



The pesantren: Politics of islamic and problematic education muslim identity

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ABSTRACT

This program aims to discuss the politics of Islamic education and the problems of Muslim identity in Islamic boarding schools. The philosophy believed in the Islamic boarding school is based on Islam, and furthermore, the philosophy of education is based on the philosophical principles it adheres to. In the beginning, the main objective of the pesantren was to prepare students to deepen and master the science of religion (*tafaqqahu fi al-din*), the reproduction of ulama where the teaching of religious knowledge (*transfer of Islamic knowledge*), maintaining the Islamic tradition (*maintenance of Islamic* tradition) and Islamic character building. Cottage The pesantren is a place of traditional education which has been very much felt by all elements, both society and government. Political education is an interdisciplinary study that integrates political science and education science, to see the dynamic relationship between various political issues and educational issues. To overcome the problem of Muslim identity, the dimensions mentioned above greatly affect Muslim identity because substantively, Islam is the same everywhere, namely the religion of Allah which was brought by the Prophet Muhammad as a guide for mankind. The emergence of various Islamic identities lately need not be responded to with excessive suspicion. Even the identity of Islam can become even more diverse when the typology of thought, understanding and practice of Islam is viewed from various perspectives both in the west and in the east.

INTRODUCTION

Pesantren is a place of traditional education which from the past until now its existence is very much felt by all elements of both society and government, *pesantren* should be a place where students learn about religious knowledge but along with the times and social progress so that *pesantren* is not only a place to receive a religious knowledge, but more than that boarding schools are able to equate themselves with government-owned madrassas in general, ranging from the level of early childhood education to college. The development of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia is increasingly rapid, because of the higher attractiveness of the community towards boarding schools, especially modern boarding schools. Behind the development of Islamic boarding schools for centuries, it was from the belly of *pesantren* that important figures were born who played an important role in the intellectual pro-

perty of Islam, and even the contribution of *pesantren* figures had brought the independence of the Indonesian people. At present, there are approximately nine million santri throughout Indonesia, more or less. This significant number indicates the rapid development of Islamic boarding schools.

Based on observations of the development of the current national education world, truly if it is not strengthened by strong religious and moral principles, and fortified with strong faith, we do not know what the Indonesian education world will look like in the future. The existence of Islamic organizations with various shades and forms of their teachings and the birth of several Islamic political parties that adhere to the principle of religion do not have a significant impact on Islam, on the other hand issues of Sara, radicalism, drugs, social media and

corruption are challenges for Muslims themselves. Departing from the above conditions, the existence of Islamic boarding schools is one of the pillars that are actually very good to reduce the era of globalization, which if sometimes not balanced with moral and spiritual strength will bring bad consequences.

The philosophy used by Islamic boarding schools is based on the Islamic religion, so as a consequence of logic, Islamic boarding schools strive and subsequently ground Islamic educational philosophy on the philosophical principles they hold. The first main purpose of the *pesantren* was to prepare students to explore and master religious knowledge (*tafaqqahu fi al-din*), the institution of ulama cadre (*reproduction of ulama*), and the place of teaching of religious knowledge (*transfer of Islamic knowledge*), maintaining Islamic traditions and Islamic character building. On the other hand, Islamic boarding school as an educational institution, but also religious institutions and social institutions which of course the role of *pesantren* was widened to become agents of social change and development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Boarding school

Etymologically, the boarding school is a combination of boarding school and boarding school. *Pondok* is derived from the Arabic funduk which means hotel, which in Indonesian *pesantren* is more equated with the environment of the parcels that are plotted in the form of rooms as dormitories for students. Whereas *pesantren* comes from the basic word "Santri" which gets a prefix and a suffix which means to show the meaning of the place (Madjid Nurcholish, 2007). Thus, *Pesantren* is a place for students. On the other hand there are a number of theories that explain the origin of the word *santri*. *First*, it comes from the word Sastri, Sanskrit language which means literacy. *Second*, comes from *cantrik*, which means someone who always follows the teacher where the teacher goes to settle. *Third*, comes from the Indian language which means people who know the holy books of the Hindu religion or science (Zamakhsyari Dhofier, 1984).

