

Date Received : January 2026  
Date Revised : February 2026  
Date Accepted : February 2026  
Date Published : February 2026

---

## TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT AL-HASANIYAH BREBES ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL IN FORMING THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF MILLENNIAL STUDENTS

**Nuridin**

Universitas Islam Negeri Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, Indonesia (nuridinsyamsudin@gmail.com)

---

**Keywords:**

Pendidikan agama Islam; Asrama Islam; Pesantren: transformasi; karakter religius; santri milenial; Siswa Milenial

---

**ABSTRACT**

**Latar Belakang:** Transformasi pendidikan agama Islam di pesantren menjadi semakin penting di tengah globalisasi, digitalisasi, dan perubahan pola belajar serta sikap keagamaan siswa milenial. Sebagai lembaga pendidikan Islam tradisional, Pesantren Al-Hasaniyah di Brebes menghadapi tantangan untuk melestarikan nilai-nilai pesantren sekaligus menanggapi tuntutan kontemporer. **Tujuan Penelitian** Studi ini meneliti transformasi pendidikan agama Islam di Pesantren Al-Hasaniyah dan implikasinya terhadap pembentukan karakter keagamaan siswa milenial. Dengan **Metode Penelitian** menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam dengan pengasuh, ustaz, dan siswa, serta analisis dokumen institusional. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa transformasi pendidikan di Al-Hasaniyah melibatkan pembaruan metode pembelajaran, pengintegrasian nilai-nilai Islam dengan konteks sosial kontemporer, dan penguatan budaya pesantren untuk menanamkan karakter keagamaan. **Hasil Penelitian** Temuan yang paling signifikan adalah bahwa transformasi ini secara efektif meningkatkan karakter keagamaan siswa, yang tercermin dalam kesadaran spiritual yang lebih kuat, ibadah yang disiplin, akhlak yang mulia, moderasi keagamaan, dan kemampuan beradaptasi dengan perkembangan modern. **Kesimpulan** Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa transformasi pendidikan agama Islam yang kontekstual dan berkelanjutan memungkinkan sekolah berasrama Islam untuk tetap relevan sekaligus memperkuat peran mereka dalam membentuk generasi milenial yang religius dan berkarakter.

---

---

**Keywords:**

Islamic religious education; Islamic Dormitory; Islamic boarding schools; transformation; religious character; millennial students; millennial students

---

**ABSTRACTS**

---

**Background:** The transformation of Islamic religious education in Islamic boarding schools has become increasingly important amid globalization, digitalization, and changes in millennial students' learning patterns and religious attitudes. As a traditional Islamic educational institution, Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes faces the challenge of preserving pesantren values while responding to contemporary demands. **Research Objective:** This study examines the transformation of Islamic religious education at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School and its implications for shaping the religious character of millennial students. **Research Method:** Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with caregivers, ustaz, and students, as well as analysis of institutional documents. The findings show that educational transformation at Al-Hasaniyah involves updating learning methods, integrating Islamic values with contemporary social contexts, and strengthening pesantren culture to internalize religious character. The most significant finding is that this transformation effectively enhances students' religious character, reflected in stronger spiritual awareness, disciplined worship, noble morals, religious moderation, and adaptability to modern developments. **The results of the study** This study concludes that a contextual and sustainable transformation of Islamic religious education enables Islamic boarding schools to remain relevant while reinforcing their role in shaping a religious and character-oriented millennial generation.

---

## A. INTRODUCTION

The millennial era is characterized by rapid advances in information technology, widespread digitalization, and significant shifts in social interaction patterns. These transformations have profoundly influenced education, particularly Islamic religious education. Growing up amid unlimited information flows, global popular culture, and increasingly pragmatic values, millennial students face challenges that may weaken their moral and spiritual orientations (Zulkarnaen 2022) . This condition demands that Islamic religious education adopt a more strategic, adaptive, and transformative role in fostering faith, noble character, and resilience in responding to contemporary challenges.

Concerns regarding the weakening of religious character among millennials are evident in declining religious observance, weakened social ethics, and increasing tolerance toward values that conflict with Islamic teachings (Waruwu and Lawalata 2023) . In this context, educational institutions are not merely centers for knowledge transmission but also arenas for holistic character formation. Islamic religious education plays a crucial role in strengthening students' spiritual and moral foundations, enabling them to navigate modern life without losing their Islamic identity (Bali and Fadilah 2019) .

