Quality Education through Pesantren, Madrasahs, and Islamic Schools in Globalization Dynamics: Pendidikan Berkualitas Melalui Pesantren, Madrasah, dan Sekolah Islam dalam Dinamika Globalisasi

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General Background: Globalization has reshaped educational landscapes worldwide, demanding institutions to remain adaptive, innovative, and competitive. **Specific Background:** In Indonesia, Islamic educational institutions—pesantren, madrasahs, and Islamic schools—play a strategic role in shaping human resources that are academically capable and spiritually grounded. **Knowledge Gap:** Despite their historical significance, these institutions often face stigma as traditional and less responsive to modern challenges, while limited studies systematically examine their integrative role in the globalization era. **Aims:** This study explores how pesantren, madrasahs, and Islamic schools adapt to global dynamics while preserving Islamic identity, and how their synergy contributes to improving national education quality. **Results:** Using qualitative analysis, the study finds that pesantren integrate local and global values through ecological curricula, madrasahs balance religious and general education while innovating in vocational and scientific fields, and Islamic schools with boarding models harmonize academic, spiritual, and social learning. **Novelty:** This research highlights the complementary roles of the three institutions, offering a holistic model of Islamic education that transcends the dichotomy between tradition and modernity. **Implications:** Strengthening collaboration among pesantren, madrasahs, and Islamic schools will foster inclusive, adaptive, and globally competitive education while safeguarding Indonesia's cultural and spiritual identity.

HIghlight :

- Pesantren integrate local and global values to strengthen student character.

- Madrasah enrich the national curriculum with Islamic perspectives.

- Islamic schools balance religious education and general knowledge in globalization

Keywords : Globalization, Islamic Boarding Schools, Islamic Education, Islamic Schools, Education Quality

Introduction

Education constitutes one of the main pillars of national development, directed toward creating excellent human resources who are globally competitive and possess strong character. Within the context of an ever-evolving globalization, the Indonesian government has implemented various

educational policies aimed at enhancing quality, accessibility, and relevance across all levels and types of education, including religious education such as pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools [1]. Globalization has brought significant changes to various aspects of life, including education. The advancement of information flows, technological progress, and the demands of global competencies compel the education sector to make adjustments to remain relevant to the dynamics of the era. Amid these global challenges, Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools play a strategic role in shaping a generation that excels not only academically but is also spiritually strong and deeply rooted in Islamic values [2].

On one hand, globalization opens wide opportunities for education to access unlimited learning resources, expand international collaboration, and encourage innovation in teaching methods. On the other hand, it also presents serious challenges, such as unequal access to education, the dominance of foreign cultures, and pressures against local values and national identity [3]. As an integral component of the national education system in many countries, including Indonesia, Islamic education faces both major opportunities and challenges in this era of globalization. On the one hand, globalization provides space for Islamic education to broaden access to information, strengthen scholarly networks, and introduce Islamic values at the international stage. Yet, on the other hand, it also brings challenges in the form of value secularization, commercialization of education, and cultural penetration that does not always align with Islamic principles

In the Indonesian context as the country with the world's largest Muslim population, the existence of Islamic educational institutions cannot be separated from the history and development of national education. Pesantren as traditional institutions, madrasah as formal religion-based schools, and modern Islamic schools have all contributed significantly to nation-building and character formation. However, in the era of globalization that demands innovation, openness, and global competence, these institutions are required to transform while preserving their Islamic identity Curriculum reform, technology integration, and teacher quality enhancement are integral to efforts in improving the quality of Islamic education so that it can stand on par with the general education system. Moreover, Islamic education is expected to respond to global challenges such as moral crises, radicalism, and the degradation of human values, while upholding the Islamic principles of rahmatan lil 'alamin

Nevertheless, Islamic educational institutions are often confronted with the stigma of being traditional entities that are slow to adapt to the demands of modern times. Challenges such as curricula that are not fully contextualized, limited resources, and the urgent need to improve graduate competencies to be competitive nationally and globally require serious attention. At the same time, many pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools have demonstrated significant innovation and adaptation, such as integrating national and Islamic curricula, implementing technology-based learning methods, and strengthening character education. Therefore, it is essential to further examine how these three Islamic educational institutions respond to the dynamics of globalization and how they contribute to improving educational quality. This study aims to explore the roles of pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools in addressing global challenges, while highlighting their potential and strategies in realizing education that is both high in quality and relevant to contemporary needs.

Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with the objective of providing an in-depth description and analysis of the roles of pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools in enhancing the quality of education amid the dynamics of globalization. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of social and educational phenomena within their contextual settings, while also capturing the perspectives of educational actors in a scholarly framework [4].

