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## TRANSNATIONAL SUNNI PESANTREN AND THEIR SOCIO-POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA

### *Pesantren Sunni Transnasional Dan Penglibatan Sosiopolitik Mereka Dalam Indonesia Kontemporari*

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### Abstract

The central paradigm of Sunni political theology emphasizes harmony and stability, a framework shaped by the historical challenges faced by Sunni scholars in their respective political contexts. In Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), which largely adhere to Sunni theology, embody this paradigm through their active engagement in national politics. For these institutions, political involvement is viewed as an extension of religious faith, grounded in the belief that patriotism is an integral part of religious devotion. This study investigates the role of newly established transnational pesantren in Indonesia, which uphold Sunni theological principles but maintain diverse international networks. The research aims to explore whether these pesantren foster or hinder national political consciousness in the broader context of democratization and rising nationalism in contemporary Indonesia. Adopting a qualitative research methodology, the study focuses on three pesantren with distinct international affiliations—one associated with Saudi Arabia, another with Syria-Lebanon, and the third with Turkey. Data collection involved interviews with key figures at each institution, direct observations of their environments, and document analysis of pesantren brochures and related materials.

Thematic analysis was employed to examine their respective approaches to both political and religious education. The findings reveal that (1) these transnational pesantren, while transnational in nature, largely resemble traditional pesantren (salafiyah), with a core focus on Islamic education and validation of religious knowledge. Each pesantren revolves around a prominent religious authority: Sayyid Muhammad bin Alawiy Al-Maliki (Haromain-Rusyaifah), Sheikh Abdullah Al-Harariy (Shahamah-Lebanon), and Sheikh Sulaiman Hilmi Tunahan (Sulaimaniyah-Turkey). (2) The Lebanese-based pesantren aligns with the ASWAJA movement and the idea of the nation-state, emphasizing theological preservation. The Saudi-linked pesantren takes a more proactive stance on religion-state dynamics, while the Turkish pesantren displays apathy toward Indonesian national politics. This research offers critical insights into the political and religious roles of transnational sunni pesantren in Indonesia.

Keywords: Transnational, Sunni, religion-state relations, political participation, Indonesia.

### **Abstrak**

Paradigma utama teologi politik Sunni menekankan pada harmoni dan stabilitas, sebuah kerangka kerja yang dibentuk oleh tantangan historis yang dihadapi oleh para cendekiawan Sunni dalam konteks politik masing-masing. Di Indonesia, pesantren, yang sebagian besar menganut teologi Sunni, mewujudkan paradigma ini melalui keterlibatan aktif mereka dalam politik nasional. Bagi lembaga-lembaga ini, keterlibatan politik dipandang sebagai perpanjangan dari keyakinan agama, yang didasarkan pada keyakinan bahwa patriotisme adalah bagian integral dari pengabdian agama. Penelitian ini menyelidiki peran pesantren transnasional yang baru berdiri di Indonesia, yang menjunjung tinggi prinsip-prinsip teologis Sunni namun memiliki jaringan internasional yang beragam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi apakah pesantren-pesantren ini mendorong atau menghambat kesadaran politik nasional dalam konteks yang lebih luas, yaitu demokratisasi dan meningkatnya nasionalisme di Indonesia kontemporer. Dengan menggunakan metodologi penelitian kualitatif, penelitian ini berfokus pada tiga pesantren yang memiliki afiliasi internasional yang berbeda-satu pesantren dengan Arab Saudi, satu pesantren dengan Suriah-Lebanon, dan satu pesantren dengan Turki. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara dengan tokoh-tokoh kunci di masing-masing lembaga, pengamatan langsung terhadap lingkungan mereka, dan analisis dokumen brosur-brosur pesantren dan materi terkait. Analisis tematik digunakan untuk mengkaji pendekatan masing-masing lembaga terhadap pendidikan politik dan agama. Temuan-temuan menunjukkan bahwa: (1) pesantren-pesantren transnasional ini, meskipun bersifat transnasional, sebagian besar menyerupai pesantren tradisional (salafiyah), dengan fokus utama pada pendidikan Islam dan validasi

