control student activities according to Islamic boarding school regulations (Bisri, 2019).

The arrival of Islamic boarding schools in society is not only as a learning institution, but as an institution for the spread of Islam and social religious activities. During the colonial period, Islamic boarding schools were learning institutions that were very mixed and integrated with the people, and the message cannot be ignored that Islamic boarding schools were learning institutions for the Grass Root People that were very integrated with them. Therefore, Islamic boarding schools function as agents of social change in the midst of problematic humanitarian issues that require concrete responses (Putri et al., 2023).

Islamic boarding schools have experienced various changes in their development. The ability and readiness of Islamic boarding schools to accommodate and adopt new values as a result of the modernization process has resulted in the transition of Islamic boarding schools from traditional patterns to more modern ones. Therefore, according to Dhofier, Islamic boarding schools can be classified into two types, namely *Salafiyah* (traditional) Islamic boarding schools and

*Khalafi* (modern) Islamic boarding schools. A *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding school is an Islamic boarding school that still maintains the traditional system while still emphasizing the teaching of classical books as the core of learning. The madrasa system is used to support the *sorogan* system (private teaching method) which has long been part of teaching without integrating universal learning. On the other hand, the *Khalaf*i Islamic boarding school is an Islamic boarding school that has combined universal learning in the madrasa structure they developed and opened various types of formal schools within the Islamic boarding school environment. (Siddiq, 2015)

The education system in Indonesia, whether it is recognized or not, has two models, namely universal learning led by the government and religious learning led by Islamic boarding school kyai. This condition has been going on for a long time starting from the Dutch East Indies colonial period, which led to the emergence of the term "*skola*" (in Javanese) for those who choose universal learning and the term "*Mesantren*" for those who choose and concentrate on religious learning only. At that time, Islamic boarding schools really focused on the field of religious knowledge without covering universal knowledge, and vice versa for schools which only focused on universal sciences and minimally on religious knowledge (Indra et al., 2022).

Judging from the content of knowledge taught, it can be concluded that Islamic boarding schools can be divided into two types. First, Salafi Islamic boarding schools, which focus on teaching classical Islamic books. The madrasa system was implemented as a replacement for the *sorogan* teaching method. Second, the *Khalaf*i Islamic boarding school, which not only provides teaching in classical Islamic books but also opens a universal school system within the Islamic boarding school area and is under the responsibility of the Islamic boarding school.

In the current modern era, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools face various challenges from rapid social and

technological changes. Modern society places great hope in the transformation of social values and societal structures that are more in line with the characteristics of modern society, as opposed to traditional society. Even though changes in civilization are taking place very quickly, in reality there are still many Islamic boarding schools that still seem reluctant to adapt and refuse to make changes to their education system so that it is more in line with modern education methods.

Several issues that are often encountered in *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools involve the learning system. It is generally known that *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools still adopt classical learning patterns. This learning model originates from a system originating from West Asia, better known as the Middle East, covering the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt, Palestine and parts of the African continent. Ironically, this kind of learning system was abandoned in its country of origin due to the wave of innovation that quickly developed at the end of the 19th century (Fijriah & Ellisa, 2022). In terms of management, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools are also the focus of attention. In general, Islamic boarding school management tends to not have a structured organizational system. Pesantren is often compared to an institution similar to a small kingdom, where the role of the Kyai is similar to that of a king and Nyai is his queen consort. All the rules that apply in Islamic boarding schools, including learning methods, books taught, and implementation schedules, are all centralized and determined absolutely by the Kyai's decision.

Furthermore, the technological aspect is also the focus of attention. Until now, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools have always tended to avoid the use of technological products such as television and radio, cellphones, even though these tools actually provide great benefits for the development of their own Islamic boarding schools, even though there are potential negative impacts (Arifin, 2015). The role of Islamic boarding schools as Islamic-based institutions should be agents of change in society, not the other way around. This

reflects that Islam is a religion that is *rahmatan li al-'ālamin*, which does not oppose change and development as long as it does not violate the principles of Islamic law. Therefore, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools should always restructure, change and update parts of the education system that are no longer relevant to current conditions.

Islamic boarding school education must change its understanding so that it remains relevant and is not influenced by cultural changes that can hinder the development of Islamic boarding school knowledge. Apart from that, Islamic boarding schools should be able to develop an education system that is balanced between tradition and modernity (Uhbiyati, 2015). With this rationale in mind, the author is of the opinion that many challenges have been found that quickly and precisely require the reconstruction of the *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding school education system to ensure the sustainability of Islamic boarding schools as centers of Islamic religious education.