As one of Indonesia's oldest Islamic educational institutions, pesantren possess distinctive strengths rooted in the integration of religious learning, worship practices, and daily moral habituation. The exemplary role of the kiai, close teacher-student relationships, and a culture of simplicity and discipline position pesantren as effective environments for shaping religious character (Kholifah 2022) . The tradition of exemplary kiai (Islamic scholars), the emotional closeness between teachers and students, and a culture of simplicity and discipline are key strengths of pesantren in

shaping religious character (Muid et al. 2024). Nevertheless, the evolving characteristics of the millennial generation require pesantren to continuously transform their educational practices to remain relevant and impactful.

The transformation of Islamic religious education in pesantren refers to a process of renewal that remains grounded in Islamic values while responding to contemporary realities. This transformation involves adapting curricula, learning methods, educational media, and student development patterns to align with millennial characteristics, including participatory learning styles and technological engagement (Asdlori 2023). The central challenge lies in integrating classical Islamic scholarly traditions with contextual and innovative educational approaches.

Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes represents a pesantren that actively responds to these challenges through a distinctive model of educational transformation. While maintaining its Salafiyah traditions, Al-Hasaniyah has developed learning innovations tailored to the needs of millennial students. These efforts are reflected in curriculum development, diversified teaching strategies, and the integration of religious character education across all pesantren activities. This unique balance between tradition and innovation makes Al-Hasaniyah a compelling case for examining how pesantren can adapt to contemporary demands without losing their identity.

Previous studies have explored character education in pesantren from various perspectives, including models of character education in modern pesantren (Selamat et al. 2023) efforts to prevent radicalism (Roby and Muhid 2022) character education management (Maulidin et al. 2024) and culture-based character education (Rochmania 2022) (Arifin et al. 2022) These studies generally affirm the significant role of pesantren in instilling values of faith, discipline, and noble character through role modeling and habituation, as well as highlighting pesantren modernization in response to societal change.

However, most existing studies address pesantren in a general context and do not specifically focus on the characteristics of millennial students. In addition, in-depth research examining the transformation of Islamic religious education in pesantren and its direct implications for the religious character of millennial students remains limited. Given the unique dynamics of the millennial generation, this gap indicates the need for context-specific and in-depth case studies.

This research addresses this gap by analyzing the transformation of Islamic religious education at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes and its role in shaping the religious character of millennial students. Specifically, the study examines the forms of educational transformation implemented, the learning strategies used to foster religious character, and the implications of these transformations for students' religious attitudes and daily behavior.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic religious education discourse, particularly regarding pesantren transformation in the millennial era. Practically, it offers insights for pesantren administrators, educators, and policymakers in designing adaptive, contextual, and values-based Islamic education models. This research argues that selective and value-oriented transformation is essential for strengthening students' religious character while preserving the pesantren's identity, positioning pesantren as relevant and sustainable Islamic educational institutions in the modern era.

## B. METHOD

This study examines the transformation of Islamic religious education at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes and its implications for shaping the religious character of millennial students. The analysis focuses on the pesantren as an educational system, key educational actors (kiai, ustaz, pesantren administrators, and students), and the practices of Islamic religious education implemented in daily pesantren life. Specifically, the research explores forms of educational transformation, learning strategies, student development patterns, and their implications for strengthening students' religious character.

A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of contextual, dynamic, and complex social and educational phenomena related to the transformation of Islamic religious education in pesantren. The case study design enables a holistic exploration of a single research locus—Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes—allowing for a comprehensive understanding of educational practices, meanings, and transformation dynamics in shaping millennial students' religious character.

Data sources consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from key informants directly involved in the implementation of Islamic religious education, including kiai, ustaz, pesantren administrators, and millennial students. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their roles, experience, and relevance to the research focus. In total, in-depth interviews were conducted with several informants representing each group to capture diverse perspectives on educational transformation and character formation. Secondary data were derived from institutional documents, such as curricula, syllabi, pesantren regulations, student development programs, and archives of educational activities, as well as from relevant scholarly literature, including books, journal articles, and previous studies on Islamic religious education and pesantren.

