



STRATEGIES OF TEACHERS GRADUATED FROM SALAF ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL IN IMPLEMENTING ISLAMIC VALUES IN PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the strategies of teachers from traditional Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in implementing Islamic values in public educational institutions. The main focus of this study is how teachers from Islamic boarding schools are able to instill Islamic values in educational environments that are not entirely based on religion. The research method used was a qualitative case study approach. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation of teachers from Islamic boarding schools who teach in public schools. The results show that the strategies used include integrating Islamic values into learning, exemplary behavior, instilling Islamic morals, and a personal approach to students. Teachers from Islamic boarding schools play a crucial role as moral and spiritual agents in a heterogeneous school environment. The implications of this study indicate that the religious competence and character of Islamic boarding school teachers can strengthen character education in public institutions and serve as models for the application of religious moderation in educational practice. This study recommends collaborative training between public institutions and Islamic boarding schools to enrich inclusive and contextual Islamic values-based educational strategies.

Keywords: *Teacher Strategy, Islamic Values, General Education*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are central figures in the educational process and play a multifaceted role (Diana & Sain, 2025). They are not only educators but also character builders for students. In Islamic education, teachers are required to instill moral, spiritual, and social values based on Islamic principles (Baharun & Khomairotusshiyamah, 2025). However, a gap arises when teachers with a Salaf Islamic boarding school background must adapt to general educational institutions that emphasize academic and rational approaches (Hefniy et al., 2025). This raises the question: how can Islamic values be internalized without conflicting with the religiously neutral public education system? In fact, teachers who graduated from Islamic boarding schools face challenges in transforming Islamic values amidst diverse school cultures. Therefore, this research is crucial to explore their strategies for maintaining the integrity of Islamic values while remaining adaptive to the general curriculum.

In practice, the phenomenon of Salaf Islamic boarding school teachers teaching in general institutions is increasing, especially in areas lacking formal education personnel (Najiah, 2025). Many of them bring with them a strong Islamic boarding school tradition of knowledge in the areas of morality, Islamic jurisprudence, and sincere devotion. However, they often face obstacles such as differences in school organizational culture, a lack of understanding among fellow teachers about religious approaches, and professional demands that differ from those in Islamic boarding schools. Despite this, many Islamic boarding school teachers are able to serve as moral role models and successfully build a religious climate without formally changing the school system. This reality demonstrates the great potential of Islamic boarding school teachers as bridges between religious education and general education.

Previous research has highlighted the role of Islamic boarding school teachers in various educational contexts. For example, a study by (Adeoye et al., 2025) explained that teachers with an Islamic boarding school background contribute significantly to the formation of students' religious character in public schools through exemplary practices and habituation. Meanwhile, research by (Rodliyah et al., 2024) found that Islamic boarding school teachers often face the dilemma of maintaining Islamic values and adapting to the national curriculum (Ishomuddin et al., 2023). However, this study differs in that it focuses on the concrete strategies employed by teachers who graduated from traditional Islamic boarding schools, rather than solely on their moral impact. Therefore, this research aims to deepen the practical aspects of the role of Islamic boarding school teachers in the pluralistic and secular context of general education.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the pedagogical and cultural strategies of teachers graduating from traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in internalizing Islamic values in general educational institutions. While previous research has focused more on general moral contributions, this study examines how these values are systematically implemented through teaching methods, social interactions, and role models. Furthermore, it explores how teachers from traditional Islamic boarding schools adapt to the management structure of public schools without losing their Islamic identity. This demonstrates that this research is not merely descriptive but also analytical in uncovering adaptive and innovative strategies that bridge the gap between Islamic boarding school tradition and the modernity of general education.