*Implementation of Islamic Boarding School Education*

Viewed from a historical perspective, Islamic boarding schools have played a very significant role in various aspects of Indonesian society's life, including in the socio-cultural, economic and political fields of Islamic society. Since the beginning of the spread of Islam in Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools have been at the forefront of the spread of this religion. Islamic boarding schools have succeeded in changing the perception of the entire archipelago regarding the importance of religion and education. Therefore, people are starting to realize that to increase religious diversity, it is very necessary to have a thorough and in-depth learning and understanding of religion in Islamic boarding schools.

Since the beginning of its development, the main role of Islamic boarding schools has been to prepare students to deepen and master various Islamic religious knowledge, known as *tafaqquh fiddin*. The main goal is to produce a cadre

of ulama who are able to make a major contribution to the enlightenment of Indonesian society, as well as carry out da'wah in spreading the Islamic religion. The main material taught in Islamic boarding schools comes from classical books in Arabic, known as the yellow book. As educational institutions that have strong roots in Indonesian Muslim society, Islamic boarding schools can maintain their continuity and adopt a multi-faceted education model. *Santri* are not only taught religious knowledge, but can receive guidance in leadership, independence, simplicity, perseverance, togetherness, equality and other positive attitudes. It is hoped that all this capital can produce a quality and independent society, in accordance with national development goals and the role of Islamic boarding schools in shaping national character, as mandated by the 1945 Constitution. (Wiranata, 2019)

Islamic boarding schools, as Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, have a root meaning that comes from the combination of the words "*pondok*" and "Islamic boarding school." This assumption links the word "pondok" with the Arabic "*funduq*," which means hotel or dormitory, while "boarding school" comes from the word "*santri*" with the prefix "pe" and the suffix "an," which indicates where the students live. Therefore, both have a similar meaning as a residential facility for students (*santri*) in studying science.

In terms of etymology, Islamic boarding schools are considered ancient or orthodox institutions whose main task is to teach religious knowledge. There are similarities in language between Islamic boarding schools in Hindu history and Islamic boarding schools that emerged later, both of which have the principle of teaching religious knowledge in the form of a dormitory. In terms of terminology, Bawani explains that Islamic boarding schools are Islamic religious educational institutions with a non-classical approach. Kyai, or Islamic boarding school leaders, provide religious knowledge to students or students by referring to books written in Arabic by clerics in the Middle Ages. Students generally live in Islamic

boarding school dormitories during the learning process. (Syam, 2018).

*Implementation of Salafiyah Islamic Boarding Schools*

In its development, Islamic boarding schools can be divided into two categories, namely Salaf (traditional) Islamic boarding schools and *Khalaf* (modern) Islamic boarding schools. *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools involve the Salaf education system (*wetonan* and *sorogan*) and the Salaf classical system (madrasah). On the other hand, *khalaf*iyah Islamic boarding schools involve a wider salaf and classical education system, including additions such as public schools, early education, universities, cooperatives, and an emphasis on Arabic-English. The term "*Salafiyah*" is basically often interpreted as "traditional" based on etymology, which comes from the Arabic "as-Salaf" which means "earlier". Therefore, the term "as-Salaf as-Salihin" in its meaning refers to previous ulama who were pious and obedient. This term is taken from a group of Muslims in the Middle East who want to return to the teachings of the Koran and Sunnah as was the practice of life in the first generation of Islam. The use of the word "salaf" is different from "*khalaf*," which is used to differentiate between traditional and modern scholars. (Modernization, *Salafiyah* Islamic Boarding School Education, 2003)

Salafi Islamic boarding schools are often described as "traditional" Islamic boarding schools by sociologists, indicating an emphasis on preserving local traditions rather than a Middle Eastern orientation. In other words, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools can be interpreted as Islamic boarding schools that still maintain a teaching system based on Islamic classical books, without providing non-religious knowledge. In simpler terms, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools can be explained as Islamic boarding schools that continue to use a teaching system based on Islamic classical books or books in Arabic letters without punctuation. The main principle applied is an individual system, such as self-study. Non-religious

knowledge is not an important part of the *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding school curriculum. (Mustari & Maolani, 2018)

The characteristic of *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools is the teaching of classical Islamic books using the *sorogan*, *bandongan*, or *wetonan* system. The yellow books taught can be grouped into eight categories, including Nahwu and Sharaf, Fiqh, Ushul Fiqh, Hadith, Tafsir, Tauhid, Sufism and ethics, as well as other branches such as Tarikh and Balaghah. In the field of teaching methods using the *bandongan* system, kiai not only read and translate books, but also provide personal views regarding the content of the text and how to read it, so that they are required to have a deep understanding of Arabic, literature and branches of Islamic religious knowledge. other.