Results a nd Discussion

Education in Indonesia has developed into various forms and systems over a long period, and one of the most notable distinctions can be found among three main educational institutions: schools, madrasahs, and pesantren. Each of these institutions has distinct historical roots, with functions and objectives that were initially aligned with the social and religious needs of society at the time. Schools, as more modern formal institutions, emphasize the teaching of science and technology. Madrasahs, which place greater emphasis on Islamic religious education, have existed since the era of the Sultanates and continue to develop today. Pesantren, as traditional educational institutions, adopt an approach that is more integrated with community life and focus on religious learning as well as character formation through more intensive teaching processes [5].

However, along with the passage of time, especially in the era of globalization, these differences have become increasingly evident. The rapid flow of information and the

advancement of technology have had a profound impact on education, including Islamic education. Globalization has influenced ways of thinking, lifestyles, and existing educational systems, including those in schools, madrasahs, and pesantren. Each of these institutions now faces the challenge of adapting to swift global changes while simultaneously preserving the essence and values that form the foundation of their teachings [6].

The polemics surrounding the Indonesian education system cannot be separated from debates about the strengths and weaknesses of each institution, as well as how they are able to adapt to contemporary demands. Some perspectives suggest that schools are more oriented toward scientific achievement alone, while madrasahs and pesantren focus more on religious instruction, which is often perceived as less relevant to the demands of modern times. Conversely, there are also views that highlight the importance of religious education offered in madrasahs and pesantren as fundamental to shaping a nation with noble character and strong morality [7].

In the context of accelerating globalization, it is essential to reflect on how these three educational institutions can collaborate in creating a more relevant and comprehensive educational system that responds to societal needs. The synergy among schools, madrasahs, and pesantren may serve as a key to establishing an education system that not only prioritizes scientific knowledge but also fosters the character and moral development of younger generations. Therefore, this study seeks to further examine the historical differences, functions, and roles of these three institutions, as well as how they can collaborate in facing the challenges of globalization to realize a holistic and high-quality education in Indonesia [8].

A. The History and Development of Pesantren, Madrasahs, and Islamic Schools

1. Pesantren as the Historical Root of Education in Indonesia

Pesantren has long been a vital symbol in the historical journey of the Indonesian nation. Prominent figures such as KH Ahmad Dahlan, KH Hasyim Asy'ari, KH Wahid Hasyim, and KH Wahab Hasbullah are among the many notable leaders who once received their education in pesantren. Moreover, Indonesia's first president, Ir. Soekarno, is also mentioned as having had a particular closeness to pesantren during the early years of independence [9]. The significance of pesantren's role remains evident to this day. In contemporary political discourse, the electoral base of pesantren communities is still frequently contested by politicians during election campaigns. As the oldest Islamic educational institution, pesantren holds a deep-rooted historical transmission whose traces can be traced back to the early period of Islamic dissemination in Java. This raises the question: what, then, were the initial milestones in the development of pesantren in Indonesia?

The first opinion, according to C.C. Berg, states that the term pesantren originates from the Indian word Shastri, which refers to those who are knowledgeable about the sacred Hindu scriptures or

scholars of Hindu holy texts. The word Shastri itself derives from Shastra, meaning small books, religious texts, or knowledge. From an etymological perspective, this suggests that the term pesantren may have undergone a process of linguistic adoption from Indian culture during the early stages of cultural interaction in the Indonesian archipelago, long before the arrival of Islam. The second opinion views pesantren as a historical creation of the Indonesian people after encountering pre-Islamic cultural influences. In this context, pesantren is understood as an Islamic educational institution that developed organically within Nusantara society, combining local elements such as the dormitory system (pondok), the close relationship between teacher and student (kiai and santri), and traditional teaching methods centered on classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning).

The third opinion argues that pesantren was adopted from Islamic educational institutions in the Middle East, yet it challenges the notion that pesantren is merely a direct adoption of Middle Eastern institutions without considering Indonesia's local cultural context. From this perspective, while Middle Eastern Islamic educational models influenced the development of pesantren, Indonesian pesantren acquired unique characteristics shaped by local social, cultural, and historical contexts that predated the arrival of Islam. Thus, pesantren should not be regarded as a mere replica of Middle Eastern models but rather as the result of adaptation and acculturation between Islamic values and local wisdom that had existed in Indonesia prior to the advent of Islam. Nevertheless, the question of who first established pesantren remains a subject of debate among scholars and historians to this day [10].

It is believed that pesantren, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, have existed in Indonesia since the 15th century. The pesantren was first introduced by Sheikh Maulana Malik Ibrahim, an Islamic preacher from Gujarat, who played an important role in laying the foundation for the establishment of pesantren in the archipelago. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, in his work Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, mentions that Sheikh Maulana Malik Ibrahim, known as Sunan Gresik, was one of the most dedicated Islamic preachers. He is even noted to have made repeated attempts to persuade the Hindu-Buddhist king of Majapahit, Wikramawardhana, to embrace Islam. Nevertheless, historians argue that the pesantren initiated by Sunan Gresik at that time did not yet possess a clear structure or system. A more concrete form of pesantren is believed to have been established later by his son, Raden Rahmat, known as Sunan Ampel, who founded Pesantren Kembang Kuning in the Surabaya region. The establishment of Sunan Ampel's pesantren was supported by the social conditions of Javanese society, which at that time had become more open and tolerant toward new teachings.

