

Transformative Islamic Education at Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli

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ABSTRACT

Islamic Boarding School, as an Islamic educational institution, initially only taught religious knowledge. However, some Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia are currently trying to transform by adopting science education and even more focused on studying science. This is interesting because, as a newcomer, the presence of an Islamic Boarding School that has been transformed into a science boarding school is in great demand by the people of South Tapanuli. This research seeks to answer the paradigm that underlies the transformation, the underlying reasons and the purpose of the change. Methodologically, to read and analyze paradigm shifts in several Islamic boarding schools in South Tapanuli, this study uses an integration approach. Meanwhile, to capture the reasons that underlie the paradigm change and the purpose of the change, this research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The results of this study found that the transformative paradigm of science-religion is the paradigm that underpins the change. An important reality behind the transformation is the assumption that the Islamic boarding that has existed so far has lost its dimension of reality. The main goal of the paradigm shift is to balance and revitalize science knowledge in educational institutions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic educational institutions are currently caught up in two problems, namely historical romanticism and reality. (Uyuni & Adnan, 2020) Historical romanticism means that Muslims are very proud of the Islamic thinkers and great Islamic scientists who have contributed greatly to the development of civilization and world science, which is the transmission of Greek scholarship (Rafiq, 2022). However, on the other hand, Muslims are faced with the reality that Islamic education is unable to compete with advanced industries and modern technology. (Najjar, 2022) This reality is even supported by the understanding of some Muslims who do not care about general science and science,

even to the level of "forbidding" it (Huff, 2017) Finally, Islamic education seems to be running in place and only concerned with individual piety.

The above problems are also embedded in several Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, for example, such as Islamic Boarding School which is known as the oldest Islamic educational institution that only focuses on *tafaquh fiddin* (studying religion) and pays little attention to aspects of information technology and science (Rangkuti, 2018). As a fundamentalist education, it is not unfamiliar, but this problem is not solved due to the pros and cons between practitioners of Islamic education itself. (Suharto, Sham, Fatmawati, & Amrozi, 2023) As a result, most Islamic education, especially in South Tapanuli, still maintains the Islamic education curriculum for generations without any additions.

Various efforts have been made, for example, with the emergence of Islamic Boarding School that integrate the development of *qauliyah* (revelatory science) verses with *kauniyah* (cosmology) and *insaniyah* (humanities) verses or better known as science Islamic Boarding Schools. (Wekke & Hamid, 2013) The presence of this science boarding school sounds foreign to some people's ears, because some people are worried that integrating science into the Islamic Boarding School can degrade the characteristics of Islamic Boarding School with Islamic classical nuances (Siddiq, 2023). On the other hand, some people actually support this integration step because it is expected to be able to overcome various problems of lagging Islamic education with general education.

The information above indicates that the weak vision of Islamic education or the unclear direction of education implemented. (Kosim, Muqoddam, Mubarak, & Laila, 2023) The unbalanced emphasis between the formation of a muslim's primary personality and his social role among a people focused solely on individual piety (Rahayu, 2023). The problem of the epistemology of Islamic education that is dichotomic between religious sciences and science and technology causes Islamic education, especially in South Tapanuli, to be left behind in terms of modern science and technology (Nasution & Holid, 2023). Practically among all adherents of all major religions on the face of this earth, Muslims are the lowest people in science and technology.

Among the most recent studies mentioned that the transformation of Islamic education for the time being is very important (Husna, Mahfuds, & Uthman, 2023). In the sense of transforming to see the needs of society in reality without having to abandon its institutional characteristics. (Niyozov & Memon, 2011) Although Islamic education in several countries, including Indonesia, Pakistan and other Muslim countries, there are still many that have not been transformed. It is influenced none other than by the fundamentalism of Muslims fostered and ridden by politically interested people (Jan, Ullah, Ul Haq, & Xie, 2023). Other research states that the effort that must be made to transform Islamic education is to integrate the religious dimension with pure science. For the science to have a theological foundation. The unification is by using the way of dialogue between one science and another (Persson, Hornborg, Olsson, & Thorén, 2018) so that the alignment of religious science and science is not forced not to feel superior to each other.