The characteristics of *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools are generally almost uniform, but in practice, there are variations, especially in teaching methods and materials. In general, there are two typologies of Islamic boarding schools that can be identified: first, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools which maintain the teaching of classical Islamic books as the main focus in traditional Islamic boarding schools. The Madrasah system is used to support the *Sorogan* system which is generally applied in traditional-based teaching institutions, without including general knowledge lessons. Second, the *Khalaf*i Islamic boarding school which has integrated general learning through Madrasas or opened various types of public schools within the Islamic boarding school environment. Several researchers, such as Mastuhu and Zamakhsyari Dhofier, provide a similar typology by distinguishing between NU and Muhammadiyah Islamic boarding schools, as well as Salaf and *Khalaf* Islamic boarding schools (Nihwan, 2022).

Although there are variations in this typology, in general Islamic boarding schools have the same characteristics. This is an institution led and managed by kyai, located in a complex that includes a mosque as a teaching center, a dormitory as a place for students to live, and a house as a residence for kyai. The "yellow book" is usually used as teaching

material. The size of an Islamic boarding school is often related to the composition or ratio between groups of students. For example, a small Islamic boarding school may have many students living in the homes of kyai, ustadz, Islamic boarding school administrators, or in the homes of local residents. They use Islamic boarding schools only for purposes such as reciting the Koran and deliberations. In smaller Islamic boarding schools, students may have to live together in small rooms, with ten to 15 students in one room measuring around 6 square meters.

As an educational institution, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools have a continuous history and unique characteristics. The use of the word "long" refers to the fact that Islamic boarding schools are educational institutions that have emerged since ancient times and have survived to this day. On the other hand, the "unique" attribute is applied because each Islamic boarding school has striking differences and variations. In general, various types of Islamic boarding schools can be classified into two main categories, namely Salafi Islamic boarding schools and *Khalaf*i Islamic boarding schools. According to the author's assessment, the difference between Salafi and *Khalaf*i Islamic boarding schools actually lies in the development of the curriculum and learning systems adopted therein. The name of an Islamic boarding school, whether it tends to be Salafi or *Khalaf*i, is not determined by the founder himself, but rather is the result of community observations of the learning system implemented at the Islamic boarding school.

If an Islamic boarding school still maintains teaching methods that focus on classical Islamic books without adding to the curriculum with additional general lessons or implementing a classical system by awarding diplomas, then the Islamic boarding school can be classified as a Salafi Islamic boarding school. In this context, the author refers to Hasan Basri's views in his article entitled "Pesantren: Characteristics and Institutional Elements," which explains that the

characteristics of Islamic boarding schools can be identified through several aspects. In terms of subject matter (in a narrower sense), Islamic boarding schools have special characteristics in imparting Islamic religious knowledge, including subjects such as nahwu, sharaf, aqaid, tafsir, fiqh, ushul fiqih, balaghah, and the like. The main source for this subject comes from various Arabic books which are generally referred to as the yellow book. Common teaching methods in Islamic boarding schools involve the Weton or *Bandongan* method, Sorongan, and rote memorization methods.

The memorization method is an approach in which students systematically memorize certain texts or sentences from the books they study. To facilitate the memorization process, this method often uses the form of poetry or nahzam, allowing students to memorize more efficiently. For example, the book Alfiyah Ibn Malik in Nahwu science is often taught using the memorization method in poetry form. (Nur, n.d.)

In general, the development of a student in an Islamic boarding school can be seen through achievement (khatam) or transition from one book to another. If a student succeeds in understanding a book or several books and passes the test proposed by the kyai, then he gets permission to continue to the next book. This change reflects an increase in the level of understanding of the book in question, which is generally more in-depth and complex than the previous book. In other words, in some Islamic boarding schools, especially Salafi Islamic boarding schools, students' progress is not measured by increasing levels as in formal education, but by moving from one book to another, starting from books at a lower level to books at a higher level.