In its early development, pesantren emphasized not only educational missions but also da'wah simultaneously. Muhammad Hasan, in his study The Development of Pesantren Education in Indonesia, explains that educational institutions in Indonesia consistently sought locations that could effectively support da'wah activities in a targeted manner. This strategy was intended to avoid potential conflicts between the values promoted by pesantren and the values deeply rooted within local communities. Nevertheless, pesantren adopted a defensive approach in preserving its core values, as its primary orientation was the provision of education. This approach proved effective in ensuring the acceptance of pesantren within surrounding communities, particularly among those who embraced Islam [11].

Nevertheless, the emergence of pesantren in Java eventually drew the attention of the Dutch colonial government. In 1882, the Dutch established the Priesterraad (Council of Priests) tasked with monitoring religious teachings within pesantren. However, this measure failed to curtail the influence of pesantren. In fact, as pesantren continued to develop across the archipelago, they produced numerous scholars who played a significant role in the advancement of Islamic teachings in subsequent periods. Notably, the two founders of Indonesia's largest Islamic mass organizations—KH Hasyim Asy'ari, the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and KH Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah—were both raised and nurtured within the pesantren tradition [12].

Upon returning from the Holy Land, many of these scholars continued the tradition by establishing their own pesantren. Before founding Nahdlatul Ulama, KH Hasyim Asy'ari had first established a pesantren in Tebuireng, Jombang, East Java, in 1899. This initiative was driven by his deep concern over the social conditions of the surrounding community at the time, which he perceived as being far removed from religious values. To address this, KH Hasyim Asy'ari purchased a building previously used by local residents for activities prohibited by religion and transformed it into a pesantren.

After the Dutch withdrew from the archipelago, the Japanese occupation government initially clashed with pesantren clerics. The conflict arose from the kiai's rejection of the saikerei tradition, a ritual of bowing 90 degrees toward Tokyo every morning at 7 a.m. as a form of respect to Emperor Tenno Heika, believed to be a descendant of the goddess Amaterasu. Due to this refusal, several kiai and ulama were arrested and imprisoned by the Japanese. This, in turn, sparked resistance among the santri, who opposed the detention of their teachers. Realizing the immense influence of pesantren clerics, the Japanese occupation authorities eventually decided to release the detained kiai. Following this incident, the Japanese no longer dared to interfere with pesantren activities.

After the proclamation of independence was declared by Ir. Soekarno and Moh. Hatta, the role of pesantren as one of the frontlines in defending independence became increasingly evident. Pesantren clerics, including KH Hasyim Asy'ari, were reported to be among the places where Bung Karno confided his concerns about the nation's fate during the early days of independence. It is said that the Proclaimer once sent envoys to the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School to seek the kiai's views regarding the arrival of Allied forces in Indonesia. The santri were also actively involved in defending Indonesia's independence, even forming several resistance militias, such as Laskar

Hizbullah. Their participation was driven by the jihad resolution proclaimed by Nahdlatul Ulama's central board under the leadership of KH Hasyim Asy'ari.

After the series of physical confrontations ended and Indonesia was finally able to fully enjoy its independence, the country's education system began to develop in a freer and more democratic manner. However, this gradually threatened the existence of pesantren due to the emergence of government-recognized educational institutions that attracted greater public interest. Mujamil Qomar, in his work Pesantren dari Transformasi Metodologi Menuju Demokrasi Institusi, noted that during the 1950s many pesantren in Indonesia faced the threat of extinction, with only the larger ones managing to survive the waves of change at that time. The role of pesantren regained prominence in the 1970s as relations between the government and the Muslim community improved. During this period, various new types of pesantren emerged that applied more inclusive educational systems. Zamakhsyari Dhofier, in his book Tradisi Pesantren, categorized pesantren into two types: salafi pesantren, which maintained the teaching of classical Islamic texts as the core of their education, and khalafi pesantren, which incorporated general subjects into the madrasah curriculum or established general schools within the pesantren environment.

