



## ISLAMIC EDUCATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN INSTILLING RELIGIOUS MODERATION VALUES AT DARUSSALAM GONTOR ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL

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### Abstract:

The issue of radicalism is often associated with religious education, including that conducted in boarding school. However, boarding school also play a strategic role in instilling religious moderation values that are relevant to building a harmonious and tolerant society. This study aims to analyze Islamic education management strategies in instilling religious moderation values at Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School. The research uses a qualitative method with a field study approach. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, then analyzed descriptively-analytically. The theoretical framework used is the four indicators of religious moderation formulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, namely tolerance, national commitment, anti-radicalism, and accommodation to local culture. The results showed that Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School implemented an integrated curriculum-based education management strategy and habituation approach. First, the value of tolerance and national commitment is instilled through multiculturalism-based learning and strengthening of national insight. Second, the value of anti-radicalism is taught through balanced religious understanding (*wasathiyah*) and religious-humanist character building. Third, accommodation to local culture is realized through the integration of pesantren culture with local wisdom in learning activities and the daily life of students.

**Keywords:** *Religious Moderation, Islamic Education Management, Islamic Boarding School*

### INTRODUCTION

Boarding school is one of the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia that plays an important role in producing generations with Islamic character. Since its establishment, the pesantren has been known for its peaceful, tolerant, and moderate religious character. Boarding School also plays a major role in building harmony between Islamic values and the local culture of Indonesian society. In various regions such as Java, Sumatra, and Kalimantan, boarding school succeeded in harmonizing Islamic teachings with local traditions, thus creating an accommodating and pluralist model of religious education.

However, in recent decades, the issue of radicalism in the name of religion has become a serious concern in Indonesia . This phenomenon has stigmatized boarding school, as if they are places that support the spread of radical ideology. This fact is very contrary to the purpose and character of boarding school education, which basically prioritizes the values of moderation, tolerance, and peace. In this context, the Indonesian government seeks to strengthen the image of boarding school as a moderate Islamic education center through Law No. 18 Year 2019 on boarding school . This law not only recognizes the existence of boarding school but also affirms their function as institutions of education, da'wah, and community empowerment.

Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School is one of the major Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia known for its modern approach to education while maintaining Islamic traditions . This boarding school instills religious moderation values in every aspect of its management, both through the education curriculum, Islamic values habituation, and social activities. The educational management strategy implemented by Gontor is one of the key factors in shaping the character of students who are religious, tolerant, and have a national commitment.

This study aims to analyze the Islamic education management strategies implemented at the Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School in instilling religious moderation values. By referring to the indicators of religious moderation formulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, namely tolerance, national commitment, anti-radicalism, and accommodation to local culture, this research is expected to make theoretical and practical contributions in strengthening the role of boarding school as a stronghold of religious moderation in Indonesia.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a field study method to analyze Islamic education management strategies in instilling religious moderation values at Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School . This research is descriptive-analytical, focusing on the implementation of educational strategies that support religious moderation values based on four indicators formulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, namely tolerance, national commitment, anti-radicalism, and accommodation to local culture. The research was conducted at the Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School, Ponorogo, East Java, which was chosen because it has a reputation as one of the leading boarding school in integrating religious moderation values in its education system.

The research subjects included boarding school caregivers (kyai), leaders of educational institutions, teachers, and students. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with caregivers and educators, participatory observation of educational activities and boarding school life, and analysis of official documents such as curriculum, boarding school rules, and learning modules. The data obtained were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validation was conducted through triangulation of sources, methods, and data to ensure the validity of the information collected .

With this approach, the research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive description of the Islamic education management strategies implemented at Darussalam Gontor Islamic boarding school in instilling religious moderation values, as well as their relevance to the moderation indicators formulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of

Indonesia.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Islamic education management strategies play a central role in instilling religious moderation values that are in line with the four indicators of religious moderation formulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, namely national commitment, tolerance, non-violence (radicalism), and accommodation to local culture . This strategy includes an integrated curriculum-based managerial approach, habituation, and character building of santri through various pesantren programs and activities.