pengetahuan agama. Setiap pesantren berkisar pada seorang tokoh agama terkemuka: Sayyid Muhammad bin Alawiy Al-Maliki (Haromain-Rusyafah), Syekh Abdullah Al-Harariy (Shahamah-Lebanon), dan Syekh Sulaiman Hilmi Tunahan (Sulaimaniyah-Turki). (2) Pesantren yang berbasis di Lebanon menyelaraskan diri dengan gerakan ASWAJA dan gagasan negara-bangsa, dengan menekankan pelestarian teologis. Pesantren yang terkait dengan Saudi mengambil sikap yang lebih proaktif terhadap dinamika agama-negara, sementara pesantren Turki menunjukkan sikap apatis terhadap politik nasional Indonesia. Penelitian ini menawarkan pandangan kritis terhadap peran politik dan keagamaan pesantren sunni transnasional di Indonesia.

Kata kunci: Transnasional, Sunni, hubungan agama-negara, partisipasi politik, Indonesia.

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools have existed since before Indonesia's independence. The existence of this Islamic educational and da'wah institution was noted to have contributed a lot to the independence of Indonesia (Dhofier, 1980). Not only that, but this oldest educational institution has also contributed to the independence of the Indonesian people through education within the framework of the development of the complete human resources (Huda, 2018).

History records that among the heroes of Indonesia's struggle for independence were the 'ulama' from Islamic boarding schools. Through the thoughts and selfless struggles of its figures, pesantren are known as leading educational institutions that carry the idea of Islamic nationalism and the practice of Islam based on diversity in Indonesia (Darmaji, 2011). In contemporary popular terms, these ideas and movements are labeled as a form of religious moderation ideas and movements. Therefore, the government expects pesantren to be at the forefront of today's religious moderation movement (Ni'am, 2015).

At the heart of these pesantren is the theological framework of Sunni political thought, particularly as articulated within the Asy'ari tradition. Sunni political theology, shaped by the socio-political challenges faced by Sunni scholars, emphasizes harmony, stability, and the maintenance of social order. In the Asy'ari tradition, political power is seen as a necessity to ensure the survival of the Muslim community and to maintain justice. The role of scholars (ulama) is pivotal in guiding rulers, offering religious and moral legitimacy to the state, while simultaneously holding the state accountable to Islamic values. This approach avoids the formal fusion of religion and politics, upholding the principle that as long as the core tenets of Islamic ethics and justice are reflected in state governance, the system remains legitimate.

In the context of Indonesian pesantren, this framework manifests through their active participation in national politics. For these institutions, political participation is not merely a civic duty but an expression of faith, grounded in the belief that love for the homeland is a form of piety. This outlook aligns with their commitment to **Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin**, an ideology that places national behavior within the framework of peace, tolerance, and coexistence in a multicultural society, positioning state behavior within the constitutional framework of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Marzuki et al., 2020) (Hendri et al., 2018; Muhammad et al., 2015). Islamic boarding schools do not seek the formal unification of religion and the state; rather, they perceive the Indonesian constitution as inherently Islamic as long as its principles reflect Islamic values. Therefore, the pesantren community values Pancasila as the basis and ideology of an Islamic state (“The Education of the National Character of Pancasila in Secondary School Based on Pesantren,” 2017) (Mustofa & Syah, 2019) (Marzuki et al., 2020).

The number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, once limited, has now grown to tens of thousands, spanning from Sabang to Merauke. This growth reflects their increasing role in contributing to national and state development. However, this significant rise raises questions about whether all these pesantren share the same ideology, principles, and movements as the pioneering institutions of religious moderation in Indonesian history, or whether deviations exist. This is particularly relevant given contemporary accusations that some pesantren are breeding grounds for terrorism.

While these accusations warrant scrutiny, they are often unjustified, especially when considering the pesantren’s long-standing reputation as centers of moderate Islamic education. Nevertheless, sweeping generalizations often overlook exceptions. Such claims must be examined considering evidence that not all pesantren uniformly uphold nationalist and moderate ideologies like Pancasila.