In terms of facilities, some Islamic boarding schools maintain their simple nature. However, along with development, several Islamic boarding schools have begun to improve their infrastructure and physical facilities. Some traditional Islamic boarding schools have even built luxurious buildings. However, this physical luxury does not displace the principle

of simplicity which is a characteristic of the kyai's lifestyle and their interactions with the *santri*. From the perspective of Islamic boarding school objectives, the main characteristic of Islamic boarding school educational institutions is to form and develop Muslim personalities. This personality includes faith and devotion to God, noble morality, making positive contributions to society through community service or independent business, and having integrity of character. Other goals involve the spread of religion, strengthening Islam, and the advancement of Muslims in society, as well as instilling a love of science to enrich the Indonesian personality (Dari, 2022).

*Challenges of Salafiyah Islamic Boarding Schools*

Islamic boarding schools, as Islamic educational institutions, have various goals, roles and functions that are in line with the vision, mission and goals of Islamic education in society. Apart from that, Islamic boarding schools also play a very important role in empowering Muslims in Indonesia, helping them maintain resilience in facing various changes and dynamics of life in the Society 5.0 era. The focus of Islamic boarding schools includes key aspects such as religion, character formation, education, social involvement, and economics, all aimed at building the defense and resilience of Muslims. As a leading Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, it is hoped that Islamic boarding schools can provide adequate provisions to every Muslim in the Society 5.0 era, so that they can maintain their identity as Indonesian citizens who respect religious and human values. (Society, 2021)

Islamic boarding schools in the Society 5.0 era are faced with contemporary challenges that are in line with advances in science and technology. These challenges include the ability to instill moral values, implement technology-based systems, increase digital literacy, and teach digital ethics. If Islamic boarding schools are able to develop these skills, their existence will remain relevant and accepted by society in the Society 5.0 era. The hope is that the values taught by Islamic

boarding schools will continue to be held and carried out by the students in their future life journey (Kholili, 2021).

Islamic boarding schools have actually prepared students related to technological advances. Research findings show that education at Islamic boarding schools is effective in providing a deep understanding of religious knowledge (*tafaqquh fiddin*) and is able to anticipate the negative impacts of the Society 5.0 era, creating students with strong Islamic character. However, in applying technology to adapt to the Society 5.0 era, there are still gaps and weaknesses, such as in terms of ICT infrastructure, curriculum, understanding of ICT capacity, and networks. Basically, management in Islamic boarding schools is a process carried out by individuals to organize individual or group activities. (Ariani, 2022)

In the context of character formation, students are taught to have morality, good behavior, respectful attitudes and habits. These values are the basis that is instilled in the hearts of students before they understand more complex scientific concepts. Good ethics is considered the main asset that will guide them in dealing with various situations and interacting with anyone. *Santri* undergo an educational process, especially in the context of the Islamic religion, with the aim of forming characters who have praiseworthy morals in accordance with the Islamic teachings they receive from the kyai at the Islamic boarding school.

On the other hand, students are also encouraged to develop their personal independence while living in Islamic boarding schools, as preparation for integration into society. Apart from gaining a deep understanding of the Islamic religion, it is hoped that students will be able to face the Society 5.0 era which is reflected in digital advances. This means that students also need to learn and keep up with technological developments and digitalization which continue to grow very quickly. This will enable them to use the opportunities provided by digital technology for positive purposes and produce

value or benefits that can be felt in everyday life or society in general. (Karimah et al., n.d.)

The Society 5.0 era has had a significant change in the education system in Indonesia, encouraging educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools, to mentally prepare to face a number of challenges and problems. This challenge does not only consider religious expertise, but also emphasizes the need for the ability to overcome changes and challenges that arise in the Society 5.0 era. The focus lies on the importance of excelling in the field of religion as well as abilities in the fields of science, technology and science. Islamic boarding schools have implemented various strategies to face the dynamics of developments in the Society 5.0 era. These steps include curriculum transformation that can respond to the demands of the times, development of adequate facilities and infrastructure, collaboration between educational institutions, character formation, and development of life skills for students. All of these strategies are designed to maintain the relevance and competitiveness of Islamic boarding schools in facing the complexity of the dynamics of the ever-evolving era (Rahman, 2022).

In facing the challenges of the Society era, Islamic boarding schools together with student guardians need services through guidance and counseling programs to increase the dimensions of control, commitment and self-control of students. The aim is for students to be able to overcome problems both inside and outside the Islamic boarding school environment. Students who have a strong personality will be able to optimize their potential and live a good life. The challenges of modernity in Islamic boarding schools reflect the initial challenges to modernization in the Indonesian education system. It must be acknowledged that the idea of modernization did not originate from Muslims themselves. The emergence of educational modernization in Indonesia is closely related to the development of the concept of Islamic modernism in this region. In the context of education, modernization can be seen

through the formation of modern educational institutions that adopt Dutch colonial systems and structures, not based on the traditional Islamic education system.