Ultimately, the role of pesantren as a vital pillar in advancing Islamic thought is undeniable. Beyond contributing to the development of religious knowledge, pesantren are also regarded as one of the indigenous educational institutions that played a significant role in fostering literacy and cultural awareness among society. In addition to their educational contributions, the role of pesantren in upholding the Republic cannot be underestimated. From within pesantren emerged many prominent figures who made significant contributions to nation-building. They were not only recognized as ulama or Kiai Haji (KH) but were also honored as national heroes for their contributions, including KH Hasyim Asyari, KH Ahmad Dahlan, KH Wahab Hasbullah, and KH Zainal Musthafa. To acknowledge the contributions and role of the santri, President Joko Widodo's administration officially designated October 22 as National Santri Day, commemorating the issuance of the Jihad Resolution, which became the driving force behind the santri's resistance in

defending Indonesia's independence [13].

2.History of Madrasah

Tracing the origins of pesantren is closely related to discussing the history of madrasahs and Islamic schools, as all three educational institutions share a religious nuance, with their primary focus being religious studies. Madrasahs were first introduced in the Islamic world during the 9th century in the Middle East, particularly in Baghdad and Cairo, serving as centers of learning that not only taught religious sciences but also other fields of knowledge such as mathematics, astronomy, and language. The development from pesantren to madrasah in Indonesia emerged in the early 19th to 20th centuries, driven by dissatisfaction with the pesantren system at the time, which was considered narrow and limited to the teaching of fardhu 'ain sciences. Two main factors underpinned the rise of the madrasah system in Indonesia: first, the influence of Islamic reform movements; and second, as a response to the educational policies of the Dutch East Indies.

As concrete evidence, in Banten, scholars from the community within the organization Mathla'ul Anwar (1916) established madrasahs as a foundation for fostering local literacy. In West Sumatra, a study group led by Sheikh Ibrahim Musa transformed the traditional halaqah into a madrasah called Madrasah Sumatra Thawwalib Parabek (1910 M). In Kalimantan, communities, teachers, and scholars united under the Persatuan Islam (1935 CE) made madrasahs the primary means of advancing the religious and social life of local people. Various other Islamic organizations such as Syarikat Islam, Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Persatuan Umat Islam also positioned madrasahs as a key institution in preparing an educated nation. For instance, Syarikat Islam established Madrasah Darussalam in Martapura (1914 M).

After Indonesia gained independence, the role of madrasahs did not simply diminish. They began adopting a more modern curriculum by integrating religious subjects with general lessons such as Mathematics, Language, and Science, influenced by the Western education system. This transformation started during the Japanese occupation when Japan promised to guide Indonesia toward independence and encouraged Indonesian leaders to form the BPUPKI, consisting of two groups: nationalists and religious figures.

The existence of these two groups gave rise to two options for Indonesia's foundation—whether to be established on the basis of religion or as a secular state. A compromise was eventually reached through the Jakarta Charter to bridge the differences between religion and state, though another challenge emerged during the formulation of Pancasila. From Pancasila, however, the Ministry of Religious Affairs was established, serving as the golden bridge for the birth of the Republic of Indonesia. The founding of this ministry was also a prerequisite for amending the first principle of Pancasila. Since then, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has developed its functions, including managing Islamic education, marriage, judiciary, and Hajj affairs. Consequently, madrasahs advanced further and expanded, eventually leading to the establishment of State Islamic Universities.

Even long before the existence of formal education, madrasahs had already served as an educational model for centuries. Well before UNESCO introduced the concept of lifelong learning or education for all, madrasahs had pioneered such an approach. They became centers of learning for all age groups, ranging from Raudhatul Athfal at the kindergarten level, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah for elementary school, Madrasah Tsanawiyah for junior high school, to Madrasah Aliyah for senior high school. All of these institutions issue state-recognized diplomas, allowing students to continue to higher levels of education. This educational concept reflects an inclusive learning system that emphasizes both character education and knowledge within a continuous framework, regardless of age or background [14].

3.History of Islamic Schools

In the early 16th century, the arrival of the Portuguese in Indonesia marked a new chapter in the history of education in the archipelago. In addition to trade, the Portuguese also carried out a mission to spread Catholicism, which became known as the "3G" (Gold, Glory, Gospel), combining the goals of seeking wealth (gold), glory (glory), and the propagation of religion (gospel). In 1536, Vasco da Gama and his troops took control of the Maluku region, where the first school in Ternate was established. This school was part of the Catholic missionary effort led by the renowned missionary Francis Xavier, who believed that in order to expand the influence of Catholicism, it was essential to establish schools that taught religious doctrine, reading, writing, and arithmetic.

However, by the late 16th century, Portuguese power in Indonesia came to an end due to numerous uprisings, and at that time, the Dutch arrived in the archipelago and began to take control of most regions of Indonesia. Unlike the Portuguese, who brought Catholic teachings, the Dutch through the VOC replaced Catholicism with Protestantism in the territories previously under Portuguese control. To support this goal, the Dutch established schools as a means of spreading Protestant teachings to the local population [15].

