

ISLAMIC EDUCATION WITHIN THE RELIGIOUS SOCIAL ORGANIZATION NAHDLATUL ULAMA

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the concept of Islamic education as envisioned by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), its contribution to the national education system, and the challenges and prospects it faces in the modern era. The research adopts a qualitative-descriptive method based on library research, using content analysis of relevant literature. The findings reveal that NU plays a vital role in advancing Islamic education through its network of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), madrasahs, and universities that integrate the values of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah, such as moderation, tolerance, and balance. Despite facing challenges related to digital transformation and infrastructure disparities, NU holds significant potential in strengthening an inclusive and contextualized model of Islamic education in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Islamic education, Nahdlatul Ulama, madrasah, pesantren, religious social organization, religious moderation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The character, identity, and civilization of Muslim communities across the globe, including in Indonesia, are profoundly shaped by Islamic education. Within this context, Islamic education is not merely regarded as a medium for knowledge transmission, but rather as a fundamental institution for cultivating moral integrity, religious piety, and socio-cultural values in accordance with Islamic teachings. It functions as a vital means for the internalization of ethical behavior, the formation of Islamic worldviews, and the construction of an ummah (Islamic community) that is not only spiritually grounded but also intellectually progressive and socially engaged.

In Indonesia, Islamic education has grown in a diverse and dynamic manner, reflecting the multicultural and pluralistic fabric of the nation. It has evolved not only within the framework of formal state educational institutions but also through the significant involvement of religious social organizations. Among the most influential of these is Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)—a religious and socio-cultural movement founded in 1926 with the aim of safeguarding traditional Islamic scholarship while engaging constructively with the challenges of modernity.

Nahdlatul Ulama is not merely a religious organization; it is a socio-religious force that carries with it deep cultural roots and a long-standing commitment to the preservation and development of traditional Islamic knowledge (*turats*) through institutions such as pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic universities. NU's educational ideology is grounded in the values of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*, promoting religious moderation (*wasathiyah*), tolerance, balance, and inclusivity. These values are continuously cultivated through its network of educational institutions that emphasize both religious sciences and general