

SOCIAL HUMANISM OF MADRASAH: A REFLECTION OF INDONESIAN MUSLIM INTELLECTUALS ESTABLISHMENT

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Abstract: This paper describes the existence of Indonesian *madrasahs* (Islamic schools), which are often considered to be of low quality, but in fact, have contributed a critical knowledge in Indonesia. This article is written using a qualitative method of literature research type. All relevant references to the theme of the discussion will be studied in depth to find new synthesis. Thus, the new paradigm will be built in accordance with the construction of the author's thoughts and collaborated with the existing literature review. We can conclude from this paper that the existence of *madrasahs* in Indonesia shows the following points. First, *madrasahs* in Indonesia were established based on a curriculum system that favors the Indonesian people so that Western influences do not bind them. Second, learning in *madrasahs* is a vital asset in maintaining the purity of Islam in Indonesia. This condition is because the mechanism aims to make students understand religion and local values to uphold unity and integrity. Third, the existence of *madrasahs* in Indonesia becomes the Indonesian nation's cultural identity and resistance to an established knowledge system without neglecting the rapid development of the times.

Keywords: Education, Indonesia, Islam, *Madrasah*, Society.

Introduction

Madrasabs play an essential role in the social transformation of Indonesian society. It facilitates students to become intelligent human beings by offering them to study both general and religious sciences simultaneously, which is intended to balance human intellectuality and spirituality to achieve a civilized soul. Abuddin Nata stated that historically, *madrasabs* were founded based on the strong desire of the Muslim community to establish an excellent education because the Dutch only provided good schools to specific circles. From this beginning, *madrasabs* synergistic with *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) have become a solid educational base among the Indonesian Muslim community to produce significant figures respected with civilized souls. We can say that the presence of *madrasabs* is one of the essential pillars of the Indonesian nation, especially for people who live in marginal areas.

Until now, *madrasabs* remains an educational institution that provides the best knowledge for Muslims in Indonesia. The existence of *madrasabs* is also an attempt to improve the *pesantren* system and not to lag behind the flow of modernization. The demand for higher education standards in Indonesia has made Muslims not be trapped only in behavior for the hereafter while ignoring the conditions in the present time. The development of knowledge-based on Islamic values can form harmonization of life continuously develop the power of reason and spirituality.

Nevertheless, some communities still underestimate the existence of *madrasabs*, namely as schools that lack academic achievement. On this side, it is interesting to study the presence of madrasas as a reflection of social awareness of the Islamic Indonesian community to carry out a cultural revolution. Based on an in-depth observation, many organizations form a *madrasabs* in Indonesia, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) or other Islamic institutions. Certain people were concerned about Islamic education in Indonesia. Therefore, *madrasabs* are an option for marginalized Indonesians to stay in school at a low price, even ready to accommodate students with limited intellectual abilities. Many people don't realize the role and position of *madrasabs* have become a medium for transforming knowledge by creating civilized professionalism.

This paper aims to reveal the social humanism formed by *madrasahs*, either directly or indirectly. The form of social humanism is a reflection of the collective awareness of the Indonesian Islamic community to equip their children with two kinds of knowledge simultaneously as a balance to achieve the world and the hereafter, as stated in the Qur'an and Hadith. In addition, this paper also seeks the vital role of *madrasahs* in fostering an intellectual revolution among underprivileged people, both in terms of material and in terms of thinking power, so that everyone can go to school to build the nation and state. This article is written using a qualitative method of literature research type. All relevant references to the theme of the discussion will be studied in depth to find new synthesis. Thus, the new paradigm will be built in accordance with the construction of the author's thoughts and collaborated with the existing literature review.

***Madrasahs* and Indonesian Society**

The early emergence of *madrasahs* in the Middle East as Islamic educational institutions continues boarding education in mosques. Similarly, the early emergence of *madrasahs* in Indonesia is a continuation of *pesantren*. The tradition of studying in *pesantren* is only to get religious knowledge, making Indonesians lagging in general knowledge. As a continuation of the *pesantren*, Islamic teaching still dominates *madrasahs* as a provision for human life. This educational institution is an alternative for the Indonesian people because beliefs and ideologies consider it.