Data collection techniques included participatory observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations were conducted to directly examine learning practices, educator–student interactions, and the religious culture embedded in the pesantren environment. Semi-structured interviews were guided by an interview protocol, allowing flexibility to explore informants' experiences, perceptions, and reflections on educational transformation and the formation of millennial students' religious character. Documentation analysis played a supporting role by providing institutional and historical context, validating findings from observations and interviews, and identifying consistency between formal educational policies and actual practices within the pesantren. During data collection, researchers encountered minor challenges related to limited access to certain internal documents and scheduling interviews due to the busy routines of pesantren activities; however, these challenges were addressed through prolonged engagement and flexible data collection strategies.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively using thematic analysis techniques. The analysis process involved data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Emzir 2019). Data from observations, interviews, and documents were systematically coded and categorized into key themes related to the transformation of Islamic religious education and the religious character of millennial students. Subsequently, in-depth interpretation was carried out to identify patterns,

meanings, and relationships among themes, resulting in valid and comprehensive conclusions aligned with the research objectives.

## **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Islamic boarding school**

Etymologically, an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) is a combination of two terms: *pondok* (pond) and *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). The term *pondok* refers to a simple dwelling such as a room, hut, or small house that emphasizes simplicity. It is derived from the Arabic word *funduq*, meaning a simple inn or guesthouse. In the context of Islamic education, *pondok* serves as a residence for students from distant regions. Meanwhile, the term *pesantren* is derived from the root word *santri* (*santri*) with the prefixes *pe-* and *-an*, thus meaning a place where students live. Conceptually, a *pesantren* is also defined as an educational institution oriented towards developing individuals with good morals and social awareness (Muhammad et al. 2023).

Terminologically, experts provide various definitions of Islamic boarding schools, but they have relatively similar substance. Mastuhu in (Lailiyah and Imami 2023) views Islamic boarding schools as traditional Islamic educational institutions that emphasize the appreciation and practice of Islamic teachings in daily life with a religious moral orientation. Abdurrahman Wahid in (Anwar et al. 2023) emphasizes the physical and social aspects of Islamic boarding schools as a complex separate from the general community consisting of the *kyai's* house, a mosque, and a student dormitory. Meanwhile, Marwan Saridjo in (Mansyuri et al. 2023) highlights non-classical learning systems such as *sorogan* and *bandongan* with primary references to classical Arabic texts. Imam Syafe'i in (Niswah et al. 2025) positions Islamic boarding schools as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia that have played a significant role in the history of the development of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago.

Based on these various perspectives, Islamic boarding schools can be understood as Islamic educational institutions that place the *kyai* (Islamic religious leader) as a central figure in the educational process. The *kyai's* role is not as a founder, guardian, educator, moral guide, or primary administrator of the educational process. The presence of both resident and non-resident students within the *pesantren* environment reinforces the *pesantren's* function as a space for intensive learning of Islamic knowledge integrated with character and spiritual development.

From a structural perspective, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) possess core elements that distinguish them from other educational institutions: a *kyai* (Islamic cleric), students (*santri*), a *pondok* (dormitory), a mosque, and the teaching of classical Islamic texts (Triono et al. 2022). The *kyai* serves as a scholarly and moral authority with social and religious legitimacy. Students, as subjects of study, are divided into *santri mukim* (resident *santri*), who reside in the dormitory, and *santri kalong* (resident *santri*), who participate in learning without residing. The mosque serves as a place of worship and a center for educational activities and scholarly interaction between the *kyai* and students.

Another important element is the teaching of classical texts, or yellow books, which are characteristic of the Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) scholarly tradition. These texts cover various Islamic disciplines such as grammar, *sharaf*, *fiqh*, *ushul fiqh*, *tafsir*, *hadith*, *tauhid*, and *tasawwuf*. These classic texts were written by both Middle Eastern and Indonesian scholars, either as original works, translations, or commentary on the works of previous scholars (Widodo and Husni 2025). Thus, Islamic boarding

schools function as institutions for the ongoing transmission of classical Islamic knowledge and as centers for the formation of religious character rooted in Islamic tradition and values.

