



Islamic Multicultural Education Innovation Through Transformational Leadership: An Analysis of the Cadre Model at the Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor

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ABSTRACT

Regeneration of leadership that is less structured in some boarding schools is a challenge in maintaining the quality of the institution. One of the main factors contributing to this problem is the weak regeneration system. This study aims to analyze the application of transformative leadership in the regeneration system in Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor and its impact on the development of multicultural Islamic education. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to data collection techniques through the study of literature and analysis of regeneration systems and educational innovation in Gontor. The results showed that transformative leadership in Gontor was able to integrate Islamic values with a modern multicultural-based approach. The regeneration Model applied includes value and character education, habituation, *santri* organization system, and sustainable leadership training. This transformative leadership contributes to the development of Islamic education that is innovative, inclusive, and relevant to global demands. The implications of this study indicate that the success of the regeneration system in Gontor plays a role in maintaining the existence of the institution for almost a century and producing alumni who take part in various fields, including politics, education, and social. The study provides an academic contribution in understanding the role of transformative leadership in Islamic education as well as offering recommendations for other Islamic educational institutions in adapting the model of regeneration as a strategy to ensure continuity of leadership and maintain the relevance of education in the modern era.

Keywords: Transformative Leadership, Regeneration, Multicultural Islamic Education, Educational Innovation.

ABSTRAK

Regenerasi kepemimpinan yang kurang terstruktur di beberapa pesantren menjadi tantangan dalam menjaga kualitas lembaga. Salah satu faktor utama yang berkontribusi terhadap permasalahan ini adalah lemahnya sistem kaderisasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan kepemimpinan transformatif dalam sistem kaderisasi di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor serta dampaknya terhadap pengembangan pendidikan Islam multikultural. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui studi literatur dan analisis sistem kaderisasi serta inovasi pendidikan di Gontor. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformatif di Gontor mampu mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Islam dengan pendekatan modern berbasis multikultural. Model kaderisasi yang diterapkan mencakup pendidikan nilai dan karakter, pembiasaan, sistem organisasi santri, serta pelatihan kepemimpinan yang berkelanjutan. Kepemimpinan transformatif ini berkontribusi terhadap pengembangan pendidikan Islam yang inovatif, inklusif, dan relevan dengan tuntutan global. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa keberhasilan sistem kaderisasi di Gontor berperan dalam menjaga eksistensi lembaga selama hampir satu abad serta mencetak alumni yang berkiprah di berbagai bidang, termasuk politik, pendidikan, dan sosial. Studi ini memberikan kontribusi akademik dalam memahami peran kepemimpinan transformatif dalam pendidikan Islam serta menawarkan rekomendasi bagi lembaga pendidikan Islam lainnya dalam

mengadaptasi model kaderisasi sebagai strategi untuk memastikan kesinambungan kepemimpinan dan menjaga relevansi pendidikan di era modern.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Transformatif, Kaderisasi, Pendidikan Islam Multikultural, Inovasi Pendidikan.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity is a hallmark of Indonesian society that makes this country a miniature of multiculturalism. In this context, Islamic education plays a strategic role in building social harmony by instilling universal, inclusive, and relevant Islamic values that meet the needs of modern society. However, the reality shows that many Islamic educational institutions still face challenges in integrating multicultural values into their educational systems. This is often due to the limitations of leadership models that can accommodate diversity and facilitate educational innovation.

Transformational leadership, with its characteristics of being inspiring, visionary, and adaptive to change, is believed to be a solution to overcome these challenges. This leadership pattern emphasizes not only effective management but also efforts to develop the potential of individuals and organizations holistically. In the context of Islamic education, transformational leadership can encourage innovation in learning systems, curricula, and management that support multicultural values (Sawaty, 2025).

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is one of the Islamic educational institutions that has successfully implemented a leadership model based on cadre development. Through a structured cadre system, Gontor has succeeded in producing leaders who are not only intellectually competent but also have a global perspective and commitment to multicultural values. This cadre system reflects the implementation of transformational leadership that prioritizes character formation, managerial ability, and mastery of knowledge.

Additionally, the diversity of students coming from various regions in Indonesia and even from abroad, such as Malaysia, Thailand, Australia, Singapore, America, Saudi Arabia, Japan, and the Netherlands, creates a naturally multicultural learning environment. Daily interactions among students from different cultural backgrounds train them to understand and respect differences. This diversity also becomes an integral part of the learning process, where students are taught to view differences as strengths in building brotherhood (Baiquni, 2018).