The term *madrasah* is rooted in the Arabic word *darasa*, which means a place for studying.¹ This meaning is equal to the word *school*. However, the terms *madrasah* and *school* have some differences in terms of the teaching's materials. They taught general knowledge and science at schools, while Islamic teachings are trained for life at the *madrasah*. We cannot separate the history of Islamic education in Indonesia from *pesantren*, which teaches only

¹ Indeed, there are many views on the origin of *madrasahs*. Still, the term *madrasah* became popular in Indonesia to denote an education system equivalent to the education carried out by the Dutch government but does not separate the content of Islam in its learning. Sunhaji, *Manajemen Madrasah* (Purwokerto-Yogyakarta: STAIN Press in collaboration with Grafindo, 2006), 74.

religious knowledge. *Madrasah* emerged as the reformation of education in Indonesia to complete the religious education institution with general knowledge and science to balance spiritual and general knowledge.

The changes in political conditions in Indonesia have driven an educational reform, which is intended to build a more structured education to prepare the young Muslim generation to participate in national development. The leadership of Islamic figures is actualized through creating a new concept of modern education from early childhood. We can only realize the modernization of life systems and rules by transforming traditional education to a modern one to meet the fast development of the era. However, the transformation of education should not change the fundamental noble values of self-identity. Implicitly, the existence of *madrasahs* in Indonesia has proven that Islam is always relevant to the progress and development of this modern era.

Madrasahs emerged for combining education in *pesantren* and general formal education.² This condition indicates that Indonesian people are aware of the need to understand knowledge rooted in Islam and any knowledge that meets the needs of this modern era. Indonesian people who have concerns about education (predominantly Islamic figures) try to balance the study of Islamic learning in *pesantren* and the study of applied understanding of life to prepare a better *muamalah* (human interrelation). Before its independence, Indonesia had some influences from Islam, China, and Dutch had made the natives of Indonesia try to build an educational system that could meet the needs for the development of the era.

The term *madrasah* is recently used to refer to the institution which offers the study of the Qur'an, prays, *shalat*, and other religious knowledge for children as well as for adults with fundamental knowledge.³ Indonesian

² With a balance of religious knowledge and general knowledge, Muslims want to show that the knowledge in this world comes from the Qur'an. However, the explanations in the Qur'an require scientific proof. We cannot doubt the truth in the Qur'an. Abuddin Nata, *Kapita Selekta Pendidikan Islam: Isu-isu Kontemporer tentang Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2012), 111.

³ Nurul Huda, "Madrasah: sebuah Perjalanan untuk Eksis" in *Dinamika Pesantren dan Madrasah* Abdul Kholiq (ed), (Semarang: Fakultas Tarbiyah IAIN Walisongo in collaboration with Pustaka Pelajar, 2002), 214-5.

Dictionary (KBBI).⁴ defines *madrasah* as a school-based on Islamic teachings. Since the issue of the Joint Decree among three ministers, namely the Minister of Religious Affairs, the Minister of Education and Culture, and the Minister of Home Affairs in 1975, *madrasahs* have several levels, namely *ibtdaiyah* (elementary school), *tsanawiyah* (junior high school), and *alimah* (senior high school).⁵ In each of these levels, there is a curriculum system that has been designed according to a person's psychological stages of learning. As a continuous learning process, the material presented continually increases according to the students' ability to respond. The curriculum in *madrasahs* is made with a flat portion between Islamic religious material and general science. The Islamic scholars initially created this curriculum to eliminate the dichotomy between Islamic spiritual knowledge and other science. In subsequent developments, this goal forms its own identity in the learning system in Indonesia, especially in the stigma of Indonesian society when *madrasahs* are already under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.

In current developments, it turns out that not all *madrasahs* belong to the state but belong to foundations created based on educational concern for the surrounding environment. Many religious leaders in certain areas feel that some public schools only accept intellectually high students. The number of students is too large, so it is necessary to make schools with curricula under the expectations of the surrounding community. For example, in Banyumas, there are many foundations such as Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and foundations belonging to specific Islamic figures participating in establishing schools or *madrasahs* to accommodate the surrounding community. They established *madrasahs* as educational institutions with teachers who had an ideology in line with the Islamic organization.

