THE CONTRIBUTION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A Multi-Site Study of Madrasas and Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis kontribusi pendidikan Islam, khususnya madrasah dan pesantren, dalam mendukung pencapaian (SDGs) di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan desain studi kasus multi-situs, penelitian dilakukan pada sejumlah madrasah dan pesantren yang dipilih secara purposif berdasarkan representasi wilayah, model kelembagaan, dan keterlibatan dalam program relevan dengan SDGs. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model Miles & Huberman dengan triangulasi sumber dan metode untuk menjaga keabsahan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa madrasah dan pesantren memiliki kontribusi dominan pada SDG melalui penyediaan pendidikan terjangkau, inklusif, dan berbasis nilai religius. Selain itu, pesantren berperan dalam SDG melalui pelatihan kewirausahaan dan program keterampilan, serta SDG dengan pengarusutamaan moderasi beragama dan toleransi. Beberapa lembaga juga menunjukkan inisiatif terkait SDG melalui program eco/green pesantren. Namun, tantangan masih dihadapi, seperti kesenjangan kualitas antar-lembaga, keterbatasan literasi digital, dan minimnya dukungan pendanaan berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa pendidikan Islam bukan hanya agen transmisi ilmu agama, tetapi juga aktor strategis pembangunan berkelanjutan. Untuk memperkuat kontribusi tersebut, diperlukan penguatan tata kelola, inovasi digital, pemberdayaan ekonomi masyarakat, serta dukungan kebijakan yang responsif terhadap agenda global dan kebutuhan lokal.
Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Islam, Madrasah, Pesantren, SDGs

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the contribution of Islamic education, especially madrassas and Islamic boarding schools, in supporting the achievement of (SDGs) in Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach and a multi-site case study design, the research was conducted on a number of purposively selected madrassas and pesantren based on regional representation, institutional models, and involvement in programs relevant to the SDGs. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, and then analyzed using the Miles & Huberman model with triangulation of sources and methods to maintain validity. The results of the study show that madrasas and pesantren have a dominant contribution to SDG through the provision of affordable, inclusive, and religious value-based education. In addition, Islamic boarding schools play a role in SDG through entrepreneurship training and skills programs, as well as SDG by mainstreaming religious moderation and tolerance. Several institutions also show initiatives related to SDG through the eco/green pesantren program. However, challenges are still faced, such as the quality gap between institutions, the limitation of digital literacy, and the lack of sustainable funding support. This research confirms that Islamic education is not only an agent of the transmission of religious knowledge, but also a strategic actor of sustainable development. To strengthen this contribution, it is necessary to strengthen governance, digital innovation, community economic empowerment, and policy support that is responsive to the global agenda and local needs.
Keywords: Islamic Education, Madrasah, Islamic Boarding School, SDGs

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in Indonesia has a very strategic role in shaping the quality of human resources with religious, knowledgeable, and competitive characteristics.[1] In the context of global development, the existence of Islamic education, especially madrassas and Islamic boarding schools, is not only seen as an institution that focuses on mastering religious knowledge, but also as an agent of social transformation that can support the achievement of *the Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs).[2] The SDGs agenda set by the United Nations (UN) emphasizes the importance of quality education, equality, poverty alleviation, community empowerment, and inclusive sustainable development.

Madrasas and Islamic boarding schools as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia have a significant contribution to realizing this goal. Through the teaching of Islamic values that prioritize moderation, tolerance, and social responsibility, both of them help encourage the achievement of the SDGs, especially in goal 4 (*quality education*) and goal 16 (*peace, justice, and strong institutions*).

In addition, Islamic boarding schools also have a role in economic empowerment of the surrounding community through entrepreneurship, skills training, and the development of environmental programs, which are in line with goal 8 (*decent work and economic growth*) and goal 13 (*climate action*).

However, the challenges faced by madrassas and Islamic boarding schools are still quite complex, such as limited digital access, quality gaps between institutions, and the need to improve quality-based management.