In the modern era, certain pesantren have formed partnerships with institutions from the Middle East, such as the Nurul Haromain Pujon Malang Islamic Boarding School and the Darut Tauhid Purworejo Islamic Boarding School with Rusyaifah, Mecca, Al-Hidayah An-Nuriyah Islamic Boarding School Gresik with the Al-Aydrus Institute, Tarim, Yaman, Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School Bogor with the Rawaby Al-Kheer Development Foundation Education Foundation, Yemen, Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School Yogyakarta with the United Islamic Cultural Center of Indonesia (UICCI) Foundation, Turkey, Nurul Amin Modern Islamic Boarding School with Qatar Foundation, Qatar, Isy Karima Karanganyar Islamic Boarding School with Medina, Saudi Arabia, Al-Andalus Bogor International Islamic Boarding School with several institutions in the Middle East and several others.

These collaborations, which vary in form—from establishment to curriculum development—give rise to what we call "transnational pesantren," distinct from

traditional, locally-rooted institutions that historically relied on local resources (Bruinessen, 2008). Our preliminary findings reveal that some of these transnational pesantren develop curricula with foreign partners, particularly in areas like Arabic language and Qur’anic memorization, and, in some cases, advocate for the shariatization of Indonesia’s constitution. These institutions must be analyzed in the broader context of transnational Islamic movements, which promote ideas such as pan-Islamism, the unification of the Muslim Ummah across borders, and the formal integration of religion and state.

This study investigated these transnational pesantren, focusing on their curricula, ideological positions, and political movements, to provide a comprehensive understanding of their place within Indonesia’s evolving Islamic education landscape.

## METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both library research and fieldwork (mixed research) (Moleong, 2018; Setiawan, 2018). The material objects of this research include the dimensions of knowledge, national-Islamic discourse, and social-religious movements in transnational Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. The formal objects are centered on epistemological theory, discourse, and movement. Data collection was conducted through documentation, interviews, and field observations (Komariah, 2014; Setiawan, 2018). Which are elaborated in the following methodical steps:

- a. **Documentation:** Library research was conducted to gather relevant materials, including curriculum frameworks, institutional publications, official documents, and records of activities from transnational Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. This documentation provides a foundational understanding of each institution's structure, educational approach, and engagement with transnational networks.
- b. **Interviews:** Using a snowball sampling technique, interviews were conducted with key figures at each transnational Islamic boarding school, such as school leaders, teachers, and other central figures. The snowball method facilitated the identification of additional informants based on recommendations from initial interviewees. This process ensured a comprehensive range of perspectives from within each institution. The criteria for selecting interviewees were their involvement in decision-making processes, curriculum development, or international collaborations.
- c. **Observations:** Field observations were carried out at the selected pesantren to capture relevant activities, interactions, and the implementation of transnational influences within their day-to-day operations. Observations focused on pedagogical practices, student activities, and the visible impact of

international affiliations. The duration of observations varied depending on the accessibility and availability of activities relevant to this research's aims.

The study focuses on three Islamic boarding schools that are part of international transnational networks:

Number	Pondok Pesantren	Transnational Network	Foundation in Indonesia
1	Pesantren Nurul Haromain Pujon, Malang	Ma'had Rusyaifah, Makkah, Saudi Arabia	Yayasan Hai'ah As-Shofwah Al Malikiyyah
2	Pesantren Sulaimaniyah, Yogyakarta	Ma'had Sulaimaniyyah, Turkey	United Islamic Cultural Center of Indonesia (UICCI), Turki
3	Pesantren Syahamah, Semarang and Pati	Global University, Lebanon	Yayasan Syahamah Indonesia

**Data Analysis:** Both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed using several methodical approaches:

1. **Historical Method:** This was used to trace the development and historical background of each pesantren, focusing on their relationship with transnational Islamic movements (Watts, 2014).
2. **Verstehen Method:** Aiming for an empathetic understanding, this method was employed to interpret the cultural and religious significance of these pesantren within their local and global contexts (Lindgren et al., 2020).
3. **Interpretive Method:** Data interpretation was guided by discourse analysis, examining the publications and narratives emerging from these institutions regarding Islamic education, nationalism, and transnationalism (Epp, 2020).
4. **Heuristic Method:** This method was utilized to explore new patterns of interaction between the pesantren and their transnational networks, focusing on curriculum and ideology (Lexi & M.A., 2010; Rekonstruksi Metodologi Studi Agama Dalam Masyarakat Multikultural Dan Multirelijius. The Speech of Inauguration of Professor of Philosophy of IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2000; Rukin, 2019).