In its development, there are problems between public *madrasahs* and private *madrasahs*. Public *madrasahs* receive assistance from the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, while private *madrasahs* rely on the number of students and grants from social donations. Recently, private *madrasahs* have also received assistance, but the amount is still insufficient.

⁴ Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta, Gramedia, 2015).

⁵ Marwan Saridjo, *Bunga rampai Pendidikan Agama Islam* (Jakarta: Amisisco, 1996), 118.

Therefore, welfare gaps often occur between teachers in financially well-off schools and teachers in less-established schools. This dualism of management is not visible at first glance but is felt by the actors to continue to organize learning activities that the community can reach.

Social Humanism of *Madrasah*

We must include discussions about *madrasahs* as social structures in Indonesian society in events that are interpreted, traced, and analyzed from the in-depth sustainability. The patterns that exist in *madrasahs* when developing Islamic knowledge in Indonesia can be highlighted as cultural events because a very thick culture dominates the nature of Indonesian society. The tendency of Indonesians to study religion in *madrasahs* has formed a value system as a need to access the broader world by adhering to the Qur'an and Hadith without neglecting rationality. In this case, *madrasahs* are educational institutions that can explore noble values that schools cannot do with a centralized curriculum structure. *Madrasahs* with autonomy to develop curriculum can deepen Islamic studies to fill the morals and values of the young generation of Indonesian society in the form of awareness.

Awareness is a human way to respond to every event with instinct and logic based on the ideology that forms it. Awareness in humans appears differently based on the belief system that exists in the community or individual. The existence of knowledge within a person is what forms a pattern of its consciousness. Humans without awareness will act like animals and are difficult to control. Therefore, every human being has awareness based on his perceptions. Normative awareness binds a person based on norms or rules that exist in society. This awareness arises when individuals living in the community are always aware of obeying the rules that have been agreed upon. This awareness arises because humans are not only individual creatures but also social beings. As a result, to create order in society, humans need to agree with the rules.

Normative-religious awareness is awareness in someone to believe in religion as a belief that provides various kinds of guidance. A person's existence in society requires faith based on his thoughts. Humans are aware that the potential power in humans is minimal, so there must be other forces that encourage it. Normative-religious awareness is triggered by the limitations of the human ability to observe the universe. Various strengths of the universe are beyond human comprehension. Only God can move the universe. Understanding God as Creator is important in learning at *madrasabs* to grow in the human spirit of the young generation of Indonesia.

In *madrasabs*, Islam is understood based on fundamental values that have grown from the early history of its birth until now.⁶ At least, there are two understandings of Islam, namely Islam as teaching of peace and Islam as a teaching of social change. The values of peace have become the basis and very central in Islamic teachings. This is manifested in personal life and social life, which is reflected through efforts to develop scientific, rational, innovative culture and increase the participation of Islam and Indonesian national politics. Amid modernization that continues to fluctuate with freedom, one of the roles of Islam in shaping the nation's morality is carried out by learning in madrasas that instill spiritual values.

When viewed from the sociological aspect, it can be seen that there is a shift in values in society from time to time.⁷ On this side, it is possible that if people are not taught about the cultural teachings of Islam, the heritage of Indonesia's ancestral wealth may change. Islam in Indonesia is well known as a tolerant Islam because Indonesian culture is in harmony with Islam, making people who truly understand have a social humanism side. Critical Islamic figures in a state of social ambivalence make *madrasabs* have bargaining power as Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia.

⁶ Aripin, Jaenal, Syamsul Adham dan Fauzan (e.d). *Kajian Islam Multidisipliner* (Jakarta: Lemlit UIN Jakarta, 2009), 15.