### **B. Millennial Generation**

The millennial generation, also known as Generation Y, Netters, or Nexters, is a demographic group born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s. This generation grew and developed alongside rapid innovation in information and communication technology, thus having a high level of familiarity with digital media and online interactions (Muhammad and Tasruddin 2025) . Various studies have shown that millennials are adaptive to change, open to diversity, and demonstrate flexibility in responding to social dynamics and developments. These conditions make the millennial generation a group that is relatively comfortable facing rapid social, cultural, and technological transformations.

Theoretically, the concept of the millennial generation can be understood through the generation theory proposed by Karl Mannheim in (Indrawan et al. 2023) , which positions generations as socially constructed products of shared historical experiences. Within this framework, the millennial generation was born between two phases of civilization, namely the pre-millennial and post-millennial periods, so it is considered to have better adaptability than previous generations. This generation is generally descended from the baby boomer generation and generation X, who inherited the values of hard work, independence, and high fighting spirit. The combination of traditional values from parents and the influence of modern technology shapes the character of millennials who are collaborative, open, and oriented towards meaning in their work (Manan 2024) .

In terms of characteristics, millennials tend to be leadership-oriented, value professionalism, and enjoy creative and innovative challenges. They tend to multitask, are highly optimistic, and require flexibility and a balance between work and personal life. This generation also prefers participatory and collaborative work patterns over hierarchical and instructive systems. Furthermore, millennials are not reluctant to change jobs if the work environment is deemed unsatisfying or inconsistent with their values and life goals (Manullang et al. 2022) .

In terms of social and cultural characteristics, the millennial generation is characterized by creativity, productivity, and fast and instant access to information. They are accustomed to critical thinking, confident in expressing opinions, and actively building social networks, both in person and through digital media (Aldyandra and Sirozi 2024) . However, high dependence on technology and social media also has negative implications, such as weakening the values of togetherness and mutual cooperation, as well as a reduction in social awareness and formal ethics. Therefore, the millennial generation is a group with great potential for innovation and change, but also faces the challenge of maintaining a balance between technological progress and sociocultural values.

### **C. Context and Culture of Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes**

Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School is located in Karangancol, Larangan, Brebes, Brebes Regency, Central Java, in a religious community with strong Islamic traditions, yet is also in the midst of social change driven by technological developments and cultural globalization. The social environment in which this Islamic boarding school operates is inseparable from the dynamics of rural-urban communities that are

increasingly open to the flow of digital information, modern communication patterns, and changes in the value orientations of the younger generation. These conditions enable the Islamic boarding school to function as an institution for the transmission of Islamic knowledge and as a social institution that plays a role in maintaining the stability of religious values amidst rapid social change.

Culturally, based on observations at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes, it has strong roots in Islamic boarding school traditions, marked by the continuity of teaching of yellow books, a charismatic leadership system of kiai (Islamic scholars), and a pesantren culture that emphasizes discipline, simplicity, and exemplary behavior. Values such as reverence for teachers, the habit of congregational worship, and the collective life of students are characteristic of pesantren culture, serving as a medium for internalizing religious values. This culture forms an educational ecosystem that is instructional, cultural, and transformative.

The character of santri, the majority of whom come from the millennial generation, brings its own dynamics to Islamic boarding school life. Millennial santri have a more open, critical way of thinking, and are familiar with digital technology (Muntolib et al. 2024) . They live in two cultural spaces simultaneously: the pesantren culture, which is steeped in traditional values, and the digital culture that offers freedom, speed, and a diversity of perspectives (Wahidah et al. 2022) . This is in line with the opinion of a Ustad at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School, who stated that this reality requires the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes to make social and cultural adjustments so that the Islamic religious education process remains relevant and effective in shaping the religious character of its students.

It is within this context that the transformation of Islamic religious education at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes finds relevance. Transformation is defined as a process of dialogue between the classical values of the Islamic boarding school and the social demands of the millennial generation. The Islamic boarding school strives to maintain the continuity of religious culture while adapting to social change, ensuring that it remains a contextual, dynamic, and sustainable space for religious character formation (Primarni et al. 2022) . Therefore, the social and cultural context of the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes serves as a primary foundation for understanding the direction and form of the transformation of Islamic religious education being implemented.

#### **D. Forms of Transformation of Islamic Religious Education at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School**

The transformation of Islamic religious education at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes is taking place gradually and contextually in response to the changing character of millennial students and the social dynamics of the community. This transformation is an effort to renew the education system while remaining grounded in Islamic scholarly traditions. Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School strives to maintain continuity between the classical values of the Islamic boarding school and the learning needs of students in the modern era, ensuring that Islamic religious education does not lose its relevance and transformative power.