Departing from the explanation above, it can be seen that the transformation of Islamic education that has existed so far is only an effort to show how important pure science is in Islamic education. Throughout the reading, the author has not found a transformational based on religious science. This research is an attempt to fill in the blanks of efforts to transform Islamic education. This research also seeks to answer, the paradigm of transformation that is seen as in accordance with Islamic education in South Tapanuli. In addition, this paper also seeks to see the relativeness behind the importance of the new paradigm and see the goals of change seen from the needs of Islamic education in South Tapanuli.

2. METHODS

To answer the formulation of the problem mentioned at the beginning, this study uses two approaches. First, to answer the problem of a paradigm suitable for Islamic education in South Tapanuli, the author currently uses an integration approach with content analysis between Islamic studies and local needs. Second, to capture aspects of local needs, this research uses a qualitative type of research with a descriptive approach with interview, observation and documentation methods.

Then, the results of this research are seen again in accordance with the elements of the paradigm that are needed. The point is to see the coherence between the discovery of paradigms and the needs of local Islamic education.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 *Science-Religious as Basis Paradigm for Transforming Islamic Education*

Our current socio-religious realities can be said to be both processual and emergency. Processual means that socio-religious symptoms are constantly moving and changing beyond the end, thus requiring a dynamic set of studies (Supriyanto, 2022). Emergency means that socio-religious problems, which are always changing all the time, certainly continue to require analytical tools and solutions to existing problems that are urgent as well. (Bullivant, 2020) Because of emergencies, it is impossible for the framework of analysis and solutions to social problems to always rely fully on pre-existing theories. Moreover, relying on sacred texts as a whole without looking at them from various perspectives. Symptoms of post-truth or post-truth reality, for example, have demanded the development of new theories in defining social reality and its impact on the religiosity of society. The approach must also involve other sciences, not limited to theological approaches, but a strong base with an integration approach is needed (M. Amin Abdullah, 2020, p. 20).

Science-religion is an approach that uses reason, *Bayani*, *Burhani* and *Irfani* which are used simultaneously with an integrated pattern. This means that all instruments of knowledge, both *Bayani*, *Burhani* and *Irfani* are functioned and integrated into every thinking activity (al-Jabiri, 2000). Thus, all science is "Islamic science", because sometimes it is "carried out" by revelation like religious science, and sometimes it is explored by the ratio and senses of the impulse of revelation such as science and humanities. This is actually the original characteristic of science under the umbrella of Islamic education (Muhammad Amin Abdullah, 2020). In contrast to Western education, which negates revelation as an epistemological instrument. Whereas the main failure of education in the Islamic world lies in the "glorification" of mainstreaming revelation and ignoring the role of ratios and senses. (Assegaf, 2011) The scientific-religious approach is a result of the combination of the three reasons above. By turning reason in various fields of study into a central point of change, especially in turast studies so that all study of nature does not lose its context. Methodologically Abid al-Jabiri and neutralized him from all existing interests so that the turast returned to normal. Then it is internalized inward by vriifying it to authoritative sources. Finally, it is introduced by touching the present (Contextual). Backward motion-----Inward motion-----Outward motion (Baso, 2017).

Meanwhile, religion is a prophetic moral to keep Islamic values from being missed in every thought activity (Sahed, Sumadi, & Rangkuti, 2018). For this reason, it is good that these three reasonings are founded on four pillars as rolled out by Muhammad Jawwad Ridho, namely, 1) Faith and surrender to the will of God by relying on the intelligence of reason. 2) Limiting ethical moral responsibility to each individual and placing it in a specific relationship between God and servant. 3) *Istikhlaf* insight (delegation of mandate as *kholifah*) in human relations with the world. 4) Relations on the basis of consensus (*al-'Ahd*) in the structuring of social relations (Ridla, 2002).