First, National Commitment. Gontor consistently integrates nationality education in the learning curriculum. The values of national commitment are taught through civic education and Islamic history lessons that emphasize the importance of unity, integration, and loyalty to the Indonesian nation . Students are encouraged to understand that practicing religious teachings does not contradict national values, as it is stated that carrying out obligations as a citizen is a manifestation of practicing religious teachings. This is reflected in various state ceremonies, the raising of the red and white flag, and respect for symbols of nationalism. Another strategy implemented is thematic discussion activities and seminars that discuss national issues from an Islamic perspective. The boarding school also formed intra- boarding school organizations such as the boarding school version of OSIS (Intra-School Student Organization) which they called OPPM (Pondok Modern Student Organization) , where students learn democratic practices based on Islamic values.

Second, Tolerance. Darussalam Gontor Islamic boarding school instills an attitude of tolerance through educational patterns that encourage students to be open to differences . The multiculturalism program is an important part of learning, where students from various ethnic, cultural, and regional backgrounds live together in one boarding school community . This diversity naturally trains them to appreciate differences and resolve conflicts in a wise way. In the context of intra-religious tolerance, Gontor promotes an inclusive Islamic approach, teaching students to respect different religious schools and views. Scientific discussion forums in boarding school also open space for students to dialogue about diversity in Islam in a healthy and constructive way.

Third, Anti-Violence (Radicalism). Gontor instills anti-radicalism values through wasathiyah (middle way) based education . The santri are educated to understand Islamic teachings essentially and contextually, so that they are not trapped in rigid or liberal interpretations. The moral education curriculum in pesantren emphasizes the qualities of compassion, mutual assistance, and avoiding violence in any form . In addition, boarding school actively conduct counter narrative programs against radical ideologies. This activity is in the form of religious lectures, soft skills training, and the introduction of digital literacy to equip santri to filter information that has the potential to provoke radical actions.

Fourth, Accommodative to Local Culture, Gontor shows an accommodative attitude towards local culture through a cultural integration approach. Pesantren activities such as the celebration of the Prophet's Maulid, commemoration of Islamic holidays, and cultural arts activities that combine local traditions with Islamic values become part of students life . This strengthens the relationship between religious teachings and local wisdom that has long been rooted in Indonesian society. In addition, santri are invited to understand that cultural diversity is the wealth of the nation that does not conflict with Islamic principles as long as it does not violate the main teachings. Gontor is also active in establishing relationships with the surrounding community through

community service activities that prioritize the spirit of togetherness.

The Islamic education management strategy implemented in Gontor has proven to be able to create an environment that supports the internalization of religious moderation values. The four indicators of religious moderation become the basic principles in formulating educational policies in pesantren, ranging from curriculum, habituation activities, to patterns of social interaction in the pesantren environment. With this approach, Gontor not only produces graduates who are intellectually intelligent, but also have moderate characters that are relevant to the needs of national and religious life in Indonesia. Although this strategy has worked well, challenges remain, especially in dealing with the influence of radicalism from digital media and modern social interactions. Therefore, Gontor continues to prioritize independence in formulating educational policies based on moderate Islamic values, strengthening supervision of learning activities, and instilling an intellectual tradition that emphasizes the principles of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin as the foundation of religious moderation in boarding school.

Darussalam Gontor implements an education management strategy that focuses on integrating religious moderation values through an integrated curriculum and learning activities. The curriculum at Gontor is designed to combine religious and general education in one unit, known as an integrated curriculum. This strategy allows santri to gain a deep understanding of religion as well as broad national insight. For example, Fiqh and Tafsir lessons are delivered together with civic education and history, thus creating harmony between Islamic teachings and national values.