In 1607, the VOC established its first school in Ambon, which taught basic skills such as reading, writing, and praying. These schools were intended for indigenous children with the aim of producing a labor force that could serve Dutch interests. As teachers, the VOC appointed Dutch personnel to educate the local children. In 1617, the VOC also established a school to produce skilled workers who would later be employed by the Dutch colonial government in Batavia. The curriculum in VOC schools generally focused only on basic skills deemed essential for Dutch colonial administrative needs. Nevertheless, these schools did not fully reach all levels of society, particularly Muslim communities, who preferred religious education through pesantren.

During the Dutch colonial period, Islamic education in Indonesia continued through traditional institutions, namely pesantren, which served as centers for religious learning and moral development of the Muslim community. However, in the early 20th century, modern Islamic educational institutions such as madrasahs and formal Islamic schools began to emerge. Their establishment was a response to the changing times, the influence of Islamic reform movements, and the growing need for a more structured and systematic

educational system. These institutions not only taught religious sciences but also incorporated general subjects as an adaptation to the colonial education system and as an effort to enhance the competitiveness of Muslims in the fields of education and society. One of the earliest examples of such an Islamic school was Sekolah Adabiyah, founded by Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad in West Sumatra in 1909. These schools became the forerunners of modern Islamic schools that combined religious education with general knowledge, aiming to prepare the younger Muslim generation to face the modern world.

In addition, during the Dutch colonial period, several prominent figures in Islamic education emerged who fought for the advancement of Muslim education, such as Ki Hajar Dewantara, who played a vital role in introducing the concept of character-based education rooted in Indonesian local culture. He founded Taman Siswa, which aimed to provide more open, independent, and community-oriented education while integrating Islamic values into its curriculum. After Indonesia's independence in 1945, the government began to pay more serious attention to Islamic education. Modern Islamic education developed rapidly, with the establishment of many Islamic schools that focused on religious studies while also offering general subjects to prepare students

who were not only knowledgeable in religion but also capable of competing in professional fields. The modernization process of Islamic education continued, and Islamic schools began adopting curricula more aligned with public schools, enabling their students to master various subjects such as Mathematics, Indonesian Language, and Natural Sciences [16].

Islamic schools have also become increasingly integrated into the national education system through institutions that combine religious and general subjects. In the 1980s, many Islamic schools incorporated curricula that blended religious education with modern sciences to prepare students not only to master religious knowledge but also to acquire scientific understanding relevant to contemporary challenges. Moving further into the era of globalization and technological advancement, Islamic schools in Indonesia have increasingly adapted to the demands of the times. The use of information technology in the learning process has become an integral part of education in these schools, enabling the younger Muslim generation in Indonesia to be better prepared for global competition while consistently upholding religious values in all aspects of life.

Ultimately, the history of the development of Islamic schools in Indonesia reflects a long journey that began during the colonial period, marked by various changes and challenges. Islamic schools have continuously sought to balance religious instruction with general education to produce generations that are not only knowledgeable in religion but also well-prepared to face the challenges of the modern world. Today, Islamic schools in Indonesia have become an important choice for many parents who wish to provide their children with an education grounded in strong Islamic principles while remaining relevant to the needs of an ever-evolving world.

Looking back, this significant shift occurred when Japan occupied Indonesia during World War II. Although their rule lasted only three years (1942–1945), the Japanese administration left a notable influence on education. One of Japan's legacies was the introduction of a culture of discipline through marching drills taught in schools. Japan also emphasized the importance of nationalism and discipline in the education system they implemented, even though this influence did not last long after Japan's defeat and the end of its occupation in Indonesia. The drills instilled discipline and order, which later became part of learning practices in various schools across Indonesia. In addition, Japan introduced the value of nationalism into the educational curriculum. However, despite the strong influence of Japan on education during that period, it only endured briefly, ending with Japan's defeat and the conclusion of its colonial rule in 1945. With the end of Japanese occupation, Indonesia entered the era of independence, which was followed by the establishment of a national education system that focused more on character building and the advancement of education throughout the country.

After Indonesia gained independence in 1945, the government began to give more serious attention to Islamic education. Islamic schools grew significantly, while at the same time, general education also became increasingly accepted by society. By the 1980s, the Islamic education system had become more integrated with the national education system, allowing Indonesia's younger generation to access education that was not only religion-based but also equipped them with knowledge relevant to the needs of an increasingly developing world. In the late 1980s, integrated Islamic schools began to

emerge in Indonesia, a concept of Islamic education initiated by campus da'wah activists from various state universities across the country..

Indonesia then became increasingly eager to reform the dichotomous secular education system, which separated religious education from general or secular education, leading to the establishment of integrated Islamic education in the country. This shift was driven by the fact that graduates of the previous system were unable to adequately address contemporary challenges and societal needs. Public schools primarily equipped students with general knowledge that was distant from Islamic values. Consequently, Islamic schools began adopting curricula that combined religious education with general sciences, enabling the creation of a generation that balances

worldly skills with religious understanding. Islamic schools in Indonesia have since grown rapidly and become the choice of many parents who wish to provide their children with an education rooted in strong Islamic principles while remaining aligned with the demands of modern times.