⁷ In this view, it is not only Islam that has changed, but also religion, in general, will have a shift in the opinions of its people along with changes in the scientific order of humans. Therefore, if someone does not get introductory knowledge, dangerous radical changes will appear. Misinterpretation of the doctrines causes the appreciation of the times to be wrong. Read A. Sudiarja, *Agama di Zaman yang Berubah* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2006), 34.

Madrasabs still have a charismatic side in front of Muslims in Indonesia. This charisma arises because these institutions teach primary ritual forms as important beliefs in special education. The material in the *madrasabs* shows the essence of peaceful values as the origin and goal of life. In addition, *madrasabs* also teach about belief in prayer, fasting rituals, or *lailatul qodar*. Therefore, creating an atmosphere of peace, tolerance, cooperation, and mutual respect among individuals and in the social life of Muslims is a fundamental obligation in Islamic teachings. Because peace is a prerequisite for achieving the welfare of society, creating peace is a must for every Muslim. The communities can do this through education in *madrasabs*.

Meanwhile, the teachings on social change have been evident since the birth of Islam. The apostolate of the Prophet Muhammad SAW is essentially an example in learning in *madrasabs* of historical, social realities. Furthermore, education in *madrasabs* can make corrections, reconstructions and at the same time offer solutions to several fundamental problems faced by today's society.⁸ History will repeat itself throughout the ages that morality is the keyword, such as the principles of justice, truth, honesty, togetherness, social responsibility, order, prosperity, and others. This is what Islam has to offer and will remain relevant and urgently needed by contemporary society and the nation.

In this regard, Islamic education through *madrasabs* is a strategy to cultivate values that will be the helpers and determinants of the Indonesian people in their ideology, and at the same time to improve the way of life and civilization of humankind. Without education based on Islam, it is believed that today's Indonesian society is no different from the ignorant human generation of the past. It is thought that the education system determines the progress or decline of the civilization of a community or nation in that society or government lives. The design of Indonesian culture cannot be separated from Islamic education so that Islam in Indonesia remains solid as a religion that is exceptionally respected in the world. In this case, the provision of primary materials from reading and writing the Qur'an to

⁸ Aripin, Jaenal, Syamsul Adham dan Fauzan (e.d). *Kajian Islam Multidisipliner* (Jakarta: Lemlit UIN Jakarta, 2009), 36,

knowledge and practice of worship will shape the beliefs of the Indonesian people, especially to have charity under religious teachings.

The concept of humanist Islamic teachings in *madrasabs* is fully aware of building a sovereign, just, and prosperous Indonesian nation. Some of that awareness is manifested in terms of:

1. Curriculum Awareness

The scholars developed many *madrasabs* curricula from Islamic boarding schools—for example, the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School and the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School. On the one hand, these institutions are Islamic boarding schools, but they also carry out a learning system from elementary school to high school. Islamic teachings still dominate the curriculum as the main subjects. However, they still refer to the National Education Standards set by the Joint Decision Letters (SKB) of the three ministers. This courage has inspired several Islamic boarding schools to establish both formal and informal madrasas (*diniyah*). With a system of independence and curriculum discipline set by the owner of the foundation, students' character as the next generation of the nation is formed.

As Islamic education in Indonesia, Madrasas have the main task of providing education following their primary duties, functions, and objectives. The *madrasabs* can do this with good management. To realize engaging learning and improve learning activities can be done with good governance. The ability of teachers/ustadz in the learning process to deliver material under the appropriate subjects being taught also determines the realization of these conditions. This ability is a strategic preparation for teachers/ustadz to provide learning materials in a more organized manner. In this regard, teachers/ustadz should have a clear frame of mind so that the Islamic learning process becomes varied and not monotonous. Professional management and freedom of thought are needed for students. To make the learning system more organized,

According to Paulo Freire⁹, learning is a pretty tough job, demanding a systematic, critical attitude and intellectual abilities that it can only obtain directly. Learning requires the active involvement of students. In learning, the teacher acts as a facilitator for the occurrence of scientific transformation in students. According to constructivism learning theory, we cannot simply transfer knowledge from the teacher's mind to the student's mind. These circumstances mean that students must be mentally active to build their knowledge structure based on their cognitive maturity. In other words, students are not expected to be *small bottles ready to be filled* with various knowledge according to the teacher's wishes.