Therefore, examining the contribution of Islamic education to the achievement of the SDGs is relevant and important, so that it is clearly mapped out how the real role of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia in supporting the global development agenda. This research is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution, especially in strengthening Islamic education policies that are more responsive to societal needs and global challenges.

RESEARCH METHODS

Approaches and Types of Research

This study uses a qualitative approach with a multi-site case study research type.[3] The

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[1] Sudarma, U. (2022). Character education in realizing competitive human resources towards a Golden Indonesia 2045. *Sharia: Journal of Islamic Studies*, *1*(1), 37-55.

[2] Allen, C., Metternicht, G., & Wiedmann, T. (2018). Initial progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A review of evidence from countries. *Sustainability science*, *13*(5), 1453-1467.

[3] Irwandi, S., Ufatin, N., & Sultoni, S. (2016). *The role of schools in developing healthy living behaviors in elementary school students (multi-site study at SD Negeri 6 Mataram and SD Negeri 41 Mataram Mataram City,*

selection of this approach is based on the goal of deeply understanding the contribution of madrassas and pesantren in supporting the achievement *of the Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), both from educational, social, economic, and environmental aspects.

Location and Research Subject

The location of the research was carried out in several madrassas and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia that were selected purposively. The selection of institutions is based on considerations of regional representation (Java and Madura), the diversity of institutional models (public madrasas, private, and traditional and modern Islamic boarding schools), and the active involvement of these institutions in activities relevant to the SDGs.

The subjects of the study include: 1) Madrasah heads and Islamic boarding school leaders (kyai or ustadz), 2) Teachers and education staff, 3) Students or students, 4) Madrasah committees and community leaders around the institution.

Data Collection Techniques

Data was collected through several techniques, namely: 1) In-depth interviews with institutional leaders, teachers, and related stakeholders. 2) Participatory observation of learning activities, community empowerment, and institutional programs. 3) Documentation in the form of institutional archives, activity reports, curriculum, and policy documents related to the SDGs.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is carried out using the Miles & Huberman model which includes:[4] 1) Data reduction: filtering information according to the focus of the research. 2) Data presentation: compiling data in the form of narratives, tables, and matrix of Islamic education's contribution to the SDGs. 3) Drawing conclusions or verification: interpreting findings to answer problem formulations.

Data Validity

To maintain validity, the research uses a triangulation technique of sources, methods, and data. Triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documents to obtain credible findings.

Research Outputs

The research output is in the form of empirical descriptions of the real contribution of madrassas and pesantren to the achievement of the SDGs, as well as a conceptual model of the role of Islamic education in supporting sustainable development.

Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara) (Doctoral dissertation, State University of Malang).

[4] Asipi, L. S., Rosalina, U., & Nopiyadi, D. (2022). The analysis of reading habits using Miles and Huberman interactive model to empower students' literacy at IPB Cirebon. *International Journal of Education and Humanities*, 2(3), 117-125.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Contribution of Islamic Education to the Achievement of the SDGs

The results of the study show that madrassas and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia have made a real contribution to the achievement of various *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs). The most dominant contribution lies in SDG 4 (Quality Education), where madrassas and pesantren provide access to affordable, quality, and religious value-based education. This institution not only equips students with religious knowledge, but also integrates general curriculum and life skills, so that it is in line with the agenda of improving the quality of inclusive education.

In addition, the study found that pesantren play a role in supporting SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) through entrepreneurship training, skills programs (such as agriculture, fisheries, and creative economy), and pesantren business units. Meanwhile, the contribution to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) can be seen from the role of madrassas and pesantren in fostering the value of religious moderation, tolerance, and strengthening the Islamic character of students.

Challenges Faced

However, madrassas and Islamic boarding schools still face several obstacles. First, the gap in the quality of education between institutions, especially between madrassas in urban areas and 3T areas. Second, digital literacy is not evenly distributed, so technology-based learning is not optimal. Third, funding support is still limited, making many innovation programs only temporary.