In the era of globalization, Islamic schools continue to adapt to the changing times by utilizing technology to support the learning process and preparing students to face an increasingly competitive world. With the growing openness and modernization of Islamic education in Indonesia, these schools now not only teach religious knowledge but also cultivate academic abilities that are on par with those of general schools [17].

B.Challenges of Pesantren, Madrasah, and Islamic Schools in Facing Globalization in the Education Sector

1.Challenges of Pesantren, Madrasah, and Islamic Schools in Facing Globalization in the Education Sector

In the book Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah (Karel Steenbrink), various challenges faced by pesantren in responding to the needs of the times are highlighted. First, pesantren are required to develop the identity of santri so that they remain relevant to Islamic values while being adaptive to contemporary developments. Second, they must harmonize structural and cultural work to strengthen the uniqueness of pesantren as tradition-based educational institutions, with particular attention to quality assurance in education. Third, financial independence is a crucial issue that must be well-managed to ensure pesantren are not overly dependent on external aid but capable of managing and developing their own resources. The capacity of human resources, especially teachers and administrators, also needs to be enhanced so they can play an active role in educational transformation. Fourth, pesantren must maintain a balance between religious education and contemporary knowledge to ensure their graduates are not left behind in the modern era. Fifth, they are challenged to instill skills relevant to the era of Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0, enabling pesantren graduates to be competitive in an ever-changing world of work and society [18].

2.Problems of Islamic Education in Madrasahs

Along with the development of education in Indonesia, madrasahs as Islamic educational institutions also face a number of significant challenges. Although they play an important role in shaping future generations based on Islamic values, madrasahs must adapt to various social, economic, and national education policy changes. Some of the problems faced by madrasahs in realizing the goals of quality education include:

First, after independence, madrasah diplomas did not have the same value as those issued by public schools under the Ministry of Education and Culture. This inequality affected the social recognition of madrasah graduates, who were often considered less competitive in the job market or higher education. Second, following the issuance of the Joint Decree of the Three Ministers in 1975, various challenges emerged, particularly regarding the quality and quantity of educators. Many madrasahs lacked competent teachers, and their learning hours were also more limited compared to public schools. This situation was further exacerbated by differences in management systems between public schools and madrasahs, leading to significant gaps, especially in the recruitment and distribution of teachers. Third, after the enactment of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, madrasahs faced both internal and external issues. Internal problems such as management, curriculum, and learning quality had not been fully resolved. Meanwhile, externally, madrasahs continued to face discriminatory attitudes that did not provide equal treatment with public schools. Therefore, madrasahs need to establish clear policies and strategies to enhance their competitiveness and broaden their reach,

particularly among the middle to upper-class Muslim communities who tend to send their children to public schools. These problems highlight the importance of comprehensive reforms in the

madrasah education system so that it can stand on par with other formal education institutions and continue to contribute significantly to national development [19].

3.Problems of Islamic Education in Schools

Islamic education in schools in Indonesia also faces a number of challenges that must be addressed to achieve its goals effectively. Several issues often arise in relation to curriculum, teaching methods, and students' interaction with religious subjects, alongside other factors influencing the effectiveness of Islamic learning in schools. First, many students lack interest in religious education due to monotonous methods that fail to connect with real-life contexts, leading to a shallow internalization of Islamic values. Second, the dominance of cognitive approaches makes religious education focus mainly on memorization and theory rather than understanding and practice, creating a gap between knowledge and behavior. Third, the partial teaching approach results in religious subjects being disconnected from other disciplines, preventing students from seeing the relevance of Islam in social and scientific contexts. Fourth, the lack of resources, engaging media, and supporting technology makes learning appear monotonous and less contextual. Fifth, the evaluation system places more emphasis on cognitive aspects through written exams, while neglecting affective and psychomotor dimensions that are crucial for shaping Islamic character. Thus, the problems of Islamic education in schools are not only rooted in curriculum but also involve approaches, facilities, and evaluation systems that need to be reviewed to ensure religious education fosters holistic student development in line with contemporary challenges [20].

C.Synergy Among Educational Institutions in Creating Quality Education Relevant to the Needs of the Times

1.Islamic Boarding Schools (Pesantren)

It is interesting to observe that the pesantren education system is not static but continuously develops in line with societal changes. Similarly, madrasahs and Islamic schools in Indonesia consistently make innovations to maintain their existence. According to Mastuhu, these reforms encompass three aspects: efforts to improve the pesantren education system, adjustments to the Western education system, and attempts to bridge the gap between the traditional pesantren system and the Western education model.