The impression that madrasas are identical with organizational weakness and low achievement is a significant problem.¹⁰ Modernization as part of social change also impacts madrasas, which have been thick with tradition and religion. Modernization in madrasas was formed with efforts to bring up more organized management, patterns, and systems. This struggle does not mean that we should remove all traditions and values with total reform. Modernization in madrasas is carried out to correct all deficiencies and various things that raise criticism. In Indonesia, *madrasahs* have a position as an educational institution and a social institution. On the one hand, madrasas educate students, and madrasas also interact directly with the community. The practice of modernization in madrasas eventually gave rise to three terms, namely traditional, modern and mixed, all of which occurred in methods, concepts, systems, and completeness.

We can say that although madrasas are separate from Islamic boarding schools, their existence is like a symbiotic mutualism. Islam in Indonesia is getting stronger because Islamic boarding schools carry out management reforms based on quality standards that the community can assess. The quality of management will be seen from the discipline of the

⁹ Paulo Freire, *Politik Pendidikan: Kebudayaan, Kekuasaan dan Pembebasan* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 28.

¹⁰ Abdul Wahid, "Manajemen Berbasis Madrasah" in *Dinamika Pesantren dan Madrasah* (Ismail SM, et al (ed)) (Semarang: Fakultas Tarbiyah IAIN Walisongo in collaboration with Pustaka Pelajar, 2002), 262.

managers and students who study Islamic religion at the Islamic boarding school.¹¹

2. Awareness of Social Arena

Learning in madrasas requires a good understanding of the conditions around the community. In this case, it becomes an absolute fact that Islam in Indonesia cannot exist without a cultural experience. The relationship between the two is so close and inseparable. The more comprehensive the understanding of Islam, the more it will intersect with the surrounding culture. Knowledge of Islam becomes an essential element as a provision of morals and values. The perception of the Indonesian people about Islam based on education in madrasas can give impressions, judgments, opinions, and additional information as beliefs.

Islam is seen as a religion that understands the dimensions of the human psyche, both stated in the Qur'an and Hadith. The process of psychological formation for Muslims is to assume that all humans are brothers. With this assumption, the interaction between fellow human beings will make them know each other, understand, and live with each other in God's love during the learning process at the *madrasahs*.

Although there are still many private *madrasahs* that are not yet well-accredited, they have an essential role in increasing the knowledge capacity of the young generation of Indonesia, especially in rural areas. On this side, madrasas accommodate people from the lower classes to attend affordable schools with good enough quality. Unlike most public schools that accept students with exemplary achievements, private madrasas accommodate more students with lower academic abilities. This condition can be seen positively that the existence of madrasas makes education in Indonesia (Java in particular) more equitable because it is supported by private education providers/foundations that do not depend on the government. The foundation managers seek donations for the continuity of the madrasa, and they work with a "sincerely charitable" philosophy. This philosophy motivates them to develop education as one

¹¹ Read Ali Anwar, *Pembaruan Pendidikan di Pesantren Lirboyo Kediri*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2011), 95.

of the essential things for life. Learning can be done anywhere, as long as there is an intention to create and change oneself. Through this effort, Allah will make those people have more abilities.

Islamic education in madrasas should develop Islamic knowledge such as fiqh, interpretation, monotheism, and Sufism. Still, it should also be able to produce conducive and flexible scholars at the international level.¹² In this position, the madrasa has given birth to Nawawi al Batani and Mahdudz Termas as Javanese ulama figures who are Asian scholars. Various circles of society can accept humanist and flexible Islamic education.

Meanwhile, education as an effort for liberation is directed at forming a new awareness of the importance of ideas to form an intellectual culture among the people in the periphery regions. Islamic education can lead people to see the human side of social injustice in Indonesia, which has recently been prone to causing divisions. Therefore, Islamic education with the content of local values becomes a fundamental development axis to plant Pancasila as the ideology of the Indonesian people.