One prominent form of transformation is the adjustment of the Islamic religious education curriculum. Interviews with the head of the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School revealed that mastery of classical texts ( *kutub al-turats* ) and integration of Islamic material with the context of contemporary life are essential. Material on faith,

jurisprudence, and morals is presented in an applicable manner, linking it to the social realities faced by millennial students, such as digital media ethics, social relations, and religious responsibilities in community life. This curriculum adjustment aims to internalize Islamic values in the students' attitudes and behavior.

Transformation is also evident in the development of Islamic religious education teaching methods. Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School (Pesantren Al-Hasaniyah) has begun combining traditional pesantren methods, such as bandongan and sorogan, with more dialogical and participatory learning methods. Religious discussions, questions and answers, and reflection on values are part of the learning process, encouraging students to think critically and understand the substance of Islamic teachings more deeply. This approach is considered effective in addressing the active nature of millennial students who require space for expression in their learning.

In addition to the curriculum and methods, the transformation of Islamic religious education at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School is also evident in the strengthening of the system for fostering the religious character of students. Character building is carried out through formal classroom learning, habituation of worship, religious activities, and enforcement of Islamic boarding school discipline. Activities such as congregational prayer, regular religious study, recitation of wirid, and daily moral development are the main instruments for internalizing religious values. This transformation emphasizes a balance between normative and humanistic approaches that take into account the psychological well-being of millennial students (Zubedi et al. 2022) .

form of transformation is the use of media and technology to support Islamic religious education . Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School has begun utilizing digital media in a limited and controlled manner to support the learning process, including digital teaching materials, Islamic audiovisuals, and internal communication media. The use of technology as a supporting tool makes learning more engaging and relevant to the world of millennial students. The following are the forms of transformation in Islamic religious education at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes, as shown in Table 1:

**Table 1**  
**Forms of Transformation of Islamic Religious Education at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School, Brebes**

| <b>TRANSFORMATION FORM</b>                     | <b>IMPLEMENTATION AT AL-HASANIYAH ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL</b>   | <b>OBJECTIVE AND IMPACT</b>   |
|--|---|---|
| Curriculum adjustment and integration          | Mastery of classical books (kutub al-turats) combined with contextual Islamic material that is relevant to the contemporary life of students  | Islamic values are internalized in the attitudes and behavior of students in an applicable manner.        |
| Contextualization of teaching materials        | The material on faith, jurisprudence, and morals is linked to the social issues of millennial students, such as digital media ethics, social relations, and religious responsibility. | Students are able to understand and practice Islamic teachings according to the realities of modern life. |
| Integration of traditional and modern methods  | The bandongan and sorogan methods are combined with discussion, questions and answers, and reflection on Islamic values.  | Encourage deep understanding, critical thinking, and active participation of students                     |
| Dialogic and participatory                     | The learning process provides space for expression, dialogue, and active involvement of students in religious discussions.  | Adapting the active and critical character of millennial students   |
| Strengthening the character development system | Formal learning, habituation of worship, religious activities, and enforcement of Islamic boarding school discipline  | Forming a consistent religious character in students' daily lives   |
| Habits and role models                         | Congregational prayers, regular recitations, wirid, and daily moral development   | Internalization of religious values through real practice and continuous habituation                      |
| Normative and humanist                         | Instilling religious values accompanied by attention to the psychological condition of millennial students  | Character development takes place in a balanced manner and is oriented towards the needs of the students. |
| Technology as a supporting tool                | The use of digital teaching materials, Islamic audio-visual media, and internal   | Learning becomes more interesting and relevant without replacing the role of                              |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | communications is limited and controlled. | teachers and Islamic boarding school traditions. |
|--|---|--|

**Source: Observation and Documentation Results at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School**

Overall, the transformation of Islamic religious education at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes demonstrates an integrative effort between preserving tradition and educational innovation. This transformation is aimed at strengthening the Islamic boarding school's role as an institution for developing the religious character of millennial students, who are able to fully internalize Islamic values and actualize them in their daily lives. Thus, the Islamic boarding school serves as a center for religious education and a social institution that adapts to changing times without losing its Islamic identity.

