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# The Role of Islamic Boarding Schools in Preserving the Ahlusunnah Wal Jamaah Tradition in Society

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## **ABSTRACT**

Islamic boarding schools are one part of the various forms and types of educational institutions in Indonesia and there are so many of them. This research aims to examine the role of Islamic boarding schools in preserving the traditions of Ahlusunnah wal Jamaah in society. This research uses a library study approach by collecting data in the field or from eyewitnesses to events. The research results show that the religious traditions of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah that are commonly practiced in society include: Yasinan, Tahlilan, Maulid Nabi, Managiban, Istigosan (Tawasul). The steps taken by Islamic boarding schools to preserve these activities are: (1) Yasinan is carried out every Friday with the community in turns from house to house, (2) The Prophet's birthday is carried out by community Islamic boarding schools together by reading al barzanji simtu dhuror with hope. received the Prophet's intercession, (3) Managib activities are carried out by the Islamic boarding school together with each community once a week at the mosque or prayer room in the hope of seeking blessings and good role models from the ulama. previously, (4) The tradition of tawasul is still maintained by Islamic boarding schools together with the community, this activity is usually known as istigotsah, to get closer to Allah SWT through prayer, good deeds and pious people such as: prophets, friends, and guardians of Allah.

Keywords: Islamic boarding school; tradition; Public; Islamic Education

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Islamic boarding schools are one part of the various forms and types of educational institutions in Indonesia and there are so many of them. Islamic boarding schools already have strong roots in society, in their journey Islamic boarding schools are able to maintain and maintain their sustainability and have a multi-aspect educational model (Mufron, 2020). Santri have natural leadership, independence, simplicity, perseverance, togetherness, equality and other positive attitudes. Apart from being an educational institution for the community, Islamic boarding schools also function as da'wah and a forum for teaching religious knowledge and morals and as role models for the community in implementing Islamic teachings. (Masruroh & Wathoni, 2019).

Islamic boarding schools have traditions that are commonly practiced among the community, including: Yasinan and Tahlilan, Istigosah and tawasul, Birthday of

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the Prophet (Muludan), Al Barjanzi/Simtudhuror/Srokolan (Suriadi, 2019). Apart from that, the students in their practice of teaching directly try to practice these traditions in their daily lives, such as students having to memorize tahlil, learn the practice of marhabanan and shimtu Dhurror, study lectures with the aim of getting them used to practicing before going out into society. Apart from the Islamic boarding school, the surrounding community also does the same thing. Like the women's routine Friday recitation activities which are guided by the nyai mothers and Islamic boarding school ustadzahs, the women learn and practice various Islamic religious knowledge. This aims to ensure that people can learn about the role of Islamic boarding schools in maintaining these traditions, so that people can maintain and preserve their existence forever.

This traditional attitude ultimately gives rise to pros and cons among the Islamic community in general in recognizing this teaching. This is due to differences in views in taking sources of Islamic religious law. For people who do not know this tradition, they consider all deeds that were never carried out by the Prophet Muhammad SAW to be heretical and heretical because this tradition only existed after the death of the Prophet.

One of the traditional practices which is sometimes considered heretical is the activity of Yasin Tahlil and Wasilah Surah Al Fatihah to people. who have died, for people who don't do it they think this practice is a waste of practice because it was not done by the Prophet. However, for people who understand this tradition, they accept this tradition well which needs to be carried out because it can be a means and infrastructure for the intermediary community to pray for people who have died, because that is why those who understand the tradition continue to carry out and maintain the preservation of this tradition. In fact, it is not just ordinary people who practice this tradition, many kyai in Islamic boarding schools do it with the aim of seeking the grace and approval of Allah SWT.

#### **METHOD**

This research uses a library study approach by collecting data in the field or from eyewitnesses to events; data and text presented (Rukin, 2019). Using Miles and Huberman analysis with several stages as follows:



- 1. Reduction Data: Reducing data means summarizing, selecting the main things, focusing on important things related to the contribution of Islamic boarding schools to Islamic boarding school traditions.
- 2. Displaying Data: Displaying data in narrative text form to make it easier to understand problems that occur in the field.
- 3. Conclusion: drawing conclusions using the deductive method, namely drawing conclusions from general things to specific things.

#### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

## Islamic boarding school

There are several opinions regarding the origin of the word "Islamic boarding school", the word Islamic boarding school comes from the term "santri" which is derived from the Tamil language which means teacher of the Koran. The word santri comes from the Indian language "shastri" which means a person who has knowledge of the holy books (holy books). The word santri comes from the Tamil word "sattiri" which means a person who lives in a hut or public religious building (Aminudin et al., 2023). According to Prasodjo in Ismayani, Islamic boarding school is a place of non-traditional education and religious study, where a kiai imparts Islamic knowledge obtained from the works of Arabic-speaking medieval scholars to a body of students who usually live in an Islamic boarding school or dormitory (Ismayani et al., 2023).