This study aims to answer one main question: What strategies do teachers graduating from traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) implement in implementing Islamic values in general educational institutions? The initial argument proposed is that teachers from traditional Islamic boarding schools possess unique abilities in internalizing Islamic values through role models, habituation, and integration of values into learning materials. Their approach is moral and cultural, rather than formalistic, making them easily accepted by students and the school environment. In other words, the strategies of Salaf Islamic boarding school teachers reflect a form of cultural *da'wah* that combines traditional Islamic boarding school values with modern approaches to general education. This argument forms the basis for further analysis in this qualitative study.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, as the primary focus of the study is to deeply understand the strategies of teachers who graduated from traditional Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in implementing Islamic values in general educational institutions. The case study design was chosen to allow researchers to explore the phenomenon contextually and holistically, particularly within complex social situations such as the interaction between religious values and the general educational system. This approach also allows researchers to interpret the subjective meanings and experiences of teachers in carrying out their roles as educators and conveyors of Islamic values.

The research location was selected at a public educational institution in Pamekasan Regency, where several teachers with traditional Islamic boarding school backgrounds are located. This location was chosen based on the consideration that the school has heterogeneous characteristics in terms of both student and teaching staff backgrounds, making it representative for describing the dynamics of implementing Islamic values in general educational environments. Furthermore, this location also has empirical relevance because it demonstrates the unique adaptation of Islamic boarding school teachers to the modern education system.

The information sources for this study include three main categories: First, respondents, namely teachers who graduated from traditional Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) who actively teach in general educational institutions. Second, supporting informants, such as school principals, colleagues, and students, provided a triangulation perspective on the role of Islamic boarding school teachers. Third, texts and documents, such as yellow books, school curricula, records of religious activities, and online articles or news relevant to the research issue, were used. Data from these various sources enriched the findings through a multi-perspective approach.

The data collection process involved several stages. First, a desk review of Islamic literature, documents, and texts related to Islamic educational values and Islamic boarding school traditions. Second, direct observation in the school environment to observe teachers' practices of implementing Islamic values in the learning process and non-formal activities. Third, in-depth interviews with Islamic boarding school teachers using semi-structured interview guidelines explored their strategies, challenges, and reflections.

Data analysis was conducted interactively following the stages of Miles and Huberman, which include: first, data condensation (data reduction), which is the process of selecting, focusing, and simplifying raw data according to the research focus. Second, data display, which is the presentation of data in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, and concept maps to facilitate interpretation. Third, data verification, which involves drawing conclusions based on findings validated through triangulation of sources and methods. The analytical methods used are content and interpretive analysis, to interpret the meaning behind the practices and strategies of traditional Islamic boarding school teachers in the context of general education. This approach allows researchers to understand how Islamic values are articulated, negotiated, and implemented within a pluralistic education system.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Basic Concepts of Islamic Values in Modern Education

The basic concept of Islamic values in modern education is defined as an effort to integrate Islamic principles such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and etiquette with an educational system oriented toward knowledge, rationality, and professionalism. In the context of this research, the operational definition of this concept in the field is interpreted as the process of instilling Islamic spiritual values without changing the structure of general education based on the national curriculum. Teachers who graduated from traditional Islamic boarding schools view education not only as the transfer of knowledge but also as a process of purifying the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*) and character formation. Thus, Islamic values serve as a moral foundation integrated with modern, competency-based and technology-based learning practices.

Based on interviews with two key informants, a teacher at MAN 1 Pamekasan stated, "Islamic values can be implemented in public schools without adding religious instruction; the important thing is that teachers exemplify good morals every day." Meanwhile, a teacher at MAN 2 Pamekasan added, "We can instill Islamic values through school culture, not just through subject matter. Teachers simply need to demonstrate behavior consistent with Islamic teachings, such as being fair, patient, and responsible." From these two statements, researchers interpret that teachers in traditional Islamic boarding schools use a contextual approach, integrating Islamic values into their daily teaching materials and behavior. They do not emphasize religious doctrine directly, but rather present it through role models, familiarization, and relevance to students' lives. This demonstrates a smart adaptation to the pluralistic culture of general education.