Islamic Education for the first time in the view of Ibn Thufail as a science to draw closer to Allah and all his creatures (Arroisi, 2020). Thus, it is not surprising that in Islam, there is a belief that all beings are seen as a structure (form) of natural objects that have a mechanistic function and process of movement (the law of causality) and generalizations driven by Allah Almighty. In fact, the influence of natural science, especially also from the biological sciences (Darwinism) gave rise to another conclusion that beings with all their beliefs are seen as social organisms, that is, identical to organisms (living beings) that have physical characteristics, functions, structures, and tissue processes that work systemically. It is suggested by Herbert Spencer and developed again by Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton with its sociological approach to structural functionalism (Soehadha, 2021).

The initial characteristic of Islamic Religious Education as a social science lies in the empirical-positivist approach it uses in explaining the relationship between God, Man and Nature as a mechanistic social fact that makes God with his will the center of all things. (Nasr & Nasr, 1990) It can be said that almost all figures of Islamic Religious Education at the beginning discovered their theories also inseparable from the problem of the relationship between God, man and nature, whether he was a figure in the study of kalam, poetry and morals (Nasr, 1993).

In this perspective, the interaction of religion and society is studied in the context of combining the study of religion and pure science. Structurally, the position of science becomes a tool (tool science), even melting (integrating) into religious studies that can be used to study religious phenomena (religion). With the science-religious paradigm, it seeks to combine the relationship between empirical social facts of religion and religious teachings which are then used to confirm the doctrine of belief in religious instruments.

3.2 The Urgency of Transforming Islamic Education in South Tapanuli

An understanding of the importance of reality, consciously or unconsciously, has implications for the attitudes and actions of the people of South Tapanuli and influences its worldview. Some people in South Tapanuli consider that the social reality lived by humans can also be of worship value if it is based on religious values (Suheri Sahputra Rangkuti, 2021). Therefore, Islamic education must not stop at merely the immersion of religious concepts, but must penetrate the empirical color of man's journey. This view, among others, is manifested in the treatment of the people of South Tapanuli responding to the realities of their world.

Interviews with several Muslim people in South Tapanuli from among farmers show that as many as 86% of them believe that their business as farmers is part of worship. This means that for the people of South Tapanuli, the majority of farmers consider that their religion and teachings are inseparable from their real lives (*Interview with Muslim People in Three Sub-Districts in South Tapanuli*, 2023) It also indicates that religion colors the efforts of those who are based on science. (Geertz, 2013)

Inevitably, Islamic education must carefully understand that human beings have a strong interweaving with religion and science. This is based on two human needs, namely the needs of the soul and the body. This means that between man and religion and science there are non-negotiable interrelationships, interrelationships, and mutual engagements. With this principle, man will have the realization that religion and science will always benefit him (Ghalia & Hossen, 2019).

Based on observations in the field, the contact between Islamic education and science that represents socio-cultural reality as an effort to develop the potential and skills of the South Tapanuli community has at least given birth to two much-needed benefits for the local community. First, it influences the socio-cultural environment in the sense of providing philosophical insights, directions of views, behavioral motivations and guidelines for change until the formation of a new social reality; Second, it is influenced by the reality of social change and the socio-cultural environment in determining the educational system, institutions and priority choices as well as its existence and self-actualization (*Observations Were Conducted in Three Sub-District Centers in South Tapanuli*, 2023)

Indeed, the central role played by Islamic Boarding School that combines religious science and science as a center of socio-cultural transformation developed after the local community felt the benefits. However, functionally, Islamic Boarding School is still considered as an option to study religion as well as other Islamic Boarding School. This does not mean that the process of transformation stops there, but rather that it is the first step in the process of universalization and development of religion and science towards a modern society (*The Results of the Recognition of Several Educational Figures in South Tapanuli*, 2023)

The Islamic Boarding School of Science became promoters and proved that in Islam, there is no such thing as a dichotomy of science, because all knowledge belongs to Allah and everything is interrelated. By establishing a science boarding school, we will know the common thread of the reason why Islamic Boarding Schools must transform into a science boarding schools, because so far, Islamic Boarding Schools have contributed a lot to the needs of the community, especially in the field of religion.