In the context of pesantren, the approach used to create education that is relevant to contemporary needs is the application of the Ecological Model of Curriculum. This model presents a holistic approach to shaping well-rounded students. The ideal santri are not only Muslims by identity but also believers (mukmin) and doers of good (muhsin), possessing noble character, knowledge, faith, and righteous deeds. The model integrates formal, informal, and hidden curricula. The formal curriculum focuses on classroom learning such as Islamic studies, humanities, and sciences; the informal curriculum includes activities in dormitories and student organizations; while the hidden curriculum encompasses values instilled through relationships among members of the pesantren community.

The challenge of this model lies in how pesantren can manage and synergize various systems, ranging from the microsystem (direct interactions in learning activities and student organizations), mesosystem (relationships among components such as teachers, students, and administrators), exosystem (support from administration, teacher organizations, and the pesantren's relationship with families), to the macrosystem, which reflects the fundamental values and worldview of Islam. All of these systems operate within the framework of time (chronosystem), meaning that pesantren must be able to adapt to the dynamics of the era without losing their core values. Therefore, this system aims to enable pesantren to maintain a balance between traditional values and the needs of the modern era through a comprehensive, structured, and contextual curriculum approach [20].

As stated by Nurcholish Madjid, he emphasized that pesantren should maintain their primary

function as religious educational institutions. However, he also proposed the need for renewal in teachings so that religious instruction remains relevant and can provide comprehensive answers to the modern challenges faced by students. This is important to ensure that pesantren not only preserve tradition but also revive the

contextual spiritual meaning in the lives of their students. The proposed approach is that pesantren must equip students with practical skills to face life's challenges, both in terms of religion and science and technology. This means that education in pesantren should also be complemented with adequate general knowledge as life provisions. Nurcholish Madjid stressed that the synthesis between spiritual excellence and mastery of knowledge will position pesantren not only as institutions that safeguard heritage but also as centers that produce generations ready to face the future.

These proposals as a whole illustrate how pesantren are at a critical point, needing to continuously adapt without losing their identity as Islamic educational institutions that remain rooted in religious values while being responsive to contemporary challenges. Pesantren must cultivate a strong student identity, not only in spiritual and moral aspects but also in confronting the demands of modern times. Harmonization between structural and cultural efforts is essential to ensure pesantren retain their distinctiveness without losing relevance. Moreover, quality assurance, financial independence, human resource capacity building, and the ability to balance religious education with contemporary knowledge present significant challenges. Pesantren are also required to equip students with skills relevant to the era of Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0, so that they are not left behind in global competition [21].

Ultimately, as explained in the thought of Nurcholish Madjid, pesantren must maintain their primary function as religious educational institutions while being able to reformulate their teaching approaches to remain relevant to the times. Pesantren should be responsive to the real-life demands of students so that they become not only pious individuals but also competitive in the wider world. Therefore, the integration of traditional values and modern knowledge is indispensable. In this context, the typology of pesantren has evolved as a response to social dynamics and contemporary needs, resulting in three main variations: traditional pesantren (salaf), modern pesantren (khalaf), and comprehensive pesantren (syāmilī). Each type carries its own strengths and challenges. Salaf pesantren face difficulties in contextualizing classical learning within the present era, while modern pesantren risk losing the authenticity of classical scholarly traditions if they overly prioritize the national curriculum. Meanwhile, comprehensive pesantren face the challenge of balancing these two approaches in order to remain relevant without losing their identity. Thus, the challenges of pesantren are not merely technical but also involve broader strategic efforts to preserve tradition, respond to modernity, and prepare graduates who are both religious and professionally competent.

2.Madrasah

To address the challenges faced by Islamic education in madrasahs, as outlined in the previous chapters—such as teacher quality disparities, differences in management compared to general schools, and the weak legitimacy of diplomas—Daulay's perspective offers a targeted solution. According to Daulay, madrasahs can be classified into three types based on their curriculum: Madrasah Diniyah, Madrasah Umum, and Madrasah Keagamaan. Each type of madrasah possesses a distinctive curricular approach, which can serve as a strength in tackling the various challenges they encounter.

Firstly, Madrasah Diniyah, which focuses on foundational Islamic religious education, strengthens students' early religious grounding. Its curriculum, encompassing religious studies as well as basic skills such as writing, drawing, and arithmetic, ensures a uniform level of basic competencies, addressing the educational gap between madrasahs and general schools. Secondly, general madrasahs, covering the Ibtidaiyah, Tsanawiyah, and Aliyah levels, have undergone significant