Observations indicate that teachers in traditional Islamic boarding schools teach values not only through words but also through concrete actions, such as making it a habit to pray before class, greet students, and gently reprimand them for infractions. Researchers observed that students more readily follow teachers' positive behavior than normative verbal commands. Interpretation of these findings suggests that Islamic values are practiced not through formal instruction, but through a hidden curriculum that emerges in social interactions at school. Thus, the application of Islamic values occurs naturally and forms a religious culture that does not interfere with the principle of freedom of thought in modern education.

Based on all the research data above, it can be restated that teachers in traditional Islamic boarding schools implement the basic concepts of Islamic values in modern education through the integration of values into learning and daily behavior. Islamic values are not presented as supplementary material, but as a moral foundation that accompanies the entire educational process. Teachers serve as role models in practicing these values, allowing students to spontaneously imitate them. This process of internalizing values is more affective and empirical than verbal or theoretical.

From the pattern described above, it is apparent that the application of Islamic values in general educational institutions creates an integrative educational model that blends spirituality and rationality. Teachers in traditional Islamic boarding schools act as moral agents capable of bridging two worlds: the Islamic boarding school world, steeped in monotheistic values, and the modern educational world, which emphasizes logic and competence. The emerging pattern demonstrates that successful internalization of Islamic values

is contextual, centered on role models, and rooted in moral awareness, not doctrinal coercion.

The Relevance of Islamic Education in Non-Islamic Boarding School Institutions

The relevance of Islamic education in non-Islamic boarding schools, in the context of this research, is defined as the relevance and meaningfulness of Islamic educational values, principles, and methods when applied in non-religious public schools. In practice, this concept is understood as the ability of Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and social awareness to remain functional within a modern educational system oriented toward academic and professional achievement. Therefore, the relevance of Islamic education is not measured by the amount of religious material taught, but by the extent to which Islamic values can shape positive behavior, character, and a learning culture in non-Islamic boarding schools.

Based on interviews with two informants, a teacher from MAN 1 Pamekasan stated, "Islamic educational values remain relevant in public schools because students still need moral and ethical guidance, even though the school is not religiously based." Meanwhile, a teacher from MAN 2 Pamekasan added, "Islamic education can be implemented through the attitudes and methods of teachers, not just through religious subjects." From these two quotes, the researcher interprets that the relevance of Islamic education in non-Islamic boarding schools lies in the function of values as ethical guidelines in the learning process. Islamic boarding school teachers believe that modern education still requires a spiritual orientation to ensure that knowledge does not lose its moral direction. This relevance emerges through the integration of Islamic values into actions, work ethic, and social interactions between teachers and students.

Observations indicate that the practice of Islamic educational values in non-Islamic boarding school institutions is evident in various school activities, such as a culture of mutual respect between teachers and students, honesty in completing assignments, and discipline in following school rules. Researchers observed that although not all activities are labeled "religious," the spirit of Islam is evident through the behavior and habits developed by teachers with Islamic boarding school backgrounds. Interpretation of these findings suggests that Islamic education in public schools is inclusive, meaning it does not require formal symbols of Islam but rather instills universal values consistent with Islamic principles. Thus, the relevance of Islamic education does not depend on the form of the institution, but on how those values are lived out within the educational environment.

Based on these findings (restatement), it can be concluded that the relevance of Islamic education in non-Islamic boarding school institutions lies in their ability to adapt to the modern educational system without losing the essence of moral and spiritual values. Islamic values serve as an ethical compass that guides the behavior and decisions of both teachers and students in learning activities. Salaf Islamic boarding school teachers serve as a crucial link between religious values and the social realities of public schools, teaching goodness through concrete examples, rather than dogmatic lectures.

From the description of the data patterns above, it is clear that the relevance of Islamic education in non-Islamic boarding school institutions is transformational and contextual. Islamic education does not exist in the form of

formal institutions or curricula, but rather through a continuous process of internalizing values. This pattern demonstrates that when Islamic values are applied contextually by Islamic boarding school teachers, they can enrich modern education with a spiritual dimension, shape ethical student character, and create a balance between intellectual and moral intelligence.