Speaking of Modern Islamic Boarding Schools, of course do not get caught up in unreserved conflicts when there is no common perception of the *pesantren* ontology. Islamic boarding school is the oldest Islamic education and broadcasting center that was born and developed in tune with the entry of Islam in Indonesia. At the beginning of the establishment of Islamic boarding schools were generally very simple. Learning activities are usually held in a *langgar* (*mushalla*) or mosque by a *kiai* with a number of students who come to recite the Koran. Over time this study develops along with the increasing number of students and widening the place of learning to become a unique institution called *pesantren*. The system commonly

used in teaching and learning in *pesantren* is wetonan or bandongan sorogan (Haidar Putra Daulay, 2007). On the epistemological level, most theories that explain the epistemology of *pesantren* are always physical oriented. These theories generally mention the integration of 5 main *pesantren* elements. Namely (1) Kiai (2) Santri (3) Mosque (4) Pondok and (5) Teaching classical Islamic books (Aridjo, 1980). In addition to the integration of the many *pesantren* can be patterned into two things, first based on physical buildings, second based on the curriculum (2010). Pawhereas, factually, the actual life of *pesantren* has diversity and dynamics that are very varied in line with the socio-cultural settings of the community where the *pesantren* is located. In most places, the five elements of the *pesantren* could be fulfilled, but in some regions it could be that one or two of these elements were not met.

Politics of Islamic Education

Educational politics is an interdisciplinary study that integrates political science and education, to see the dynamic relationship between various political problems and educational problems. In Islamic education this study wants to examine and find political issues and Islamic education, in this case modern Islamic boarding school education.

The main purpose of the study of educational politics is to explain the relationship between the process of formulating the goal (*the production of goals*) and the steps taken to achieve it (*the form of their achievements*). In discussing the formulation of the objectives of Islamic education, for example if the study of education administration only discusses the substance and values contained in it, the study of political education also discusses where the formulation of the objectives came from, who was involved in its preparation, through what mechanism how the formulation of the objectives was discussed and what values are contained in it, and whose political or educational interests are represented therein (M. Sirozi, 2013).

Furious in terms of the meaning and purpose of political education, the study of political education including Islamic education, should depart from the historical periodization of the nation's journey. This is because the politics of education are seen as local interests and the creation of a country's cultural identity. Indonesia experienced several phases of national history; *First*, Pre-independence (colonialism/colonialism). In this era, revealed by Tilaar, the function of educational institutions is a resistance movement against colonialism (Tilaar, 2001). At that time, youth groups educated in educational institutions, gathered and devised strategies to free themselves from the confines of colonialism. In the context of Islamic education, the Islamic Boarding School as the oldest Islamic education system in Indonesia contributes to the spirit of resistance

against the invaders (Abdurrahman Mas'ud, 2013). The *Second* is independence phase or often called the Old Order. At the time of independence, the position of education was at a crossroads even though Indonesia was independent, at this time the government had not yet determined the system of government to be followed, the system of Islamic countries and democracy became a hot issue and a debate that ended in a compromise. Indonesia calls itself the Pancasila state which accommodates the interests of nationalist and religious groups. In the context of the world of education, religious or religious education is accommodated through the Ministry of Religion and the national education system is managed by the Ministry of Education.

The *third* is period of development or the New Order. At this time, the politics of education still adheres to an accommodative system of two educational models that were coined by the Old Order government. However, the superiority of the government's role at that time tended to prioritize general education. That is, religious education in the new order did not get much attention from the government. The existence of Islamic education is more independent than schools that are fully supported by the government. This is due to the fact that the majority of Islamic educational institutions such as *pesantren* and *madrasa* are mostly managed by private or non-government organizations. On the other hand the unfortunate thing, Muslim politicians who sit in parliament also do not make a significant contribution to the development of Islamic educational institutions. M. Sirozi said that the role of Muslim politicians was amputated by the power of nationalist groups in the New Order. Muslim politicians in parliament only fill minority groups (2010).