According to Minarti, there are two types of Islamic boarding schools, namely:

- 1. Islamic boarding schools that maintain the Islamic education system in its original form. This Islamic boarding school does not have levels like the levels we know in schools (madrasah). The existing classes or groups are classified into the knowledge studied such as Tafsir, Figh, Nahwu, Sharaf study groups and so on.
- 2. Islamic boarding schools that adapt to the demands of the times and developments in the field of education. This Islamic boarding school organizes a madrasa system in educating its students in addition to reading the book as carried out by the first type of Islamic boarding school. Therefore, here there are levels of student learning such as: Ibtidaiyah, Tsanawiyah, Aliyah and even University levels. (Minarti, 2022).

Thus, Islamic boarding schools are educational institutions that have the following characteristics: kiai, santri, mosque, dormitory as a place to live and classical books as sources or learning materials.

## **Characteristics of Islamic Boarding Schools**

According to Budiyanto et al., (2022), stated that to differentiate between Islamic boarding school education and non-Islamic boarding school education, it is necessary to know the elements that must be fulfilled, namely:

## 1. There is a mosque

Mosques are an element that cannot be separated from Islamic boarding schools and are considered the right place to educate students, especially in the practice of five daily prayers, sermons, congregational prayers and recitation of the Yellow Book.

## 2. Learning the Yellow Book

In the past, the teaching of the Yellow Book, especially written by scholars of the Shafi'i school of thought, was the only formal recitation given in the Islamic boarding school environment.

#### 3. Student

According to the definition used in the Islamic boarding school environment, an 'alim person is only called a kyai if they already have a boarding

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school complete with students who live there to study the Yellow Book. Therefore, students are an important element in an Islamic boarding school institution.

#### 4. Kiai

Kyai is the most essential element of an Islamic boarding school. He is even said to be the person who founded the Islamic boarding school, owned it and mastered religious knowledge

## **Objectives of Islamic Boarding Schools**

According to Departemen Agama (2001), the learning objectives of the Islamic Boarding School are:

- 1. Human beings who serve God who are faithful and devout are implementers and supporters of the teachings of the Islamic religion as a whole.
- 2. a human servant of God who is mutafaqqih fiddin who plays the role of imamul muttagin. Leader and propagator of Islam in society.

According to Putra (2016), the aim of Islamic boarding school education, namely the formation of good people in this world and in the afterlife. Humans can achieve perfection if they are willing to try to seek knowledge and then practice fadillah through the knowledge they learn. Fadillah can then bring him closer to Allah and ultimately make him happy in life in this world and in the afterlife.

#### Tradition and Culture

Tradition can be understood as knowledge, doctrine, habits, practices, etc., which are passed down from generation to generation, including the way of conveying this knowledge, doctrine and practice. Azra said that traditions are customs that have been passed down from generation to generation and are still continuously carried out in society, in every place, or in different tribes (Azra, 2019). Tradition is the concept of a belief or behavior that is passed down from generation to generation. The concept of tradition can include language, religion, cuisine, social customs, music and art. Often, in practice, tradition is what is believed to be right or wrong. Tradition is the characteristics and knowledge of a certain group of people. Traditions are shared patterns of behavior that are passed down (Harahap, 2019; Fatmawati, 2020). Some Muslims explain that tradition (custom) is often identified with 'urf. 'Urf itself means a tradition or habit that is carried out repeatedly. The cultural phenomenon (tradition) is not a proposition that stands alone and will give birth to new legal products, but is merely an ornament to become the basis for universal Sharia laws and does not conflict diametrically with textual religious texts.

The marfu' hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Mas'ud through the sanad of Abu Daud, which is the basis for the rule above:

Meaning: What Muslims believe and view as good is also good in the sight of Allah" الْعَادَةُ مُحَكَّمَةٌ

Meaning: "Customs can be used as a basis for law"

By the Fuqoha, these hadiths are seen as the basis for the validity of tradition ('urf) as a source of Islamic law. Apart from this hadith, the majority of fuqoha also postulate on the word of Allah in the Koran, Surah Al-A'rof verse 199 which reads:

Meaning: "Be forgiving and order those who do what is right, and show them apart from those who are stupid."

The verse and hadith above emphasize that the perception of Muslims on an issue can be considered as a basic basis, because this is seen as having positive value in the sight of Allah SWT. Therefore, it does not need to be opposed and deleted, but a basis for designing legal products will be created.