Islam has advocated education based on verses in the Qur'an and Hadith. Madrasas play an essential role in transforming the values in the Qur'an and Hadith to their students. The Muslim's communities in Indonesia also need the conversion of the Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith, as a guide for Muslims. This guidance also becomes an inseparable element in the lives of Muslims to accept and transform it. The goal is to create the life of society, nation, and state in a peaceful atmosphere. A democratic life applied with a blend of Islamic values will shape the characteristics of a dynamic country in the *madrasah*.

Apart from that, learning in madrasas can shape creativity. Creativity is essential in everyday life. Every movement of civilization is always marked by changes that always demand innovation. An observer

¹² Abdurrahman Mas'ud, *Menuju Paradigma Islam Humanis* (Yogyakarta: Gama Media, 2003), 193.

of social change, Anthony Giddens¹³ Views that humanity creates its history by being aware of that history, meaning that humans must become reflective beings who cognitively understand their potential and their surrounding environment, not just living life. Strong criticism and accuracy support reflective thinking to see social phenomena with instinct and sensitivity. This pattern encourages people always carefully to read the signs around them. Furthermore, the work of reason is to formulate a strategy by looking at the possibilities in the transformation of Islamic values in Indonesia.

It is necessary to note that the views of the Indonesian Islamic community regarding the way of life are based on their knowledge formed in the education bench. Each country has a particular view to ensure that its people live in prosperity through the education process. The concept of prosperity is described in more depth based on the current situation and conditions and with different perspectives. The welfare of the people includes the need for food and drink and educational facilities that should be fulfilled and guaranteed by the state.

In addition, the concept of education in madrasahs is not directed at making people lazy but to teaching sharing with the less fortunate. This concept is intended to build not only physical but also spiritual well-being. In the physical aspect, there are efforts to share through *zakat*, *qurban*, and the like. Meanwhile, Muslims pray for each other in the spiritual element and advise them to stay on the right path. The concept of welfare according to Islam is based on the *Alquran* and *Hadith*.

3. The Awareness to Make a Cultural Revolution

Almost all countries in the world have experienced a revolution with different backgrounds. Usually, a process is driven by a failure in the country, which can be caused by negligence in implementing a policy or an economic crisis. In 1958, under the rule of Mao Tse Tung, China experienced a financial failure that led to an approach to increase

¹³ Anthony Giddens, *Teori Strukturasi: dasar-dasar Pembentukan Struktur Sosial Masyarakat* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010), 366.

business and productivity.¹⁴ Chili also made a cultural revolution as a result of economic instability. The cultural revolution was made in Japan after Nagasaki and Hiroshima were bombed. The government sent the remaining teachers to take higher education. A process to improve the community's knowledge was also done by the government of Malaysia by taking Indonesian teachers from 1960 to 1970. At that time, Indonesia was considered the center of expertise because Indonesia had prominent figures in Malaysia's independence. At that time, Malaysia had just got its independence from the British 12 years later than Indonesia, but finally, the state could achieve a more established education and civilization.

If we are reviewing Indonesian history, we cannot separate the establishment of madrasas from the efforts of Muslims to make a cultural revolution against the invaders. When the Kiai was forced into war, modern Muslim scholars were born who preached nationalism. Therefore, it is not surprising that Islam has an active movement because it has prepared cadres early. Resistance is not only carried out by war, but the delivery of discourse can provide extraordinary influence and motivation for the people of Indonesia. Education is an important place to foster confidence in shaping change. This goes hand in hand with the pesantren, which has long been established as an independent Islamic education and free from foreign influences.

In relating the above phenomena and educational theory, Paulo Freire¹⁵ Paulo Freire once argued that education could give people awareness to choose their lives and build themselves for the better. Islamic education through madrasas can be understood as a long-term change to organize the environment. Knowledge, information, and insight will inspire people to manage the socio-cultural conditions around them to be better. Humans always transform through ideas that are built fundamentally to produce various kinds of works. Obtaining these ideas can be done through Islamic religious education, access to information,

¹⁴ Read "Revolusi Kebudayaan Cina" in chamad86.blogspot.in/p/revolusikebudayaancina accessed on 27 Mei 2019.