The *Fourth* is upheaval of national politics places more emphasis on aspects of liberal democracy. It is a model of democracy that emphasizes freedom without restrictions. Everyone can express, think, act and ally. In this era, the government lost its fangs in accommodating certain interests. The government only functions as a facilitator and mediator to the needs of the community. The birth of the National Education System Law requires the government to regulate and manage religious and religious education institutions. In terms of theoretical analysis, the existence of religious and religious education, which is intended by the National Education System Law, actually existed before the PP. Number 55. Islamic boarding schools, for example, are dialectics of the historical culture of Indonesia or the archipelago with Islam.

Finally on October 15, 2019 was passed by the president of the Republic of Indonesia gave birth Law Number 18 of 2019 concerning *Pesantren* is a joint agreement involving parties representing the *Pesantren* community, each of whom has validated the formulation of legal norms optimally in accordance with the

characteristics and peculiarities of the *Pesantren*. *Pesantren* is a community-based institution and was founded by individuals, foundations, Islamic community organizations and/or communities who instill faith and piety in Allah, cultivate noble morals, and uphold the teachings of Islam *rahmatan lil'alam* as reflected by humility, tolerant, balanced, moderate, and other noble values of the Indonesian nation through education, Islamic *da'wah*, example, and community empowerment within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Pesantren already existed and developed before Indonesia became a country. The existence of this regulation provides two impacts of suspicion of political motives in the context of Islamic education-specifically Islamic Boarding Schools and *Madrasa Diniyah* namely: *First*, Islamic boarding schools will no longer have the freedom to manage and manage the curriculum that will be provided to their students. *Second*, the existence of this regulation will be implemented as a political tool for regional heads in an effort to gain votes in the regions.

Viewed from the perspective of education politics that education can influence politics and politics can be socialized through education. This is evidenced in the changes and developments in Islamic education in the political map of Islamic education which experiences dynamics based on the level of interest of the stakeholders in making state policy in the national education system. Therefore, Muslims need to understand the politics of education so that Muslims in Indonesia, especially Islamic political activists can fight for the needs and interests of Islamic education.

Problems of Muslim Identity

Problematic faced by Muslims today covers all dimensions of life such as Sara, radicalism, drugs, social media and corruption. These problems have resulted in stagnation in all fields and finally it is very easy for Muslims to be trapped in networks or conspiracies.

Based on a number of researchers in the world, it has indeed appreciated the character or characteristics of Indonesian Islam which is known as a peaceful, friendly and tolerant Islam that characterizes the expected Islam for the future. The problem of Islamic education in this case is that Islamic boarding schools today are far different from the challenges of Islamic education as existed in the classical and middle-ages both internally and externally.

Education is now more oriented to how to increase intelligence, achievement, skills, and how to deal with competition and oriented toward report cards or academic achievement indexes. Education has now lost its main mission of investing in human character. Moral and character education is no longer a major factor in a child's education. Both of these are considered to be the duties of

religious leaders, the task of parents or guardians at home. Schools compete with a curriculum that is believed to create a super young generation of the earliest possible age. So, Education is a social activity. The situation always varies according to the different patterns, traits and cultures that develop in these societies (Ali Khalil, 1980).

In line with the times, education which is only based on hard skills, namely producing graduates who only have academic achievements, must begin to be addressed. Now learning must also be based on developing soft skills (*social interaction*) because this is very important in shaping the character of the nation's children so that they are able to compete, be ethical, moral, and polite and interact with the community. Soft skill education is based on fostering mentality so that students can adjust to the realities of life. A person's success is not determined solely by knowledge and technical skills (*hard skills*), but also by the skills to manage themselves and others (*soft skills*).

Islamic boarding school produces young generations of Islam who are not only strong in "science" *ilmiah* but also in science "*amaliyah*". Islamic Boarding Schools should try to produce future leaders who are able to fight in any field of their choice with strong competent believer characters and life skills that have been formed and are able to fight anywhere with all obstacles.