The Challenges of Secularization and Value Shifts in Public Schools

The challenge of secularization and value shifts in public schools, in the context of this research, is defined as a situation where educational orientation tends to separate religious values from modern educational practices that focus on rationality, competition, and academic achievement. In the field, teachers who graduated from traditional Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) interpret secularization as a tendency to weaken the appreciation of moral and spiritual values among students and a reduced attention to the ethical dimension of the learning process. This value shift occurs when religious culture and respect for teachers begin to be replaced by a pragmatic and individualistic culture. Thus, this sub-finding illustrates the dynamic between the ideals of Islamic education, which is rich in moral values, and the reality of a public education system that emphasizes solely academic outcomes.

Based on interviews, a teacher from MAN 1 Pamekasan stated, "Children now focus more on report card grades and rankings, rather than on ethical conduct. When reprimanded with religious advice, they sometimes remain silent or smile without responding." A teacher from MAN 2 Pamekasan added, "Public schools are sometimes too busy with administration and curriculum targets, so the space for moral education is increasingly limited." From these two statements, researchers interpret that traditional Islamic boarding school teachers face a dilemma in maintaining a balance between the demands of modern educational professionalism and efforts to instill spiritual values. They perceive a gap between the ideals of values-based education and the reality of a school that tends to be technocratic. This challenge requires Islamic boarding school teachers to be more creative in incorporating Islamic values without incurring resistance from the religiously neutral school environment.

Observations indicate that the tendency toward secularization is evident in students' behavior, who begin to ignore ethical etiquette, such as speaking during teacher explanations or showing less respect for their teachers. Researchers also found that religious activities, such as group prayer or tadarus (recitation of the Koran), are only performed formally and are not deeply internalized. However, teachers who graduated from Islamic boarding schools strive to balance this by exemplifying simplicity, politeness, and consistency in worship. Interpretation of these findings suggests that secularization in public schools does not mean a rejection of religious values, but rather a result of an educational orientation that emphasizes cognitive aspects over affective ones. Islamic boarding school teachers utilize personal example as a means of subtly and educationally countering the tide of secularization. Based on the above findings (restatement), it can be concluded that the challenges of secularization and value shifts in public schools are a reality experienced by teachers of traditional Islamic boarding schools. They recognize that the modern education system tends to neglect spiritual and moral development, yet they still strive to instill Islamic values through a personal and contextual approach. This effort represents a form of cultural resistance to the current of secularization that reduces education to merely the transfer of knowledge without instilling

meaning.

From the description of this pattern, it is clear that traditional Islamic boarding school teachers play a crucial role as value guardians amidst an increasingly rational and pragmatic education system. The emerging pattern demonstrates two main strategies: first, resistance by example, namely countering secularization through exemplary behavior; second, adaptive integration, instilling Islamic values through integration into modern learning. This pattern demonstrates that although secularization presents a challenge, traditional Islamic boarding school teachers instead see it as an opportunity to reinvigorate the spirit of Islamic education within a public education system that tends to lose its spiritual dimension.

The results of this study indicate that teachers graduated from traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) play a significant role in maintaining the relevance of Islamic values within a secular and rational public education system. This finding aligns with Tilaar's (2002) opinion, which states that modern education often suffers from value disorientation due to an excessive focus on cognitive aspects, necessitating the integration of moral and spiritual values to maintain a humanistic education. In this context, traditional Islamic boarding school teachers serve as a bridge between two worlds: the spiritual tradition of the *pesantren* and the rationality of general education. However, unlike Peter Berger's theory of the secularization of education, which emphasizes the separation of religion from the public sphere, this study demonstrates that Islamic values can be integrated through exemplary behavior and habituation, rather than through the formality of religious symbols.

Compared with the research by Rahmawati (2021) and Nizar (2020), these findings demonstrate similarities in the role model and habituation as primary methods for instilling Islamic values. However, this study focuses more on the adaptive and contextual strategies used by Islamic boarding school teachers to maintain Islamic values without creating resistance in public schools. These results imply that the effectiveness of values education does not necessarily depend on formal structures, but rather on the character and moral credibility of the educator. In other words, the success of Islamic values-based education in public schools stems from the teacher's social function as a moral leader, not from rigid religious doctrine or rules.