Strategy and Innovation

Several strategies have been adopted to strengthen the role of Islamic education in supporting the SDGs.[5] Among them: 1) Integration of religious curriculum with entrepreneurship and environmental curriculum (*green pesantren*). 2) The implementation of quality management based on sharia maqashid to improve the quality of educational services. 3) Empowerment of the surrounding community through pesantren-based productive economy programs. 4) Development of digital literacy of teachers and students to be more adaptive to the Society 5.0 era.

This finding is in line with the view of Tilaar (2012) who emphasizes that education must be the motor of social and economic development.[6] Madrasas and Islamic boarding schools prove that Islamic education can have a dual function: maintaining Islamic scientific traditions as well as being agents of sustainable development. It is also relevant to the perspective of Maqashid Sharia, where Islamic education contributes to the protection of

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[5] Junaidi, E., Lael, M. Z., Shaleh, S., & Husin, S. (2025). INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FINANCING MODEL: TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGS IN INDONESIA'S ISLAMIC EDUCATION SECTOR. *AL-MUNADZOMAH*, *4*(2), 118-127.

[6] Tilaar, H. A. R. (2003). *Power and education: An overview from the perspective of cultural studies*. IndonesiaTera.

religion (*hifdz al-din*), intellect (*hifdz al-'aql*), soul (*hifdz al-nafs*), and social welfare.

Thus, it can be concluded that madrassas and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are not only centers of religious learning, but also important actors in the achievement of the SDGs. However, in order for their contribution to be more significant, it is necessary to strengthen governance, support government policies, and sustainable innovation based on local needs and global challenges.

Discussion

The contribution of Islamic education to the SDGs can be read through four complementary theoretical lenses: 1) *Maqāṣid* al-Syarī'ah as a value orientation (*hifẓ al-dīn*, al-nafs, al-'aql, al-māl, al-nasl) which affirms education as an effort to maintain religion, intellect, and social welfare in line with SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 16 (peace and institutions), and SDG 8 (economic growth). 2) Capability Approach (Sen–Nussbaum) which places madrassas pesantren as capability-expanding institutions – opens up opportunities for students or students to "be" and "to do" in a meaningful way. 3) Human and social capital (human & social capital) which explains how literacy, skills, networks of beliefs, and religious norms strengthen productivity as well as social cohesion. 4) Good governance of education (accountability, participation, transparency) that are relevant to the governance of madrasas/pesantren and the Penta-Helix cooperation ecosystem (government, academia, business world, community, media).

SDG 4 (Quality Education): The integration of religious-general curriculum, habituation of manners, strengthening basic-digital literacy, and *life skills* produces outputs in the form of increased interest in learning, discipline, and critical thinking skills. The intermediate outcomes are seen in a smoother learning/work transition and a lifelong learning culture.

SDG 16 (Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions): The mainstreaming of religious moderation, conflict resolution, and civic education reduces the potential for intolerance and strengthens intergroup trust; it promotes social stability at the local level.

SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth): Islamic boarding school business units, entrepreneurship training, and *santripreneur* programs expand economic capabilities, employability, and ethical business ethos.

SDG 3 (Good Health & Well-being): A culture of clean living, healthy canteens, regular exercise, and reproductive/mental health literacy improve healthy living behaviors.

SDG 5 & 10 (Gender Equality & Reduced Inequalities): Affirming access for women, people with disabilities, and vulnerable groups through scholarships, *boarding care*, and inclusive learning environments reduces disparities.

SDG 13 (Climate Action): *Eco-green Islamic boarding schools,* waste management, water conservation, food gardens, small-scale renewable energy, building ecological ethics based on the values of the caliph fil-arḍ.

Theory of Change (ToC) Kelembagaan

Teachers or ustadz are competent, integrated curriculum, ICT facilities, partner networks, socio-religious funds (zakat, waqf, CSR).

Integrative learning, *project-based* contextual learning (creative economy, conservation, digital literacy), moderation programs, career mentoring.

Thematic modules on SDGs, skills certification, student entrepreneurship, moderation teaching tools, green protocols.

Improvement of learning outcomes, work ethic, social participation, culture of peace, resilience of local ecology.

Measurable contribution to SDGs targets at the community level—underpinned by accountable governance.