This research is motivated by the researcher's concern regarding the weaknesses of some *pesantren* institutions in fostering successors or cadre development. Some kyais only rely on their charisma in leadership and show little concern for cadre development, resulting in only a few *pesantren* able to survive more than a century while continuing to evolve in line with the currents of time and technology.

Transformational leadership focuses on a leader's ability to provide inspiration and motivation, driving positive change through shared vision and goals. This transformational leadership pattern aligns with the cadre system at Gontor, where students are educated to become leaders who are integral, independent, and innovative. This system prioritizes leadership values such as sincerity, exemplarity, and responsibility. Moreover, the cadre

system at Gontor can strengthen multicultural values within the heterogeneous student environment, using Arabic and English as tools for transformation and training students to think globally and understand cross-cultural contexts.

The importance of innovation in multicultural Islamic education encourages the need for in-depth studies on leadership models in educational institutions like Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. This study is relevant due to the growing demand for educational models capable of addressing the challenges posed by diversity and global dynamics. By analyzing the cadre model at Gontor, it is hoped that concepts and best practices can be found and adapted by other Islamic educational institutions to support the development of multicultural education in Indonesia.

Research on leadership in Islamic education has been extensively conducted, particularly regarding the effectiveness of managing *pesantren*-based educational institutions. Previous studies have discussed the role of leadership in educational institutions, including a journal article written by Febri Nanda et al. on the various leadership styles, such as democratic, bureaucratic, and charismatic styles, aimed at helping to create a sense of brotherhood, cooperation, and organization. The difference in this study will focus more on one leadership style, namely transformational leadership with a cadre model (Monalisa et al., 2022).

In another study, the discussion also includes the role of leadership, particularly in the aspect of developing the quality of Islamic education, with results indicating that educational success is viewed as vital for the development and change in all departments, especially in efficient, effective leadership and management with continuous oversight (Nuridin, 2022). According to Muttaqien et al. (2023), who authored a paper on institution reform through leadership principles, it also explains that internal change agents, especially in facing human resource challenges, are emphasized by leaders, as this will affect the efficiency of existing programs.

In the same context, Shibab's research also discusses the role of kyai leadership in Islamic educational institutions, concluding that kyai plays a role in building students' more Islamic character, reinforcing religious values, and leading wisely. Additionally, in the upcoming research, the researcher will delve into the delegated leadership model in cadre development within institutions (Shibab et al., 2023). Furthermore, a specific article about leadership strategies, specifically "*Gethuk Tular*," has been published in a Scopus journal, offering guidance to school principals in remote areas on how to strengthen stakeholders and improve school quality. The findings highlight that high enthusiasm, active involvement, strong motivation, and collaboration with various parties can advance schools (Juharyanto et al., 2020).

Therefore, since the researcher sees a plethora of articles discussing the role of a leader, particularly in advancing educational institutions, the researcher intends to provide a more in-depth explanation of the role of leadership, especially in the transformative aspect, with a cadre model at one of the most prominent *pesantren* in Indonesia, namely Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor.

RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative research is aimed at describing and analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, and perceptions (Ghony, 2016). This research approach employs descriptive qualitative techniques, referring to literature reviews that involve collecting information by reading, seeking sources, making notes, and other related activities. Here, the researcher utilizes descriptive analysis techniques and leverages literary resources to gather information on multicultural Islamic education innovations through transformational leadership. The researcher will employ books, journals, articles, papers, documents, and other resources as primary tools to discuss this theme (Nurhadi, 2018).

The theory used in this discussion is Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes a leader's ability to inspire and motivate their followers, encouraging them to achieve higher goals beyond mere personal interests (Rahma, 2017). Transformational leadership is defined as a leadership style focused on positive changes in individuals and organizations. Transformational leaders not only strive to achieve organizational goals but also aim to enhance the motivation and morale of their followers. They create a clear and inspiring vision and communicate in a way that invigorates enthusiasm (Komsiyah, 2016). Leaders with a transformational style possess several key characteristics: The first characteristic is idealized influence, where the leader acts as a role model for their followers, evoking strong emotions and fostering identification. Second, Inspirational Motivation: they are able to convey an engaging vision and motivate followers to work hard to achieve common goals. Third, intellectual stimulation: leaders encourage innovation and creativity, helping followers to view problems from new perspectives. Fourth, individualized consideration: they provide attention and support to followers individually, assisting them in their personal development (Avolio, 1999).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Transformational Leadership through the Cadre Concept

Several key aspects are necessary for creating innovation and change, including understanding what is happening and the demands and needs of the times. Educational institution managers are required to possess managerial capabilities and be adept at reading and understanding their environment (Said, 2023).