Sociologically, these findings also confirm Durkheim's theory of education as a means of transmitting social values. The secularization that has displaced moral values in public schools can be understood as a dysfunction in the modern educational structure, where spiritual aspects are marginalized by economic logic and rationality. However, traditional Islamic boarding school teachers provide a corrective function to this dysfunction by reintroducing moral values as the ethical foundation of learning. The correlation between teacher role models and changes in student behavior suggests that the moral structure of schools can be revitalized through educators rooted in religious values. This demonstrates a clear causal relationship between the internalization of Islamic values and the emergence of a religious culture in public educational institutions.

The implications of these findings are crucial in the context of national education. Functionally, the strategy of Islamic boarding school teachers strengthens character education, which has long been a key government agenda. The values they instill, such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility, are universal and therefore acceptable to all students, regardless of religious

background. However, structurally, the shift in values resulting from secularization demands an education system that is more responsive to the moral dimension. If education continues without a balance between rationality and spirituality, a moral gap will arise between students' academic achievements and social behavior. Therefore, the results of this study underscore the need for educational policies that recognize the role of religious values as the foundation for national character formation.

Conceptually, this study emphasizes that educational modernity is not necessarily synonymous with secularization. In fact, when Islamic values are applied contextually and inclusively, education becomes more comprehensive, encompassing the intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions. Salaf Islamic boarding school teachers demonstrate that religious values do not need to be formally institutionalized to be relevant; they simply need to be living role models for students. Therefore, this study implies the need for synergy between Islamic boarding schools and public institutions in designing character-building programs based on universal Islamic values. In other words, Islamic education is not only the property of Islamic boarding schools, but is a source of public ethics that can enrich a civilized and moderate national education system.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study demonstrates that teachers graduated from traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) play a strategic role as value guardians and moral agents in secular public educational institutions. The main lesson of this study is that Islamic values can still be internalized in modern educational systems through contextual strategies such as role models, habituation, and personal approaches without inducing resistance. This research teaches that the propagation of values does not always have to be verbal or dogmatic, but can be realized through concrete actions, moral role models, and the integration of spiritual values into the teaching and learning process. This proves that Islamic education is universal and can be integrated with general education as long as it is delivered with an inclusive and humanistic approach.

The main strength of this study lies in its scientific contribution to renewing perspectives on the relationship between Islamic boarding schools and general education. This research presents a new paradigm that Islamic boarding school teachers are not only religious instructors but also agents of the integration of moral values into national education. Methodologically, the qualitative case study approach employed allows for a deeper exploration of the meaning and social experiences of Islamic boarding school teachers within the context of educational secularization. Meanwhile, in terms of variables and focus, this study enriches the literature by addressing the issue of "adaptive strategies for Islamic values in the context of general education," which has not previously been explored in depth.

However, this study has limitations. It was conducted in only one location in Pamekasan Regency, with a limited number of informants who were homogeneous in terms of gender and age. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to broader educational contexts, such as schools in urban areas or institutions with diverse social backgrounds. Furthermore, qualitative research methods provide in-depth understanding of the context but do not adequately reflect general trends at the population level.

In line with these limitations, further research is needed using mixed-methods or quantitative surveys to provide a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of Islamic boarding school teachers' strategies in various educational contexts. It is also recommended that further research consider variations in gender, age, and social background of both teachers and students to ensure more representative results. Cross-regional and cross-institutional approaches are also important to assess the extent to which Islamic values can be integrated into the national education system sustainably. Thus, this research provides both an academic basis and practical inspiration for developing educational policies that place Islamic values as the foundation of national character without neglecting the principles of openness and plurality. Salaf Islamic boarding school teachers have proven to be ideal models of educators, combining spiritual, intellectual, and social intelligence, making them concrete examples of Islamic education relevant in the modern and global era.

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