¹⁵ Paulo Freire, *Politik Pendidikan: Kebudayaan, Kekuasaan dan Pembebasan* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 195. This view leads to efforts to liberate humans through humanist education, namely education that is in line with their needs.

network formation, and new knowledge acquisition in line with the surrounding circumstances.

During the New Order era, the existence of *madrasahs* became very important to eliminate the communist education carried out by the PKI. While people believe in a rational view, Islamic education in madrasahs teaches the dynamics of humans with God (worship), human-to-human relationships (*muamallah*), and humans with the universe (*kehalifa*).¹⁶ Unfortunately, the political conditions during the New Order era were less favorable for Islamic educational institutions. NU or Ma'arif educational institutions got difficulties in terms of licensing, the establishment of schools, and the implementation of student exams. These difficulties were due to the government party's dominance, while Islam was in the United Development Party (PPP). Considering such a condition, madrasahs appeared in the form of foundations on behalf of individuals to ease the relationship of figures with civil servants. In contrast, non-civil servants took a distant position. From that situation, madrasahs continue to operate in an education system that teaches Islam as an essential part. *Madrasahs* came under the authority of national education after the decree of three ministers and obtaining various assistance from the government. Madrasahs always strive to improve ers in 1975 related to quality improvement by acknowledging the graduates of *madrasah* equivalent to public schools, can continue their study to public schools, or transfer to public schools of the same level.¹⁷

¹⁶ Mudjahirin Thohir, *Orang Islam Jawa Pesisiran* (Semarang: Puslit Sosial Budaya Lembaga Penelitian Universitas Diponegoro in collaboration with Fasino, 2006), page 215-216. Also read Kholid Mawardi, *Mahzab Sosial Keagamaan NU* (Purwokerto-Yogyakarta: STAIN Purwokerto Press in collaboration with Grafindo, 2006).

¹⁷ Sunhaji, *Managemen Madrasah* (Purwokerto-Yogyakarta: STAIN Purwokerto Press in collaboration with Grafindo, 2006), 75-6. However, *madrasahs* do not follow 100% of the curriculum of the Ministry of Religion as implemented in State Madrasah Aliyah. This condition happens because madrasa managers and stakeholders want the integrity of the knowledge learned in madrasahs, prioritizing the study of religious knowledge without ignoring general knowledge. Accordingly, various studies have been carried out on the existing curriculum so that in several madrasahs, there are forms of development and innovation to provide more religious knowledge. In this case, madrasahs have the freedom to develop the curriculum as long as the material for the national exam remains under the predetermined curriculum.

With the support of non-governmental organization services and quality, one of which is fulfilling the facilities and infrastructure to go to Madrasas of National Standard under educational standards. As time passes, madrasas will develop breakthroughs to realize the ideals of the founders. However, madrasas do not follow 100% of the curriculum of the Ministry of Religion as implemented in Public *Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic Senior High School)*. This condition happens because *madrasah* managers and stakeholders expect the integrity of the knowledge learned in *madrasabs*, prioritizing the study of religious knowledge without ignoring general knowledge. Accordingly, various studies have been carried out on the existing curriculum so that in several *madrasabs*, there are forms of development and innovation to provide more religious knowledge. In this case, madrasas have the freedom to develop the curriculum as long as the material for the national exam remains under the predetermined curriculum.

Islamic education in Indonesian *madrasabs* always carries out a cultural revolution to create religious figures who have an essential role in governance. This process is carried out through intellectual enlightenment that changes the democratic and consistent civilization of the Indonesian nation through Islamic values in *madrasabs*. Therefore, most private *madrasabs* were established in rural areas to educate the marginalized people. With the availability of affordable learning opportunities, the region gradually became motivated to pursue higher education, not just to fulfill the requirements to read and write. In Banyumas, for example, many private *madrasabs* were established because of public awareness to provide Islamic education for children based on the religious ideology they follow. In this case, the *madrasah* is a place to give the younger generation learning materials according to the views of the teachers who are recruited following the community's expectations.