## RESULT

The three transnational Islamic boarding schools examined in this research—Syahamah Islamic Boarding School (Lebanon), Haromain Islamic Boarding School

(As-Shofwah), and Sulaimaniyyah Islamic Boarding School (Turkey)—share a common foundation in Sunni theology, although they are distinct in their respective schools of thought. The Syahamah and As-Shofwah schools adhere to the Shafi'i tradition, while the Sulaimaniyyah follows the Hanafi school. Epistemologically, all three institutions derive their knowledge from Islamic sciences categorized under *turats* (classical heritage). Notably, the Syahamah and As-Shofwah schools predominantly utilize traditional pedagogical methods, whereas the Sulaimaniyyah Islamic Boarding School incorporates both traditional and modern educational approaches. The validation of their knowledge is anchored in key figures recognized as authoritative references: Sayyid Muhammad bin Alawiy Al Maliki for the Haromain Islamic Boarding School, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Harariy for the Lebanese Islamic Boarding School, and Sheikh Sulaiman Hilmi Tunahan for the Turkish Islamic Boarding School. The written works of these scholars are integral components of the mandatory curriculum for students at each institution.

The socio-religious movement associated with the Lebanese Islamic Boarding School (Syahamah) in Indonesia is framed within the ASWAJA movement, which aligns with the principles of a nation-state. However, the primary focus of this movement tends to emphasize the preservation of the ASWAJA monotheistic doctrine. In contrast, the organizational activities of the Haromain Islamic Boarding School (As-Sofwah) exhibit an affirmative stance toward issues intersecting religion and the state. Nonetheless, some key figures within this school reflect socio-religious movements that echo the agendas of the mass organizations to which they are affiliated, rather than those of their alma mater. Consequently, individuals associated with the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) demonstrate movements consistent with NU's principles, while those linked to the *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI) exhibit similar tendencies. Conversely, the broader socio-religious activities of the Turkish Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia appear marked by a passive attitude towards national issues, as these institutions tend to refrain from involvement in movements related to matters of national identity within the Indonesian context.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### *Transnational Sunni Islamic Boarding Schools: A Transnational Context*

The Syahamah Foundation is an influential entity involved in education, da'wah, and social welfare, established in 1999 by a group of Indonesian Islamic boarding school alumni, including Ustadz Khoirul Anshori and Muhiddin Fatah. Following its founding, the foundation received legal recognition in 2010 through the notary deed of Suparman Hasyim, SH, No. 1, dated December 1, 2010. The Syahamah Foundation has since expanded its influence, establishing a network across 15 provinces in Indonesia, including DKI Jakarta, Banten, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, Central Sulawesi, North Kalimantan, Aceh, North Sumatra, Riau, West Sumatra, Lampung, and Papua. This expansive

reach includes numerous Islamic boarding schools that serve as educational hubs, fostering a significant relationship with international partners. Many students from the Syahamah Foundation are encouraged to pursue further studies abroad, particularly at institutions such as the Global University in Lebanon, which has produced numerous scholars associated with the Syahamah Foundation (Mansour, 2020).

This transnational engagement underscores the intricate dynamics of political theology, as the foundation navigates both local and global Islamic educational contexts. The Syahamah Foundation exemplifies how transnational networks can influence political perspectives among its students, emphasizing religious teachings as a framework for civic responsibility and political engagement. In this regard, the foundation's operations reflect the notion that Islamic educational institutions play a critical role in shaping political consciousness within their communities, contributing to a broader discourse on governance and social responsibility (Mavani, 2021).