Transformational leadership is a process where leaders and followers elevate each other to higher levels of morality and motivation, such as justice and humanity, rather than being based on emotions, greed, social jealousy, or hatred. Consequently, a shared perception develops between leaders and subordinates, allowing them to optimize their efforts toward achieving their goals. This fosters trust, commitment, respect, and enhances efforts to cultivate innovation for the development of an institution (Bass, 1990).

The world of *pesantren* is characterized by centralized leadership and a high dependence on a leader. The changes and adjustments seen in *pondok pesantren* illustrate that kyais are capable of adapting to ongoing developments (Arista, 2019). Imam Zarkasy, as the founder of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, leads the transformation of Islamic education with an inclusive and holistic vision. His leadership is highlighted through the integration of formal, non-formal, and informal education, creating a balance between

religious and general knowledge through self-directed learning and multicultural education. Imam Zarkasy opens up space for student creativity and builds an inclusive environment. The transformation of the institution into public ownership through waqf also reflects a long-term commitment to educational accessibility. Additionally, his contributions to character and leadership development have established a solid foundation for holistic education with a modernization approach (Bahij, 2023).

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, established on September 20, 1926, is one of the most influential *pesantren* in Indonesia. Located in Ponorogo, East Java, Gontor is recognized for its innovative approach to Islamic education, merging traditional values with modern methods. Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has branches throughout various regions in Indonesia, divided into male and female campuses. The male campus has spread to 13 branches across the country, located in areas such as Ponorogo, Kediri, Banyuwangi, Magelang, Southeast Sulawesi, Lampung, Aceh, Solok Air West Sumatra, Jambi, Poso, and Riau. The female campus has eight branches across Indonesia, located in areas such as Ngawi, Kediri, East Java, Kendari, Poso, Riau, and Lampung.

Leadership at PMDG is conducted by three main leaders known as the “Trimurti,” consisting of K.H. Hasan Abdullah Sahal, K.H. Akrim Mariyat, and Prof. K.H. Amal Fathullah Zarkasyi. This leadership model is collective, where the three leaders synergize in decision-making and management of the *pondok*. Each branch campus operates under the guidance of a caretaker. At Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, leadership education is implemented through various methods (Ahmadi, 2019), including: First, Guidance and Training, students receive direct mentorship from kyais regarding leadership values in every activity. Second, Task Assignments, students are given responsibilities in various organizational activities, such as event committees, which help them learn about responsibility and management. Third, Habituation, through daily activities in the *pondok*, students are accustomed to taking initiative and contributing to an organization. Fourth, Role Model (*Uswah Hasanah*), leaders demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors expected from students, allowing them to emulate these actions.

Many conclude that several *pesantren* have weaknesses in educating successor leaders; this may be justified, as many *pesantren* have proven unable to last long. The primary means for kyais to preserve the *pesantren* tradition is to build strong solidarity among themselves. A common practical approach is that the closest family members should be strong candidates for replacing the leadership of the *pesantren*, developing networks through endogamous marriage alliances between kyai families (Yuliati, 2015).

Therefore, one area that needs improvement in the *pesantren* world is the management of leadership cadre development. In reality, there are often gaps between the expectations and capabilities of prospective leader candidates, leading to declining quality over time as the baton is passed to new cadres. Typically, this cadre development is conducted using the “imitation” method, meaning that selected students who are deemed capable may participate in activities carried out by their seniors. Ideally, current conditions should be better than previous ones through a reorientation of the leadership cadre development system in *pesantren*, without compromising the noble values of *pesantren* (Soekamto, 1999).