The strength of the madrasas is increasingly visible when it is integrated with *pesantren* that have been recognized for their legality. Since the last few decades, we have seen significant developments related to *pesantren* education. At the discourse level, this development appears through various thoughts raised by several scientists, researchers, and

pesantren observers. Several ideas have emerged to improve the image of the *pesantren* while maximizing its function and role. Generally, their ideas revolve around teaching-learning methodology, the character of thought, and its traditions and culture.¹⁸

From this idea, it is clear that *pesantren* has changed its system towards *madrasah* because people in Indonesia teach their children to be wise and obtain legal proof of graduation. In reality, it is the *pesantren* that gains popularity, even though it includes a *madrasah*. In this case, it seems that the *madrasah* is only a side institution. However, the existence of *madrasahs* in Islamic boarding schools confirms that the Islamic boarding schools already have maturity in terms of management. The way of life in Indonesia requires people to have graduation that the government legalizes.

Meanwhile, instead of having national education standards, the *pesantren* curriculum is the absolute authority of the Kiai. For this reason, many *pesantren* provide education through *madrasahs* with transparent grades during the day. The ability of Islamic religious knowledge usually follows the grading system, both reading the Qur'an and Hadith as well as in the practice of worship. Islamic boarding schools that collaborate with *madrasahs* will always exist. They are managed well because they do not depend only on the *kiai's* character. The learning system is carried out with a transparent planning system and results from orientation.

An educational foundation that already has a certificate can establish a boarding school and, if it meets the requirements, can verify an integrated *madrasah*. In this situation, we can firmly instill Islamic teachings, and their educational status is legally recognized. We can say that the requirements and pillars of education are generally fulfilled, but the content of Islamic teachings in the evening or morning hours is thicker as a belief. In this constellation, Islamic values can be deeply rooted as the belief system of the Indonesian nation.

¹⁸ See Mohmmad Achyat Ahmad, *Liberalisasi Islam di Pesantren* (Pasuruan: Pustaka Sidogiri, 2013), 38.

However, along with open access to information and an understanding of the rights to life, Indonesian people have begun to consider education in *madrasabs*. Currently, education in Indonesia is a medium for shaping change. Considering the opportunities that exist due to globalization, especially the opportunities for student exchange, *madrasabs* can develop student exchange programs in Southeast Asia. This idea is driven by the fact that Islamic religious education is carried out in Indonesia and several other countries. To avoid a monotonous education system, sending young people to study in other countries can broaden their views and form cultural accumulations sometime after returning. Education can be a way to achieve self-liberation and build environmental awareness for creativity so that a new civilization is formed.¹⁹ Education is an essential part of shaping the culture of a society, starting with preparing the younger generation as agents of change. The development of inter-madrasah relations will make the views open to science that is increasingly developing and complementary. Understanding differences will make people have a spirit of tolerance.

Conclusion

The results of this study conclude that *madrasabs* in Indonesia have an urgent role in Islam. The following points indicate this. First, *madrasabs* in Indonesia use a curriculum system that favors the Indonesian people from being bound by Western cultural influences. *madrasabs* are here to complement the pesantren to have a more organized management. This combination makes Islam in Indonesia stronger because there is a profound balance of knowledge. Second, learning in *madrasabs* is a vital asset in maintaining the purity of Islam in Indonesia. This condition happens because the learning is intended to understand religion and local values to uphold unity and integrity. Third, the existence of *madrasabs* in Indonesia becomes the cultural identity of the Indonesian nation, as well as a resistance to an established knowledge system.

¹⁹ Muhammad Fuad, *Pendidikan sebagai Transformasi Sosial: Telaah terhadap Filsafat Pendidikan Paulo Freire* (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia, 2010).

However, learning in *madrasahs* still does not lag behind the times. These circumstances can be seen from the content of the Islamic religion, which has noble values to build the young generation of Indonesia. Education is an intellectual revolution to make Muslims in Indonesia remain with a solid view, even though the current of modernization is getting stronger. The educational course in *madrasahs* will develop openly by exchanging students with other countries while maintaining the roots of Indonesian culture.

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