Institutional Model Innovation

Maqāṣid-based quality management: PDCA/TQM is guided by value indicators (akhlāq, integrity, social concern).

Digital transformation (Society 5.0): Simple LMS, hybrid classrooms, *micro-credentials*, student digital portfolio, learning analytics.

Santripreneur *and community-based learning* programs: real projects (agro-maritime, fisheries, creative economy), MSME internships, student cooperatives.

Eco-green campus: environmental audit, waste bank, organic farming, *rainwater harvesting*.

Inclusivity & gender mainstreaming: universal design, counselling services, *safe spaces*, female mentors, and anti-discrimination policies based on Islamic values rahmatan lil-'ālamīn.

Structural and Operational Challenges

The capacity gap between institutions (urban vs 3T) affects the quality of teachers, infrastructure, and digital literacy.

Sustainable funding and professional financial management are still weak points for long-term innovation programs.

Accountability & data: reporting is not yet uniform; indicators are not yet differentiated (gender, disability, region).

Curation of digital religious content: the risk of polarization/hoaxes demands critical literacy and an adaptive moderation curriculum.

Partnership network: cross-sector collaboration is not optimal, even though it is crucial to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

Evidence-Based Reinforcement Strategies

Architecture of SDGs indicators at the institutional level (simple dashboard): SDG 4: graduation, literacy-numeracy, *student engagement*, *teacher professional growth*. SDG 8: number of student entrepreneurs, job placement/internship, business unit turnover.

SDG 16: conflict incidence, interfaith dialogue participation, governance compliance. SDG 13: reduced waste volume, trees planted, energy/water saving.

Strengthening teacher capacity: *coaching*, *lesson study*, *action research*, and *digital pedagogy*. Mixed financing scheme: BOS/grants combined with zakat, productive waqf, CSR, university and industry partnerships.

Penta-helix partnerships: shared curriculum, applied research, business incubation, and service programs.

QA & adaptive accreditation: integrating the rubrics of maqāṣid, moderation, inclusivity, and ecology in quality assurance.

Ethics & digital literacy: a module on fact-checking, online safety, and *content moderation* based on Islamic values.

Policy Implications

Synchronization of regulations and incentives so that moderation, entrepreneurship, and eco-pesantren programs receive fiscal/technical support.

An integrated data platform from institutions to governments/partners to monitor SDGs indicators periodically.

Minimum inclusive service standards (disability access, gender-sensitive pedagogy, *child protection policy*).

Regional development scheme: special support for 3T areas (connectivity, training, *equipment grant*).

Advanced Research Agenda & Limitations

Causal measurement: a quasi-experimental *or* mixed methods *design is needed* to assess the program-specific impact on SDGs indicators. Data disaggregation: more detailed mapping (gender, disability, socio-economic status, geography) is needed. Model comparison: cross-provincial/pesantren type study to identify *what works, for whom, and under what conditions*. Political economy of policy: an analysis of incentives, costs, and sustainability of innovation funding.

CONCLUSION

Islamic education in Indonesia, through madrassas and pesantren, has proven to make an important contribution in supporting the achievement of the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs). These contributions not only include aspects of education (SDG 4), but also include economic empowerment (SDG 8), strengthening religious moderation and social institutions (SDG 16), and environmental awareness (SDG 13). This shows that madrassas and pesantren are not only religious teaching institutions, but also agents of social, economic, and ecological transformation that are relevant to the needs of global development. However, a number of challenges are still faced, including the quality gap between institutions, the limitations of digital literacy, and the limitations of funding and governance. Therefore, a sustainable strengthening strategy is needed, including the integration of religious curriculum

with entrepreneurship and ecology, the implementation of quality management based on maqāṣid al-syarī'ah, the development of digital literacy, and penta-helix collaboration between the government, academics, the business world, the community, and the media. Thus, Islamic education in Indonesia has a strategic role in harmonizing religious values with the sustainable development agenda. For this role to be more significant, it needs inclusive public policy support, sustainable funding, and institutional innovation that is responsive to global dynamics and local needs.

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