So that the community has put a strong trust in Islamic Boarding School, especially for Muslims, but Muslims also expect the existence of Islamic educational institutions that are able to produce a generation of Muslim scholars who are intelligent in the general field and also have charisma and prioritize Islamic principles, so with the emergence of scientific boarding schools are expected to be able to answer the problems of the Islamic community today (*Interviews with Some Teachers Who Teach in Islamic Boarding Schools That Have Transformed in South Tapanuli*, 2023).

In interviews with several Islamic education leaders in South Tapanuli explained that the idea of integration between religion and science is a must today. This is because the current situation of the South Tapanuli community is increasingly modern and requires science to develop modernity and religion is the umbrella that colors the goals of modernity. Whether we realize it or not, according to the author, some Islamic Boarding School with those that have included science subjects in their curriculum have used and adopted terms that came from the West. The acceptance of these scientific ideas that were originally banned has now become commonplace in some Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli (*Interview with Three Leaders of Islamic Boarding Schools That Have Transformed in South Tapanuli*, 2023).

One of the leaders of the Islamic boarding school in South Tapanuli gave an explanation related to the above. The mixing of religion and science in Islamic Boarding Schools does not show a tendency to secularization. This can be witnessed together. The composition of the curriculum in this Islamic Boarding School looks balanced between religion and science. In the sense that Islamic boarding schools that have included science in the curriculum still show and maintain their identity as Islamic educational institutions by distributing their curriculum. (Li & Shein, 2022)

The above is in line with an Islamic boarding school leader who has combined religious science and science and argues that Only through education is the most effective path to carry out a major transformation in an effort to educate the public to have open insights. This view focuses on the function and role of education as an institution that is trusted in carrying out value transformation. In reality, education is indeed the most appropriate means of developing including the cultivation of paradigms including Islamic education. (Saada, 2023) Islamic education has a determining influence on social and cultural structure.

3.3 *The Main Objectives of Islamic Education Transformation in South Tapanuli*

Islamic education, such as Islamic Boarding School, not only seeks to create santri or graduate profiles who only understand religion, but are also able to follow advances in technology and information. But on the contrary, although some Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli have transformed into integration, it does not mean that this Islamic Boarding School removes the characteristics of Islamic Boarding School as Islamic educational institutions (Cibro, Salminawati, & Usiono, 2023).

A leader of an Islamic boarding school in South Tapanuli explained that since the Islamic Boarding School he led turned into an Islamic Boarding School that combines science, there are many opinions spread in the community that this Islamic Boarding School has lost its identity and characteristics as an Islamic Boarding School because it does not focus on the field of *tafaqquh fiddin*, some people think that Islamic Boarding School only study religious science, because there has been general education that focuses on studying general science. (*Interview with an Islamic Boarding School Leader in South Tapanuli*, 2023)

This kind of public assumption has actually been dismissed by Law No. 18 of 2019 concerning Islamic boarding schools in Chapter III Article 5, paragraph 1 that Islamic Boarding School consists of 3 types, namely: 1) Islamic Boarding School that organize education in the form of yellow book studies, 2) Islamic Boarding School that organize education in the form of Islamic *dirasah* with *mu'allimin* education pattern, and 3) Islamic Boarding School that organize education in other forms that are integrated with general education. From the researcher's analysis, all Islamic Boarding Schools in South Tapanuli that have been transformed fall into the third category, namely Islamic boarding schools that

combine Islamic science and general science ("UU No. 18 Tahun 2019 Tentang Pesantren [JDIH BPK RI]," n.d.).