2. Various Traditions of Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah in Society and Goals

The religious traditions usually practiced by Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah vary depending on each region, including:

a. Yasinan and tahlilan (salametan)

Yasinan and tahlilah (selametan) are religious ceremonies held when a person dies, either at the time of death or after, three days, seven days and forty days, a year (mendak) and a thousand days after his death (Ahmad Mufid Anwari & Nur Kholik, 2020). According to Salim & Sari (2024), tahlil is more dominant than other readings, so the word tahlil was chosen as a series of readings and became known as tahlilan

Meaning: "From Ma'qil bin Yasar that the Messenger of Allah said: 'Read Yasin's letter near the dead." (HR. Ahmad).

Meaning: "From Jundab bin Abdullah, Rosulullah SAW said: Whoever reads Suratul Yasin at night because he seeks Allah's approval, he will be forgiven (HR. Ibnu Hibban in his Sahih book).

The aim of the Yasinan and tahlilah (selametan) traditions is apart from praying for people who have died, this tradition contains elements of goodness, namely strengthening unity in society and being a means of giving alms and giving thanks to God (Dr. KH. Muchotob Hamzah, 2017).

From the hadith above it can be explained that reciting tahlil and yasin is permissible, because the aim is to seek Allah's approval in the hope that those who read and those who are prayed for through the Yasin letter will have their sins forgiven by Allah SWT.

## b. Birthday of the Prophet

The commemoration of the Prophet's birthday can be interpreted as a day to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, of course the

Prophet never did this. Because to honor him, Muslims afterwards often held this event. Ibn Taymiyah responded to the muludan tradition very positively

Meaning: "As for glorifying the birthday and making it an annual event, this is sometimes done by some people. They can also get great rewards because of their good intentions and glorification of the Prophet sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, as I explained previously."

The purpose of the Prophet's birthday tradition is to honor the Prophet's birthday. With this birthday of the prophet, it is hoped that Muslims will be able to remember how persistent the apostle's struggle was in pioneering and developing Islamic teachings amidst Arab tradition and culture which at that time was in a state of ignorance, emulating the attitudes and actions, especially the noble and great morals of the great prophet Muhammad. peace be upon him, to show our love for the Prophet Muhammad saw, to emulate the prophet's great morals and hope for the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad saw (Suriadi, 2019).

## c. Manaqiban

The tradition of asking for prayers and blessings from Rosulullah SAW, in some communities, is often not only done to living ulama. Sometimes these scholars warned him to read the books of the Prophet's birthday and the books of the manaqib of the Auliya, especially the manaqib of Shaykh Abdul Qodir al-Jailani. With the aim of appreciating his love for the auliya and ulama as the heirs of the Prophets, where loving them means loving the Messenger of Allah (Ahmad et al., 2015). The aim of the manaqiban tradition is to increase dhikr, practice cleansing oneself from the influence of lust, and emulate the behavior of ulama and auliya both in worship and in social life.

## d. Istigosah and Tawasul

Istigosah and tawasul have the same meaning, namely asking for benefits or avoiding harm from Allah SWT, by mentioning the name of a prophet or saint because of both. There are many reasons for the ability of istigosah and tawasul, so it is not surprising that istigosah and tawasul have developed since the Salaf, generations of friends and tabi'in (Maksum & Fikri, 2020). Allah SWT, says in QS An-Nisa' 64

Meaning: "And We did not send a messenger except to be obeyed with Allah's permission. Indeed, if when they wronged themselves they came to you and asked Allah

for forgiveness, and the Messenger asked forgiveness for them, they would surely find Allah Most Accepting of Repentance, Most Merciful."

From the verse above we can also take an essential lesson, namely that, Rasulullah SAW is a beloved creature of Allah and has a very high position in the sight of Allah so he was given authority by Allah to be an intermediary (wasilah) and a place to ask for help (istighotsah) from Allah SWT. This is all proof that tawasul does not conflict with the concept of divine perfection, including Allah's all-hearing and all-knowing power towards the prayers of His servants. The aim of the istigosah and tawasul traditions is to get closer to Allah SWT, through the wasilah of the Prophet, saints, pious people and by doing pious work (Cholid, 2021).

## The role of Islamic boarding schools in preserving Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah traditions in society

Islamic boarding schools have a very important role in preserving and developing the traditions of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah (ASWJ) in society, especially in Indonesia. As an Islamic educational institution that has been established for centuries, Islamic boarding schools not only function as centers of religious education, but also as institutions that maintain and teach moderate Islamic teachings and in accordance with the principles of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah. The following are some of the main roles of Islamic boarding schools in preserving ASWJ traditions in society:

## 1. Religious Education Based on Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah

Islamic boarding schools play a major role in teaching the teachings of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah to students and the surrounding community. By using classical books (kitab kuning) which are the legacy of previous scholars, Islamic boarding schools teach an understanding of Islam that is moderate, tolerant, and in accordance with the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This learning includes fiqh, aqidah, Sufism, and hadith which are important foundations in the ASWJ tradition.