In Gontor's leadership concept, standards are established through extensive experience with certain qualifications that have proven loyalty, dedication, and, of course, integrity, and leadership cadre development at Gontor does not have to come from individuals who have blood relations with the educators of the *pondok*. One of the main objectives of this cadre model is to produce future leaders who not only possess strong religious knowledge but also have good managerial and social skills. The cadre development process also aims to ensure that the values and programs of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor continue to function according to the guidelines established by the founders of the *pondok*. Some of the cadre development models implemented at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor include:

1. Education of Values and Character

Cadre development at Gontor emphasizes the importance of value and character education as the main foundation. The values taught include: Sincerity, performing all actions solely for the sake of Allah; Simplicity, living simply without diminishing the quality of life; Independence, training students to be self-reliant in various aspects of life; Islamic Brotherhood, fostering a spirit of unity among students from various backgrounds; and Discipline, instilling a disciplined attitude towards time, tasks, and responsibilities.

The cadre model at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is a structured and sustainable system aimed at forming a generation of quality leaders with noble character. The cadre model at Gontor is based on the principle of "*Patah Tumbuh Hilang Berganti*," which means that every administrator who has completed their term will be replaced by new administrators. This ensures continuous leadership regeneration, where the values and experiences of previous administrators can be passed down to the next generation.

Furthermore, the leadership cadre concept at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is characterized by delegation-transformation, rooted in Islamic teachings involving all members of the *pondok*, and articulated within the caregiving system, namely a Total Quality Control system, operating 24 hours a day (Ihsan, 2001). This allows prospective leaders to receive constant monitoring, guidance, and development.

2. Education System Based on Habituation

The cadre model at Gontor employs a habituation approach, training students to live disciplined and organized lives. This habituation includes: Time management, where students are taught to utilize their time effectively with a structured daily schedule; Daily activities, where everything from waking up, congregational prayers, to studying is done with discipline; and Practical leadership, where students are given rotating responsibilities to lead their peers in various activities, both formal and informal.

3. Student Organization System

One of the distinctive features of cadre development at Gontor is the Modern Pondok Students Organization (OPPM), which is entirely managed by the students. There are 20 special divisions aimed at serving as a platform for practical leadership learning (Ningsih, 2022). Through assignments, habituation, and mental training, prospective leaders are prepared to engage with society and its diverse problems and solutions. Students are responsible for executing various *pondok* programs and activities,

such as managing dormitories, organizing study activities, and planning major events. Through OPPM, students learn about management, coordination, communication, and problem-solving.

4. Teacher Cadre Development

The cadre process at Gontor does not stop at the student level but also extends to teachers. Teacher cadre development involves: Selected senior students or graduates being trained to become young teachers and required to undergo a service process. They are involved in teaching, managing the *pondok*, assisting various sectors of the *pondok*, and mentoring students. Senior teachers are also assigned to be caretakers at each branch campus, given the freedom to make tactical decisions for the branch they manage, with the outcomes discussed in meetings and submitted to the leadership. This represents a semblance of democracy that grants authority to propose suggestions to subordinates, but the final decision remains under the power of the leaders (Rahmi, 2023).

The cadre process begins as new students enter the *pondok*. They are mentored by senior students through various activities, both in the dormitory and in study groups. This creates an environment that supports learning and personal development. Senior administrators are expected to set a good example in managing the organization. In this way, the values and principles present in the *pondok* can be preserved and passed on to the next generation.

The cadre development at Gontor also emphasizes learning through experience, such as speech or lecture practice, consistently involving students in managing major events, and engaging students in production activities and *pondok* initiatives to train practical skills.

As an educational institution that receives students from various regions, cultures, and even countries, Gontor teaches the importance of tolerance and understanding differences. The cadre model at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is a comprehensive system that encompasses value education, character formation, leadership development, and the strengthening of practical skills. Through this approach, Gontor successfully produces graduates who are not only excelling in knowledge but also possess noble character, leadership abilities, and multicultural insights. This model serves as one of the best examples of integrating Islamic education with the needs of modern society.

The relationship between transformational leadership theory and the reality of the cadre model at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor significantly impacts the success of developing multicultural Islamic education, which is capable of creating a collaborative system, adaptive to inclusive environments, and able to produce a generation that excels not only in Islamic knowledge but also has the ability to foster a harmonious environment and provide solutions in a pluralistic society.

Innovations in Multicultural Islamic Education to Shape a Global Perspective Generation

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is one of the Islamic educational institutions that consistently implements innovations in creating multicultural-based education. This approach is reflected in various aspects of *pondok* life, from learning methods, management of the social environment, to interactions among diverse individuals. These innovations are not only rooted in Islamic values but also respond to global needs for tolerance (Ghony,

2017), inclusion, and appreciation of diversity. This is in line with the goals of Multicultural Islamic Education, which upholds principles of justice and equality (Mustamar, 2023).