development to balance religious and general education curricula. This curricular reform aims to produce graduates who are not only devout but also academically and professionally competent in the global era. As part of this development, madrasahs have been formulated into specific models tailored to contemporary challenges. For instance, to cultivate Muslim students excelling in science and technology, the Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Insan Cendekia integrates Islamic curricula with a research-based scientific approach. Meanwhile, to meet industrial, entrepreneurial, and modern economic demands, vocational madrasahs have been developed to equip students with technical skills such as business management, Islamic finance, information technology, and various hands-on skills. By incorporating instruction in Indonesian, foreign languages (such as English and Arabic), natural sciences, and practical education, general madrasahs today function as educational institutions capable of producing highly

competitive graduates for the workforce while maintaining their religious identity. This innovation also responds to the requirements of the National Education System Law (UU Sisdiknas) and the need for an inclusive, adaptive education system. Thirdly, Madrasah Keagamaan, which emphasizes advanced religious studies, addresses the challenge of madrasah segmentation that appeals only to certain groups. With curricula deepening in Qur'anic exegesis, Hadith, Fiqh, Arabic language, and Islamic history, this type of madrasah serves as a center of Islamic scholarly excellence, fulfilling society's demand for competent ulama and Muslim intellectuals.

With a clear classification system and curriculum as proposed by Daulay, madrasahs can operate with greater focus and professionalism. This strategy helps reduce quality disparities, improve management, and enhance the legitimacy of diplomas as well as public trust in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. In essence, madrasahs are formal schools that offer unique advantages, not only developing students' skills but also shaping their character to be courteous and appreciative of diversity. Today, with support from the government, society, and the private sector, approximately 76,000 madrasahs have been revitalized: buildings renovated, human resources trained, and management improved, transforming them into dynamic educational institutions. Madrasahs are poised to become authoritative centers of learning, continuing centuries-old traditions and producing well-rounded national leaders [22].

3.Islamic Schools

To address the various challenges faced by Islamic schools—particularly in improving educational quality, achieving a balance between religious and general knowledge, and embracing contemporary dynamics—the Islamic Boarding School model was established as an integrative solution. This model aims to nurture students who excel academically while also possessing moral integrity, Islamic spirituality, and life independence. The concept of Islamic boarding schools is not foreign in Indonesia's educational tradition, as the boarding system has long been practiced by traditional pesantren. However, by the mid-1990s, concerns began to emerge in society regarding the fragmentation of educational systems. Public schools were often seen as overly secular and neglectful of spiritual values, while pesantren were perceived as too exclusive in their religious approach and less responsive to advancements in science and technology. Within this context, Islamic Boarding Schools emerged as a synthesis between the strengths of public school curricula and the spiritual and character formation of pesantren. These institutions integrate modern pedagogical approaches with intensive Islamic guidance while instilling values of leadership, responsibility, and national insight. Thus, Islamic Boarding Schools represent a contemporary innovation in Islamic education that remains adaptive to the challenges of the times while staying firmly rooted in Islamic core values.

In addition, this model serves as a holistic alternative, as it not only teaches science and general knowledge but also strengthens religious education and character formation. With students residing in dormitories, the learning process takes place intensively throughout the day, creating an integration of academic, spiritual, and social aspects. This directly addresses previously identified challenges, such as weak curriculum integration, lack of role models, and unequal quality

of facilities and infrastructure in Islamic education. Therefore, the development of Islamic schools with a modern boarding school concept constitutes a strategic response to the need for an excellent, inclusive, and adaptive model of Islamic education in the global era [23].

Conclusion

In facing the increasingly complex challenges of the times, Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia (pesantren, madrasahs, and Islamic schools) must work in synergy to create an education system that is high in quality, relevant to global developments, and firmly rooted in religious values. Each institution possesses its own strengths and challenges, yet when united in a structured collaboration, they can complement and strengthen one another.

Pesantren, with an ecological curriculum approach that integrates formal, informal, and hidden education, holds great potential in shaping students' character and faith. However, to remain relevant in the era of globalization, pesantren need to renew their curricula, enhance managerial capacity, and adapt teaching methods to maintain a balance between tradition and contemporary needs. Madrasahs, in their various forms (diniyah, general, and religious), can contribute by strengthening the foundations of religious education on one hand, while also providing general knowledge and skills on the other. In addressing the challenges faced by madrasahs, classification and improvements in teaching quality are key to ensuring that graduates are competent and competitive, both in the job market and in mastering religious knowledge. Meanwhile, Islamic schools with a boarding school concept offer a holistic solution by combining general and religious education within a supportive system. This model emphasizes not only academic achievement but also character building and spirituality, which are crucial for the younger generation amidst the pressures of globalization.

By synergizing these three institutions (pesantren, madrasahs, and Islamic schools), Islamic education in Indonesia can become more holistic, inclusive, and adaptive. This synergy will produce a generation that not only excels in religious knowledge but also possesses the skills and competencies required by the demands of the times. Through mutually supportive collaboration in curriculum, teaching quality, facilities, and character values, these Islamic educational institutions can produce graduates who are ready to make positive contributions both nationally and globally.

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