## 2. Spreading the Values of Moderation and Tolerance

Islamic boarding schools as religious educational institutions play an important role in teaching Islamic values of moderation. The Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah tradition prioritizes an understanding of Islam that is not extreme, is more open to differences, and prioritizes a tolerant attitude in social life. By instilling these values, Islamic boarding schools play a role in creating a peaceful and harmonious society even though it consists of various ethnicities, cultures and religions.

## 3. The role of Kyai as role models and community leaders

Kyai as Islamic boarding school leaders have a big influence in maintaining the continuity of the teachings of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah. They not only act as . Carmidin

religious teachers, but also as role models in everyday life. The existence of kyai who teach and practice ASWJ teachings is key in preserving this tradition. Kyai are also often figures who guide the community in solving religious and social problems around them.

## 4. The Role of Islamic Boarding Schools in the Social and Cultural Context

Apart from religious education, Islamic boarding schools also play a role in maintaining and spreading Islamic culture which is in line with the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah traditions, such as salvation, commemoration of the Prophet's birthday, as well as the tradition of pilgrimages to the graves of Songo saints. This tradition is often carried out in Islamic boarding schools and is part of the social life of the local community. In this way, Islamic boarding schools not only preserve religious teachings, but also foster Islamic culture which is based on ASWJ values.

## 5. Strengthening the Aqidah of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah

Islamic boarding schools also play a role in strengthening the aqidah of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah among Muslims. Islamic boarding schools provide a clear understanding of the concept of aqidah which is in accordance with the understanding of great scholars in the ASWJ tradition, such as belief in three main points, namely monotheism, treatises, and the last day. This is important to maintain the unity and resilience of the Muslim Ummah from the influence of teachings that conflict with the understanding of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah.

## 6. Adaptation and Innovation in the Modern Era

Although Islamic boarding schools have strong roots in tradition, many Islamic boarding schools are starting to adapt to current developments, including the use of information technology to spread ASWJ teachings. By utilizing social media, Islamic boarding schools can reach more people in conveying da'wah that promotes a moderate and tolerant understanding of Islam.

Overall, Islamic boarding schools have a very important role in maintaining and preserving the traditions of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah in Indonesian society. Islamic boarding schools are not only religious educational institutions, but also as strongholds for the protection of moderate Islamic values, as well as being centers of civilization that instill good principles in social life.

The following are the steps taken by Islamic boarding schools to preserve traditions in society:

- 1. Yasinan and tahlilan activities continue to be preserved by Islamic boarding schools through the activities of their students and the surrounding community. So it doesn't have to be when someone dies, this activity is carried out routinely every Friday night or Friday afternoon in rotation from house to house. Muslims continuously.
- 2. The tradition of the Prophet's birthday is still preserved by Islamic boarding schools. The celebration of the Prophet's birthday is carried out every year in the month of Robiul Awal. The forms of activities are various, such as: reading sholawat ial barjanzi, religious tausiyah, reading simtu dhuror accompanied by tambourine or hadroh music. This activity is carried out in the hope that we can

- take the example of the Prophet's morals which can then be implemented into everyday life.
- 3. Islamic boarding schools still maintain and preserve manaqiban activities by reciting the manaqib of Shaykh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani which is well known among manaqib lovers. This activity is carried out by Muslims once a week at the mosque or prayer room in the hope of finding blessings and good role models from previous scholars.
- 4. The tradition of tawasul is still maintained by Islamic boarding schools together with the community. This activity is usually known as istigotsah which is carried out when there are yasinan or tahlilan activities. Tawasul itself has the meaning of being an intermediary to get closer to Allah SWT through prayer, good deeds and pious people such as: prophets, friends and God's guardians, so that what is desired will be achieved.
- 5. The tradition of grave pilgrimages is still preserved by Islamic boarding schools and the community. This activity is usually carried out at the end of the month of Shaban, the end of the month of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. With the aim that Muslims always remember death.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that in Mas'ud's perspective, Islamic education must integrate worldly knowledge with religious values to form individuals who have a balance between moral, spiritual and intellectual aspects. The concept of inclusive and democratic education is an important part of his thinking, where education must be accessible to all levels of society regardless of social or economic status. Apart from that, according to Mas'ud, Islamic education focuses on building character, independence and ethics based on Islamic teachings, and is able to equip individuals to face the challenges of the world and the hereafter. This article also explores the relevance of Abdurahman Mas'ud's thoughts in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia today.

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