The innovation of Multicultural Islamic Education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is one of its most prominent aspects. Gontor has succeeded in integrating Islamic values with a multicultural approach, reflecting openness, tolerance, and respect for diversity (Abdullah, 2014). With the motto, “*Gontor stands for and above all groups*,” this value aims to avoid group fanaticism and inter-group conflicts. The core foundation is as an educational institution that embraces differences, whether in ethnicity, customs, language, or other aspects of diversity (Yusron, 2022). Below is an explanation of the innovations in multicultural Islamic education implemented at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor:

1. Integration of Religious and General Curriculum

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor develops a curriculum that combines religious and general knowledge, providing students with a holistic understanding. In religious education, students are taught the fundamentals of Islam in a moderate way, including Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, Aqidah, and others. On the other hand, they also study general subjects such as Biology, Physics, Mathematics, History, and Grammar. This approach reflects an inclusive educational innovation, wherein Islam is not separated from the development of knowledge (Zarkasyi, 1996). Integrative learning emphasizes respect for diversity and the creativity of learners and can be implemented by integrating materials across various disciplines (Bakri, 2018).

2. Language Mastery as a Means to Build Multicultural Harmony

Both Arabic and English serve as the medium of instruction at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, reflecting openness to the global world. In addition to being communication tools, students are trained to use Arabic and English in their daily interactions, facilitating cross-cultural communication and understanding various literature from a global perspective (Alhamuddin, 2017).

3. Innovation in Learning Methods

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor develops learning methods that are interactive and relevant to the needs of the times, prohibiting traditional methods that lack engagement. Through group discussions, students are encouraged to be actively involved in the learning process. Experiential and hands-on learning is emphasized, with students participating in various activities, cooperating, organizing, and engaging in many other events. Tolerance education is implemented by having students live in shared rooms with peers from different regions, including international students, fostering friendships and learning about diverse traditions and cultures (Asrori, 2019).

4. Effective and Sustainable Cadre System Model

The cadre development at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor does not only shape students into independent leaders but also reinforces their understanding of multiculturalism. Leadership training involves students in organizations and managing *pondok* life, dedicating time to educate their peers sincerely through a democratic system. There are also community service programs, wherein graduates are required to teach and apply their knowledge to society, reflecting one of the key concepts of cadre development.

5. Technology as an Interactive Learning Tool

As part of its innovations, Gontor has integrated technology into the learning process, utilizing science and language laboratories, audiovisual aids in teaching, listening exercises in English language learning, and even a music studio for students who wish to hone their musical skills. Many Islamic-themed *nasyid* songs have been successfully created at Gontor for da'wah purposes, collaborating with well-known musicians such as Ifan Seventeen, Rizal Armada, Ivan Govinda, Natta Reza, and others.

6. Extracurricular Activities as a Medium for Multicultural Interaction

Extracurricular activities at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor are designed to promote diversity and cooperation. There are clubs based on interests and talents, competitions, cultural performances, sports, and various other activities that strengthen relationships among students. Additionally, there is an annual event held at the beginning of the year, known as the introduction week, which features various cultural creations from all students based on their regions of origin. This is conducted to foster an understanding of cultural diversity within the environment they inhabit. Other routine activities help form habituation and adjustment (Maskuri, 2009), fostering attitudes and behaviors that enable students to live harmoniously in a multicultural society.

7. Internationalization Activities and Partnership Building

A variety of internationalization activities are held, such as jamboree trips abroad and educational tours (*riblah tarbawiyah*) (Yasin, 2019), inviting speakers and guests for international seminars, and establishing partnerships with the Egyptian government for scholarship provision. Overall, the innovations in multicultural Islamic education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor create an inclusive, dynamic learning environment relevant to contemporary challenges. This *pondok* has successfully demonstrated how Islamic values can be integrated with an appreciation for diversity to produce a generation of leaders who are tolerant, possess noble character, and are prepared to face the complexities of the modern world.

Impact of Transformational Leadership on the Success and Sustainability of the Institution

Transformational leadership at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has a significant impact on the development of multicultural Islamic education. This leadership has successfully created an inclusive, innovative educational environment that has remained relevant to contemporary needs for nearly a century. Values of tolerance, moderation, and appreciation for diversity are at the core of the educational system implemented, enabling students not only to excel academically but also to develop the ability to become leaders who encompass diversity in community life.