**E. Transformation of Islamic Religious Education Learning Methods and Strategies**

The transformation of Islamic religious education teaching methods and strategies at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes represents a pedagogical response to the changing characteristics of millennial students, who are more dynamic, critical, and familiar with information technology. The transformation fosters a more varied and contextual learning approach without losing the spirit of the Islamic boarding school. Thus, the learning process remains rooted in Islamic scholarly traditions while addressing the needs and learning styles of millennial students.

One form of transformation in learning methods is the integration of traditional Islamic boarding school methods, such as *bandongan* and *sorogan*, with a dialogical and participatory approach. The *bandongan* method, which emphasizes the transmission of knowledge from the *kiai* (Islamic teacher) or *ustaz* (Islamic teacher) to the students (*santri*), remains intact as a means of transmitting scholarly authority. However, this method is complemented by discussion and question-and-answer sessions that provide space for students to clarify their understanding, express their opinions, and relate religious material to the realities of everyday life.

The transformation of learning strategies is also evident in the emphasis on reflective and applied aspects of Islamic religious education. Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School encourages students to reflect on the Islamic values they learn through habituation activities, worship practices, and social interactions within the school environment. This strategy aims to ensure that religious learning does not stop at the cognitive level but transforms into a religious experience that sustainably shapes students' attitudes and behaviors (Amaludin and Adaniyah 2025).

Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes has begun utilizing a wider variety of learning media as part of its Islamic religious education strategy. Audio-visual media, digital teaching materials, and technology-based Islamic resources are being used selectively and in a controlled manner. This media utilization can increase students' motivation and facilitate comprehension, especially for millennial students who tend to prefer visual and interactive learning (Syagif 2022).

The transformation of Islamic religious education teaching methods and strategies at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School is also supported by a more

humanistic approach to exemplary behavior and mentoring. Kiai (Islamic scholars) and ustaz (Islamic teachers) act as teachers, mentors, and role models in the practice of Islamic values. This approach emphasizes that Islamic religious education in Islamic boarding schools is a holistic process that integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Thus, the transformation of teaching methods and strategies at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School contributes significantly to shaping the holistic and contextual religious character of millennial students.

#### **F. Implications of the Transformation of Islamic Religious Education on the Religious Character of Millennial Students**

The transformation of Islamic religious education implemented at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes has significant implications for the religious character development of millennial students. This transformation impacts the cognitive aspects of students' understanding of Islamic teachings and touches on the affective and behavioral dimensions of religious learning. Through a more contextual and adaptive educational approach, millennial students experience a deeper internalization of religious values that are more relevant to their lives.

One of the main implications of the transformation of Islamic religious education is the increased spiritual awareness of millennial students. Learning that integrates understanding of religious texts with reflection on values and worship practices encourages students to interpret Islamic teachings more personally. Religious awareness is understood as a spiritual need that shapes students' life orientation. This is evident in observations at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic boarding school, namely the students' increased consistency in performing their worship and their awareness of maintaining behavior in accordance with Islamic values.

Educational transformation also has an impact on strengthening the morals and social ethics of millennial students. Through character development integrated into the Islamic boarding school culture, students are trained to internalize the values of honesty, responsibility, discipline, and social awareness. An educational approach that emphasizes role models and habituation ensures these values are practiced in daily interactions. Students' religious morals develop as a result of their experiences living in the value-rich Islamic boarding school environment.

Another implication is the development of millennial students' abilities to actualize Islamic values contextually. The transformation of Islamic religious education encourages students to understand religious teachings in relation to the challenges of modern life, including the use of technology and digital media. Students are trained to be critical, selective, and responsible in their use of technology, so that religious values remain the foundation for navigating the digital reality.

The transformation of Islamic religious education also has implications for fostering religious moderation among millennial students. Dialogic and reflective learning approaches help students wisely understand differences and develop tolerance without losing Islamic principles. This moderation is a crucial part of the religious character of millennial students, especially in the context of a pluralistic and dynamic social life.

Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that the implications of the transformation of Islamic religious education at the Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes demonstrate that planned, values-based educational reform can comprehensively strengthen the religious character of millennial students. This

transformation maintains the relevance of Islamic boarding schools in the modern era and emphasizes their role as strategic institutions in shaping a millennial generation that is religious, virtuous, and capable of actualizing Islamic values in their personal and social lives.