Based on the results of interviews with the curriculum field in three Islamic Boarding Schools located in South Tapanuli, it is explained that the Islamic Boarding Schools they manage have fulfilled the five elements of Law No. 18 of 2019 concerning Islamic boarding schools in CHAPTER III article 5 paragraphs. The learning of the Yellow Book and Arabic language continues, it's just not studied in depth as befits a *salafiyah* Islamic Boarding School such as the Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School which is indeed focused on the Yellow Book and does not focus on science. However, its identity as an Islamic educational institution will be maintained because it has been regulated in the law. The difference in the focus of each Islamic Boarding School does not mean that there is negative competition and opposition, because each Islamic institution certainly has a different focus on the issue of the society, so each institution must have advantages and disadvantages which of course must support each other and cover up shortcomings.

From this explanation, it can be concluded that the transformation carried out by several Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli is not to compete with classical traditional Islamic Boarding Schools or other Islamic educational institutions. However it is more of an effort to answer the problem in the midst of society about the lack of Muslim scholars in the field of science and technology. Islamic Boarding School that have carried out the transformation also often visit other traditional Islamic Boarding Schools as a form of strengthening *silaturahmi* and cooperation on society issues.

The development of the curriculum in Islamic Boarding School is in accordance with the theoretical studies that have been discussed previously, that this transformation is largely influenced by the thinking paradigm that has been discussed previously, that the purpose of the transformation of this Islamic Boarding School is to dismiss negative stigma and prove the demand of society that needs Islamic educational institutions that create profiles of graduates who are able to compete in modern industry and the currents of globalization, But by not eliminating Islamic values.

From the document study conducted by researchers in the three transformed Islamic Boarding Schools, there are several curriculum developments to make room for the sciences. For Islamic intracurricular subjects consisting of Arabic, Tawhid, Aqidah Akhlak, Islamic Cultural History, Fiqh, and Qur'an Hadith. General subjects consist of Civic Pancasila Education (PKN), Mathematics, Indonesian, National History, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Geography, Economics, Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Sociology, Accounting, Scientific Writing Training, English which includes Grammar, Debating, Presentation, Conversation, Dictation, Story Telling, and introduction to TOEFL.

From the aspect of subjects, there have been changes and adjustments based on the results of the researcher's interview with the head of the madrasah there are at least 4 subject groups, namely 1) Islamic Knowledge (Islamic Studies) consisting of tawhid, moral creed, fiqh worship / muamalah, Qur'an Hadith, Islamic Cultural History, Arabic, and so on. 2) General knowledge and science consisting of mathematics, chemistry, biological physics, geography, astronomy, sociology, economics, computers, Indonesian and PKN. 3) English knowledge consisting of grammars, English theory, English debate, listening, reading, writing, speaking, and TOEFL tests. 4) Special abilities consisting of tilawah, tartil, tahfidz, quality of worship, and the like. From the results of the researcher's analysis, the rpp of the geography teacher, for example in the material about the process of creating the universe, the teacher cited scientific theories such as Big-Bang and Nebula, then the teacher wrote that in the Qur'an there is also a verse whose editorial is the same as the theories of the creation of the universe, namely Q.S Al-Anbiya verse 30. Likewise with other science subjects, the process of Islamization of science is highly recommended in every science subject.

With the implementation of this modern science integration curriculum in several Islamic boarding schools in South Tapanuli is expected to be able to break the problem of Islamic education so far where Islamic education is often lagging behind in terms of modern science competition with public schools, this is also an answer to the needs of the community who expect the emergence of Islamic

educational institutions that can compete with general education so that their graduation profile is able to compete with general graduates but still have religious science and akhlakul karimah as a characteristic of Islam.

4. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that the reason for the transformation of Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli into a science boarding school is to revitalize Islamic education in the modern era and break down the anxiety of the Islamic community to be able to compete with general education in the field of science. The science-religious paradigm is the basis for curriculum development that has been carried out by the transformed Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli. This transformation is very important considering that modernization and globalization have touched various regions, including South Tapanuli. Thus, with the transformation of Islamic education from initially only applying religious curriculum to integrating religious science and science, it is expected to be able to answer the needs of the community. This hope is the main goal of the transformation of Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli.

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