The value of tolerance is taught through cross-perspective dialog in discussion forums, deliberations, and debates that are often held in pesantren. Nationalism commitment is instilled through nationalism programs such as flag ceremonies, introduction to Pancasila values, and active involvement in commemorating major holidays. The value of anti-radicalism is strengthened through character education that focuses on wasathiyah (moderate) teachings and digital information filters, to counter extremism narratives that often target the younger generation.

The implementation of religious moderation values in Gontor is reflected in the daily life of santri. The attitude of tolerance is manifested in the pattern of interaction between santri who come from diverse cultural, ethnic, and regional backgrounds. Life in the dormitory is an effective means to train santri to coexist with differences, both in terms of traditions and daily habits. In addition, collective activities such as community service, sports, and joint recitation also strengthen the value of togetherness and tolerance among students. National commitment is internalized through activities such as thematic discussions on the role of santri in maintaining national unity, as well as community service activities around the pesantren that involve santri in village development. Meanwhile, the anti-radicalism attitude is applied through teaching that emphasizes contextual and essential understanding of religion. The santri are invited to dialogue about actual issues such as radicalism and extremism in a constructive frame.

Openness to local culture is also an important part of life at Gontor. Santri are taught to understand that local traditions that do not conflict with religious teachings are part of the cultural wealth that needs to be appreciated, while still emphasizing the simplicity and universality of Islamic values in various learning activities and daily life.

Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School faces several challenges in integrating the values of religious moderation. One of the main challenges is the

influence of radicalism that spreads through digital media. A lot of misleading information can influence santri thinking if it is not filtered properly. In addition, the diversity of students backgrounds also has the potential to create internal conflicts that require a wise resolution approach.

However, this challenge also opens up opportunities for innovation. Gontor can utilize technology to strengthen digital literacy education and combat the narrative of extremism through positive content tailored to the values of religious moderation. Although the challenges of the times continue to evolve, Gontor remains consistent with an educational approach based on moderate Islamic values without relying on intensive external cooperation. The pesantren emphasizes internal strengthening, such as improving the quality of teachers and developing a curriculum that remains relevant to the dynamics of society. Efforts to sustain religious moderation in Gontor are realized through habituation of santri to simple Islamic life, constructive dialogue, and strengthening national insight in various aspects of formal and non-formal education.

This approach does not focus on adding new subjects, but rather on strengthening existing materials, which are designed to form the character of moderate, wise, and leader-like students. Openness and independence remain the main principles in every step of the reform, so that this pesantren is not only a model for other pesantren, but also an inspiration in maintaining harmony between Islamic tradition and the demands of modern life.

## **CONCLUSION**

Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School has successfully integrated the values of religious moderation in its education management through an integrated curriculum approach, dialog-based learning, and habituation in the daily life of santri. Moderation values such as tolerance, national commitment, anti-radicalism, and openness to local culture are practically realized through programs designed to educate santri to become moderate, open-minded, and nationalist individuals.

The educational management strategy at Gontor includes balanced religious teaching between textual and contextual, dialog across perspectives, and social activities that strengthen unity. The implementation of these values is seen in the daily lives of students through the habituation of cross-cultural interaction, nationalism activities, and community service. This approach not only strengthens the santri's Islamic identity, but also makes them tolerant and contributive agents of change in a multicultural society.

However, challenges such as the influence of digital radicalism and the diversity of santri backgrounds require adaptive management strategies. This opens up opportunities for Gontor to continue to innovate, for example through digital literacy, partnerships with external institutions, and curriculum updates that are relevant to the challenges of the times. With a strong commitment, Gontor can become a model for mainstreaming religious moderation for other boarding school in Indonesia, while contributing to strengthening social harmony and national integrity.

Overall, the integration of religious moderation values at Darussalam Gontor is a strategic step that not only supports the vision of Islamic education, but is also relevant in building an inclusive, peaceful, and just Indonesian society.

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