The transformational leadership is coupled with the cadre model at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has a substantial impact on the advancement of multicultural Islamic education. These two approaches complement each other in shaping a learning environment that is inclusive, progressive, and responsive to diversity, both in the internal context of the *pondok* and in preparing students to face global challenges. Among the emerging impacts are:

1. Improvement of Education Quality with a Global Orientation

Transformational leadership instills a long-term vision to continuously enhance the quality of education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. Through cadre development, students are given responsibilities to learn management, innovate, and collaborate within a multicultural system. For instance, the use of Arabic and English as communication media trains students to think globally while appreciating local cultures, enabling them to adapt to changing times without losing their core values. The result is the emergence of graduates who are prepared to face global challenges with a strong multicultural perspective while maintaining their Islamic identity.

2. Development of Leadership Skills

Through the cadre model, students are not only taught leadership theory but also provided with hands-on experience in leading various *pondok* activities. They are trained in entrepreneurship, learning practical skills in managing cooperatives, farming, animal husbandry, carpentry, and more (Syahrul, 2015). Students are also trained to make decisions, solve problems, and motivate others in situations that reflect diversity. The impact is that students can apply conflict resolution skills and this leadership training in society at both local and global scales while upholding multicultural values.

3. Indicators of Institutional Success

According to researchers, in the modern education system, the quality of output and outcomes is a primary measure alongside the curriculum and school management. Key graduates are seen as a foundation for the institution's development. One illustration of the success of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is not only reflected in the rapid development of impressive buildings and its widespread reach but also in the institution's outcomes. This includes Gontor's bargaining relationships with the government and universities at both local and global levels. Collaborative relationships with various institutions, along with the recognition of Gontor's diplomas by universities both domestically and internationally, and the existence of MOUs with institutions in other countries for various academic activities such as student exchanges, highlight its success.

Moreover, public figures play a significant role in this success; the achievements of alumni who have become notable figures in politics, education, and social fields, including Dr. Hidayat Nur Wahid, KH. Hasyim Muzadi, Ahmad Fuadi, Emha Ainun Najib, Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, among others, further underscore Gontor's influence. Finally, community recognition is reflected in the positive responses from society towards the Gontor educational institution, both domestically and internationally. For example, the Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar visited Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor to foster connections, as Gontor's reputation has reached a global level.

The combination of transformational leadership and the cadre model impacts the development of Multicultural Islamic Education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor by creating a progressive, inclusive educational system that meets the needs of a multicultural society. Transformational leadership provides vision, values, and inspiration that instill tolerance, moderation, and respect for diversity within Islamic education. Meanwhile, the cadre model offers practical avenues for students to internalize these values through direct experiences, enabling them to become adaptive and contextual leaders.

Transformational leadership at Gontor emphasizes character development and students' competencies, shaping them into agents of change who are oriented not only towards personal achievement but also towards making positive contributions to society. The cadre concept used is a key way to maintain leadership in the *pondok pesantren* setting, concentrating on developing spiritual, intellectual, and social values that are important for today's world.

In the context of multicultural Islamic education, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has successfully implemented innovations that support the creation of an inclusive environment that values diversity. The effects of implementing transformational leadership are evident in the improvement of the quality and relevance of the education provided, which strengthens the position of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor as an educational institution that significantly contributes to the formation of future leaders capable of responding wisely and responsibly to global challenges.

CONCLUSION

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has successfully implemented a progressive educational system through transformational leadership and a structured cadre model. The transformational leadership practiced by the *pondok's* leaders emphasizes Islamic vision and values and inspires students to become tolerant, moderate, and inclusive individuals. With the support of a sustainable cadre model, students gain practical experiences that strengthen their character, leadership skills, and ability to face multicultural challenges. The innovation of multicultural Islamic education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has successfully integrated Islamic values with modern, inclusive, and multicultural approaches. The multicultural environment of the *pondok*, interactive learning methods, cadre systems, and moderate character education are key components of Gontor's success in producing graduates who have a global perspective, noble character, and the ability to be tolerant leaders in society. This model serves as an example of how Islamic education can accommodate diversity without losing its identity. Overall, the educational system implemented at Gontor reflects a synergy between traditional Islamic values and modern innovations, positioning it as a relevant, adaptive educational institution focused on nurturing future leaders who excel in knowledge, character, and diversity.

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