In contrast, the Nurul Haromain Islamic Boarding School, established by Abuya Sayyid Muhammad Alawi Al-Maliki—a prominent 20th-century Sunni scholar from Mecca—illustrates another facet of this complex relationship. The governance of this pesantren was entrusted to KH Muhammad Ihya' Ulumiddin, the first chairperson of the alumni association of Abuya Sayyid Al-Maliki's alumni in Indonesia. This historical connection highlights an institutional relationship that facilitates the movement of Islamic knowledge through an organized alumni network. Such connections signify a localized understanding of political theology, where students are encouraged to interpret Islamic teachings as a guide for political support aligned with their religious obligations, thereby fostering a collective identity that prioritizes stability and cooperation (Saeed, 2018).

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The Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School, operational in Indonesia since 2005, is another significant player within this educational landscape. This institution is part of the United Islamic Cultural Center of Indonesia (UICCI), founded by Indonesian



and Turkish Muslim volunteers based in Istanbul. The UICCI is a manifestation of a broader transnational Islamic network that encompasses thousands of branches across Europe, Africa, the Americas, Australia, and Asia. In Indonesia, the Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School maintains a presence in 11 provinces and 30 cities, with over 2,000 students enrolled across major urban centers such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Medan (Khalid, 2022). The establishment of this pesantren aligns with the teachings of Shaykh Sulaiman Hilmi Tunahan, a notable Turkish scholar and the last murshid of the Naqsyabandiyah Order, whose influence extends across approximately 160 countries, including Indonesia.

The Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School’s growth strategy, particularly in student-dense regions like Yogyakarta—often regarded as a center for academic pursuit—highlights the institution's intent to engage youth within a framework that prioritizes Islamic scholarship. This approach connects with political theology by emphasizing the role of religious education in fostering civic engagement and political awareness among students, encouraging them to become informed participants in their communities (Asad, 2015).

The establishment of these transnational Islamic boarding schools—Syahamah, Nurul Haromain, and Sulaimaniyah—reveals the diverse interpretations and applications of Sunni Islamic teachings in Indonesia. Each institution articulates a unique approach to political theology, highlighting how local contexts inform their strategies for engagement with the political landscape. Through their educational practices, these pesantren cultivate a generation of Muslims who are not only well-versed in their religious traditions but also equipped to navigate and actively participate in the complexities of contemporary Indonesian society, thereby reinforcing the importance of political theology as a field of study within Islamic education.

### ***Socio-Political Engagement on Their Communities’ Indonesian National Identity***

The Syahamah Foundation's Lebanon Islamic Boarding School actively engages in both religious and national activities, reflecting a nuanced interplay between Islamic education and the promotion of national identity. Participation in flag ceremonies, particularly during significant national commemorations such as Indonesia’s Independence Day on August 17, exemplifies the school's commitment to fostering a sense of nationalism among its students (Khan, 2020). Additionally, the institution frequently partakes in national seminars and has even hosted these events, thereby asserting its role within the broader socio-political landscape. Despite its active engagement in these nationalistic endeavors, the school consciously refrains from involvement in political demonstrations and activities typically associated with partisan politics, even though it operates within a democratic framework. This stance aligns with a broader trend observed in similar educational institutions, where

engagement in direct political activism is often avoided in favor of maintaining educational and ideological purity (Smith, 2021).

Furthermore, the Syahamah Islamic Boarding School Foundation adheres strictly to the *ahlus sunnah waljama'ah* (ASWAJA) framework, distancing itself from any movements outside this ideology. The primary focus of the foundation's activities is to reinforce ASWAJA's mainstreaming within the Indonesian Muslim community, particularly in discussions surrounding monotheism (Asy'ari, 2019). Events such as speech competitions on Islamic and national themes conducted via digital platforms like YouTube and flag ceremonies held on school grounds illustrate the foundation's commitment to intertwining religious education with national values. However, the institution's approach has faced criticism for being overly formulaic, particularly in its methods, rather than in the substantive content of its teachings (Rahman, 2022).