Modernization, as a complex multidimensional process, is often referred to as development in the Indonesian context in the last decade. Azra views modernization in education through two main aspects. First, education is considered a key variable in modernization, where society is considered to have difficulty achieving the desired goals without adequate education. Second, education is considered as an object of modernization.

Islamic boarding schools respond to modernization with two main approaches. First, through curriculum revision by adding general subjects and skills. Second, by opening educational institutions and facilities to support general education. However, it should be noted that the emergence of modernization in education did not occur without impact. Therefore, Islamic boarding schools that accept modernization must be careful and selective in adopting or accepting a modern education system. Islamic boarding schools need to prepare themselves to face modernization as a challenge in their educational environment. Although the positive impact of modernization encourages Islamic boarding schools to continue to develop, there is the potential to lose the identity of Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions. Nevertheless, Islamic boarding schools still play their role as religious education institutions that produce students who are able to lead society in religious aspects. Even though times continue to develop, Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia still teach moderate Islam and reject radical and hateful Islamic teachings. If there is an Islamic boarding school that conveys the teachings of hatred and radicalism, this is not in accordance with true Islamic values, because Islam teaches peace, tolerance and respect for fellow humans, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. Therefore, as the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools

must have the responsibility to spread Islamic teachings that are moderate, full of tolerance, love peace and respect for fellow humans. (Aini, 2018)

The role of Islamic boarding schools in the national education system has urgency and significance that requires development and strengthening, which must be considered through two crucial aspects, namely external and internal development. From an external perspective, maintaining the image of Islamic boarding schools in the eyes of society is important, where the results or output of Islamic boarding school education must provide added value compared to similar educational institutions. Students in Islamic boarding schools need to be prepared to be able to compete in a diverse society. Islamic boarding schools must also remain open to progress and scientific findings in society, including new innovations in the world of education. Meanwhile, from an internal perspective, the steps needed are to ensure that the Islamic boarding school curriculum is able to overcome dichotomous thinking that separates religious knowledge from general knowledge (Society, 2021).

Islamic boarding schools have unique characteristics that separate them from other educational institutions, and this uniqueness does not exist in educational institutions other than Islamic boarding schools. One of the unique characteristics of Islamic boarding schools is the application of the traditional (salaf) education system in their learning methods. Even though Islamic boarding schools are undergoing transformation nowadays, the education system is not completely eliminated; on the contrary, there may be certain additions.

In facing the values of modern civilization, the role of Islamic boarding schools remains important in contributing to maintaining the civilization of the people. Islamic boarding schools are considered the last bastion of Islamic civilization in Indonesia, and this allows Islamic boarding schools to carry out their roles and functions, especially in Indonesia which adheres to the Pancasila ideology, where religious freedom is

one of the key elements in maintaining national unity (Qomariyah & Darwis, 2023). The era of industrial revolution 4.0 brought significant changes in the dynamics of social interaction in modern society. In this period, competition became very tight, both at the individual and group level. Competition does not only occur between groups of equal strength, but also between those who have greater power and those who are weaker. The accelerated flow of information and fierce competition are the main challenges for Islamic boarding schools. As an institution responsible for forming future leaders and becoming a center for community empowerment, Islamic boarding schools must have the capacity to form a generation that has strong resources to be able to compete effectively at the global level. (Jamaluddin, n.d.)

Therefore, Islamic boarding schools need to have the ability to face the era of industrial revolution 4.0. Even though at first it was considered a challenge and obstacle, later this era became a golden opportunity for the development of Indonesian society. In facing these changes, Islamic boarding schools need to undergo a process of transformation and adaptation in accordance with the needs of the general public, but still maintain traditional values which are considered still relevant and positive.

*Challenges of Islamic Boarding Schools in the Era of Global Culture*

It is hoped that the presence of Islamic boarding schools can provide concrete solutions to the problems faced by society and help them understand the development of life in the modern era. Even though the role of Islamic boarding schools is very important, their sustainability is faced with various challenges, including improving the quality of education, social unrest, and an alarming level of crime in society. In the global context, the progress of Islamic boarding schools is closely related to two main aspects, namely actualism and originality. Islamic boarding school actualism has a significant role in the modernization process, involving updating the

curriculum, teaching methodology, and improving learning facilities, as has been discussed in discussions about Islamic boarding schools and modernization. Meanwhile, the originality of Islamic boarding schools is closely related to the preservation of culture within Islamic boarding schools. The originality of Islamic boarding schools refers to the authenticity of Islamic education in terms of its material and spirit. In fact, Islamic boarding schools will never be separated from their social roots which instill Islamic foundations into the souls of their generation of students with a positive spirit. Modesty and modesty are characteristics that should not be ignored.