The resulting *santri* competence is an integration of knowledge, values and attitudes (*faith*) and deeds (*charity*) or in a more operational definition, graduate competence is the mastery and ownership of knowledge that can be applied in life (*skills*) with the values of noble character (*attitude*), so it is expected that students who have knowledge that can be practiced with piety. As for scientific development, Islamic boarding schools have provided sufficient "*provisions*" for graduates to become competent human beings, including active Arabic and English language skills, because language is the key in opening up insights, both scientific and skill.

Students produced by Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools are not only children who know something correctly (*to know*) but must also be accompanied by practicing it correctly (*to do*), influencing themselves (*to be*) and building togetherness with others (*to life together*). Islamic education must produce people who have the characteristics of: 1) open and willing to accept new things as a result of innovation and change; 2) democratically oriented and able to have opinions that are not always the same as those of others; 3) grounded in reality, respecting time, consistent and systematic in solving problems; 4) always involved in planning and organizing; 5) have confidence that everything can be calculated; 6) realize and respect the opinions of others; 7) rational and believe in the ability of science and technology; 8) upholds justice based on merit, contribution and needs; and 9) oriented to productivity, effectiveness and

efficiency. Humans who possess such characteristics must be produced by Islamic education, namely people who are confident (*self-confident*) and are able to make wise choices and compete in an era of competitive globalization. so that Islamic boarding schools can prepare generations of Muslims to become people of 'alim and faqih in every aspect of life, both *diniyah* (*Ijtihad, Fiqh, Justice, etc.*) and applied science from science and technology (*chemistry, physics, medicine, etc.*). So that the output obtained is able to answer every change and challenge of the times and problems of Muslim identity.

Facing the era of globalization which has an impact on various changes both in the economic and socio-cultural fields, it is necessary to study how Islamic boarding schools appreciate the symptoms of modernization that are taking place so strongly as it is today. It is armed with a balanced knowledge of both *diniyah* and its *madiyah*. Therefore, all community groups including the Islamic Boarding School community must be prepared to face it and need to respond to the problematic of open and critical Muslim identity.

CONCLUSIONS

The development of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia is increasingly rapid, because of the higher public appeal towards Islamic boarding schools, especially modern boarding schools. Behind the development of Islamic boarding schools for centuries, from the belly of the *pesantren* was born important figures that played an important role in Islamic intellectual property, even the contribution of Islamic boarding school figures had brought the independence of the Indonesian people. At present, there are approximately nine million *santri* throughout Indonesia, more or less. This significant number indicates the rapid development of Islamic boarding schools.

Islamic boarding schools with so many and complex variants and dynamics, both physically, culturally, educationally, and institutionally, the main purpose of *pesantren* is to prepare students to explore and master religious knowledge (*tafaqqahu fi al-din*). Reproduction of ulama institutions (*reproduction of ulama*) where the teaching of religious knowledge (*transfer of Islamic knowledge*), maintaining the Islamic tradition (*maintenance of Islamic tradition*). On the other hand, the *pesantren* is actually an educational institution or institution that is oriented to the formation of Islamic character building which has a high level of Islamic and social morality that is actualized in the education and teaching system. Therefore, in the view of Islam the politics of national education should have the following dimensions: Building Faith.

To overcome the problem of the dimensions of Muslim identity mentioned above greatly affects Muslim identity because substantively, Islam everywhere is the same,

namely the religion of God brought by the Prophet Muhammad as a guide for humanity.

The globalization era is characterized by advances in technology and information, *pesantren* get a variety of criticism because it is less able to answer the challenges of globalization. While considering the general education system, it is considered more responsive in responding to globalization. However, public education organized by the government also raises new problems which make the morals nation increasingly due to globalization. Integration between the *pesantren* education system and general education institutions is a step forward for the weaknesses of the two systems of educational institutions that are developing at this time. In addition, the unification of the two *pesantren* education systems and general education is a strategic step for the Islamic world.

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