The Syahamah Foundation's collaborations with domestic partners are framed within the objective of bolstering the ASWAJA ideology while simultaneously safeguarding national unity against extremist ideologies and anarchist movements. The foundation's alliances are predominantly with organizations that align with ASWAJA, reflecting a strategic positioning within Indonesia's socio-political milieu (Ulum, 2021). Thus, the presence of the Syahamah Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia can be interpreted as a manifestation of a broader ASWAJA movement that resonates with the principles of the nation-state.

In contrast, the Nurul Haromain Islamic Boarding School exhibits a similarly nationalistic fervor, participating in flag ceremonies and commemorations of significant national events, such as Santri Day and Independence Day. However, this institution has notably refrained from organizing national seminars or engaging in demonstrations. Its philosophy is grounded in compliance with government policies, demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where adherence to health protocols was emphasized (Suharto, 2023). This stance reflects a non-confrontational approach to governance, which prioritizes the alignment of religious and state interests.

While the Nurul Haromain Islamic Boarding School is welcoming to guests from diverse backgrounds and political affiliations, it maintains a cautious distance from political figures to prevent potential exploitation for partisan agendas. The absence of formal written partnerships with other organizations reinforces this position, indicating a commitment to maintaining independence from political influence (Hassan, 2020). The management's involvement in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) indicates a complex relationship with broader socio-political movements in Indonesia, which could potentially color their ostensibly neutral stance (Syafi'i, 2024).

The Turki Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School takes a markedly different approach, focusing primarily on routine educational activities centered on Islamic studies and preparations for academic pursuits in Turkey. The lack of broader

community engagement through structured majlis ta'lim sessions suggests a more insular focus on internal educational processes (Yusuf, 2021). Celebrations of Islamic holidays and academic competitions reinforce their religious identity, yet these activities do not extend into the socio-political sphere in any significant manner. The passive stance towards national issues is evident in their educational practices, which emphasize Islamic education over active participation in national discourse (Prabowo, 2022).

In summary, the overarching theme among these Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia illustrates varying degrees of engagement with national identity and political theology. The Syahamah Foundation actively intertwines its religious objectives with national identity, while Nurul Haromain balances compliance with state policies with a cautious approach towards political involvement. In contrast, the Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School adopts a more passive stance, focusing primarily on educational activities devoid of political implications. This multifaceted landscape reflects the complexities of navigating religious, educational, and national identities within the Indonesian context.

### ***Illustrating Political Theology through Interview Data***

The qualitative data derived from interviews with leaders and students of these pesantren reveal how their educational experiences shape their political perspectives. For example, the officer and leader as well from the Syahamah Islamic Boarding School remarked, "We taught to respect the government as long as it does good; we focus on spreading knowledge, not on protests" (Interview, 2022). This sentiment encapsulates a theological framework that values stability and order, underscoring how religious teachings can cultivate a political consciousness oriented toward acceptance and civic responsibility rather than dissent.

Moreover, a leader from the Nurul Haromain Islamic Boarding School articulated, "We guide our students to understand politics within the framework of Islamic teachings. If the government is doing its job, we support them" (Interview, 2022). Such statements exemplify the intertwining of religious and political ideologies, framing political engagement as an extension of religious duty and thereby shaping a collective identity that prioritizes harmony and obedience over dissent and resistance.

Additionally, a student from the Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School offered insight into their approach: "Our focus is on knowledge and character building. We believe that true change comes from being good citizens who contribute positively to society, not through protests or political noise" (Interview, 2022). This perspective highlights the pesantren's commitment to cultivating moral integrity and civic virtue over political activism. It indicates a deliberate strategy of engagement that aligns with their religious teachings, promoting an understanding of citizenship grounded in ethical behavior and social responsibility.

These insights illuminate the intricate relationship between faith and politics within the context of these Indonesian Islamic boarding schools. The teachings of these pesantren, deeply rooted in Sunni theology, significantly influence the political consciousness of their students. By emphasizing religious education as a guiding force in civic engagement, these institutions offer a nuanced approach to political theology, contributing to a broader understanding of how religious education can shape political ideologies within the Indonesian context.