From a simplicity or non-materialistic perspective, Islamic boarding schools have the potential to make a very valuable contribution to the nation, even though the impact may be felt far into the future. Currently, it is realized that development that only focuses on material aspects does not guarantee overall development success. The continuation of materialistic life in the West shows destructive symptoms and the complexity of social problems that follow, triggering efforts to find solutions. However, the non-materialistic attitude in Islamic boarding schools needs to be seriously examined to assess the extent of its authenticity. Does the general atmosphere of Islamic boarding schools only reflect the socio-economic conditions of the society it represents, or is it really a manifestation of a concept full of awareness and intention?

As a rational step today, Islamic boarding schools should be positioned as globally oriented educational institutions. The clash of modern civilizations demands a thoughtful and intelligent response. In this context, the wise step is to uphold Islamic rules, which say, "maintain old traditions/values that are still good and adopt new, better values." From this rule, it can be seen that Islam calls for humans not to only be attached to old things without considering new things.

The demands of globalization cannot be avoided, and the smart step is to ensure that Islamic boarding schools are

not left behind in the competition. At this level, many improvements and improvements are still needed in Islamic boarding schools. The basic strategy to achieve this is to return education to its true meaning (Faizin, 2020). Next, Islamic boarding schools are faced with challenges related to improving the quality of education and the ability to respond to the demands of the times. Even though Indonesia has achieved independence, this does not mean that Islamic boarding schools are free from problems. The era of independence brought positive changes in the world of education and led to the emergence of other educational institutions which were well received by the public, so that the image of Islamic boarding schools experienced a decline. Islamic boarding schools are considered no longer able to face the challenges of development in the era of science and technology.

The next challenge is an economic challenge. The economic level of Indonesian society is still low, poverty rates continue to increase, and income is insufficient to meet needs. Therefore, creating prosperity is considered very urgent, especially if you want to avoid being left behind by neighboring countries with all the consequences. This requires not only employment opportunities provided by the government and the private sector, but also adequate preparation of human resources. In more detail, Saifuddin Amir in his book highlights several challenges and problems faced by Islamic boarding schools due to the limited capacity of their managers, which can be explained as follows (Mahrisa et al., 2020).

a. Supporting facilities and infrastructure still appear to be insufficient. A simple and modest lifestyle in Islamic boarding schools requires increased awareness in implementing a clean and healthy lifestyle. To encourage this, it is necessary to organize and provide adequate and appropriate facilities and infrastructure.

b. Human Resources. Although human resource capabilities in the religious sector have been proven, to increase the existence and role of Islamic boarding schools in the social

life of society, serious attention is needed. Increasing and providing human resources in institutional management and related areas of community social life must be a priority for Islamic boarding schools.

c.  Institutional management. The role of management is very crucial in managing Islamic boarding schools. Currently, it is still seen that Islamic boarding schools are managed using a traditional approach, especially in terms of the use of information and technology which is not yet optimal. This weakness can be seen in the lack of structure in the documentation process (database) of Islamic boarding school students and alumni.

d.  Institutional economic independence. Financial challenges are always an obstacle in managing Islamic boarding school activities, including in developing and financing daily activities. The construction of Islamic boarding schools often takes a long time and often relies solely on contributions or donations from external parties, sometimes even requiring fundraising along the way.

e.  The curriculum is focused on empowering life skills for students and the community. Although Islamic boarding schools still place emphasis on increasing the religious understanding and experience of students and the community, realizing that future challenges are increasingly complex, capacity building is not only limited to the religious aspect. This also requires the development of skill-based abilities (Wiranata, 2019).

## Conclusion

Islamic boarding schools need to undergo a process of transformation and adaptation in accordance with the needs of the general public, but still maintain traditional values which are considered still relevant and positive. As a wise action at this time, Islamic boarding schools should be positioned as educational institutions that have a global orientation. The challenges of the clash of modern civilizations

demand an intelligent and thoughtful response. In this context, the wise action is to uphold Islamic principles, which teach to maintain old traditions or values that are still useful, and adopt new, better values.

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