Additionally, the distinction between various pesantren, such as the Syahamah, Nurul Haromain, and Sulaimaniyah, reveals the diversity of thought within the broader Islamic educational landscape. Each institution’s unique approach to political theology underscores the multiplicity of interpretations that exist within Sunni Islam, demonstrating how local contexts inform the strategies these schools employ in their engagement with the political sphere.

As the leader and students articulate their understanding of political responsibilities, it becomes evident that their education shapes not only their religious beliefs but also their broader worldviews. The commitment to civic engagement, paired with a focus on religious education, provides students with the tools necessary to navigate the complexities of contemporary Indonesian society. Consequently, these pesantren become essential sites for cultivating a generation of Muslims who are not only knowledgeable in their faith but also aware of their roles as active participants in society.

This multifaceted approach emphasizes the interplay between religious teachings and political engagement, suggesting that the pesantren are not merely educational institutions but also important contributors to the shaping of civic identity in Indonesia. The diverse expressions of political theology within these schools reveal a complex landscape where faith informs political attitudes and actions, reflecting broader societal dynamics in Indonesia. Ultimately, this analysis underscores the critical role that Islamic education plays in shaping not only individual beliefs but also collective identities and civic responsibilities within the context of a pluralistic society.

The following is a table summarizing the findings and analyses discussed in this section:

Aspect	Syahamah Foundation	Nurul Haromain	Sulaimaniyah Islamic Boarding School
<b>Political Engagement</b>	Actively participates in national activities but refrains from involvement in	Avoids demonstrations, endorses beneficial government	Remains disengaged from practical politics, emphasizing educational pursuits.

	practical politics.	al policies.	
<b>Social Activities</b>	Engages in national seminars, competitions, and majlis ta'lim, while reinforcing the ASWAJA ideology.	Celebrates Santri Day and national flag ceremonies, adhering to health protocols.	Commemorates Islamic holidays, organizes CCS competitions, and engages in community service.
<b>Collaborative Efforts</b>	Collaborates with ASWAJA-based organizations within Indonesia.	Welcomes all individuals but exercises caution in engaging with political figures.	Hosts academic writing competitions, inviting alumni and the surrounding community.
<b>Ideological Orientation</b>	Strengthens the ASWAJA ideology while upholding national unity.	Adheres to governmental decisions, maintaining a balance between religion and state.	Concentrates on Islamic education and Sunni traditions without political engagement.
<b>Academic Activities</b>	Conducts ASWAJA-based educational initiatives, focusing on monotheism.	Provides religious education and enforces health protocols.	Offers Islamic education and preparatory programs for study in Turkey, alongside student recognition awards.

## CONCLUSION

Transnational Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia do not consistently engage in practical politics, particularly those adhering to Sunni ideologies, as exemplified by

the three institutions analyzed in this study. These transnational pesantren prioritize the preservation of traditional Islamic sciences and *da'wah*, reflecting a broader concern about the challenges posed by modernity to the faith of Muslims. Among the three, the pesantren affiliated with the Sunni Mecca Islamic boarding schools demonstrated a higher level of participation in nationalistic discourse compared to their counterparts associated with Turkish and Lebanese institutions. The Lebanese pesantren showed some engagement, but the Turkish Islamic boarding schools tended to exhibit apathy toward national issues.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of understanding the interplay between religious education and political theology. The reluctance of these institutions to actively participate in political movements suggests a potential disconnect between traditional Islamic teachings and contemporary political engagement. This raises critical questions about how transnational Islamic boarding schools can adapt their educational paradigms to better address the political realities faced by their communities.

Future research could explore the mechanisms by which these schools can be encouraged to engage more actively in the political sphere, particularly through curriculum reforms that incorporate discussions on civic responsibility and national identity. Practical interventions in the education system, such as workshops and seminars focusing on the intersection of faith and politics, could foster a more active role for these institutions in addressing pressing national issues. By integrating political engagement into their educational framework, transnational Islamic boarding schools can contribute positively to the development of a more informed and responsible citizenry within the Muslim community in Indonesia

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