### **G. Students' Reactions to the Introduction of Technology in Learning**

The findings indicate that millennial students at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School generally responded positively to the introduction of technology in their learning processes. Most students perceived the use of digital media—such as presentation tools, audiovisual materials, and limited access to online learning resources—as enhancing their understanding of religious subjects. Technology was viewed as making learning more engaging, interactive, and relevant to their everyday experiences as digital natives. Students reported increased motivation, particularly when complex religious concepts were explained using visual or multimedia-based approaches.

However, students' acceptance of technology was not uniform. While many welcomed digital tools as complementary learning resources, others expressed a preference for traditional face-to-face instruction, especially in core religious studies such as kitab kuning (classical Islamic texts). For these students, direct interaction with ustaz and kiai was considered essential for ensuring the authenticity and depth of religious understanding. This indicates that technology was largely accepted when positioned as a supporting tool rather than a replacement for traditional pedagogical relationships.

The study identified several points of resistance toward the integration of technology in learning. Some students expressed concerns that excessive reliance on technology could reduce discipline, weaken focus during learning sessions, and encourage superficial engagement with religious knowledge. A number of students perceived digital devices as potential distractions that could interfere with spiritual concentration and the pesantren's culture of simplicity.

In addition, resistance also emerged from normative and ethical considerations. Certain students felt that unrestricted access to digital technology might expose learners to content that conflicts with pesantren values. This concern was particularly strong among students who emphasized the importance of moral supervision and spiritual discipline as core elements of pesantren education. Such responses reflect a critical awareness among students regarding the risks associated with digitalization, rather than a rejection of technology itself.

From a critical perspective, the transformation of Islamic religious education through technology at Al-Hasaniyah faces several challenges. First, there is a tension between innovation and tradition. While technology offers efficiency and accessibility, its integration must be carefully managed to avoid undermining the authority of religious teachers and the experiential learning model that characterizes pesantren education.

Second, disparities in students' digital literacy present a limitation. Not all students possess the same level of technological competence, which can create unequal learning experiences. Without adequate guidance, technology may benefit only certain students while marginalizing others who are less familiar with digital tools.

Third, infrastructural and regulatory constraints also limit the transformation process. Restricted internet access, controlled device usage, and pesantren regulations

designed to protect students' moral development sometimes slow the adoption of technology. Although these restrictions serve as protective mechanisms, they can also reduce opportunities for students to develop critical digital skills within a supervised educational framework.

These findings suggest that students' reactions to technological integration are characterized by cautious acceptance rather than unconditional enthusiasm. The presence of resistance does not indicate rejection but reflects a critical engagement with the transformation process. Students actively negotiate the balance between technological innovation and the preservation of pesantren values, highlighting the need for a selective and values-based approach to educational transformation.

The results support the argument that successful integration of technology in Islamic boarding schools requires contextual adaptation. Technology should function as an instrument to strengthen religious understanding and character formation, not as an end in itself. By maintaining strong pedagogical authority, ethical supervision, and cultural grounding, pesantren can mitigate the risks of digitalization while maximizing its educational benefits.

Overall, the transformation process at Al-Hasaniyah demonstrates that the integration of technology can enhance learning outcomes and student engagement when aligned with pesantren traditions. At the same time, the identified challenges underscore the importance of critical reflection, institutional readiness, and continuous evaluation to ensure that technological innovation contributes positively to the formation of millennial students' religious character.

## **CONCLUSION**

The transformation of Islamic religious education at Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School in Brebes represents a strategic response to the social and cultural dynamics of the millennial era while preserving the core values of pesantren education. This transformation is evident in the renewal of learning contexts, the adaptation of educational methods and strategies, and the strengthening of pesantren culture as a medium for internalizing religious values. Through an adaptive, dialogical, and contextual approach, Islamic religious education functions not merely as a means of transmitting religious knowledge but also as a process of cultivating spiritual awareness, noble character, religious moderation, and students' capacity to actualize Islamic values in contemporary life. Consequently, Al-Hasaniyah Islamic Boarding School demonstrates its continued relevance as an Islamic educational institution that balances firm adherence to tradition with openness to innovation in shaping the religious character of millennial students.

Looking forward, future research could examine similar transformations in different pesantren contexts, compare traditional and modern pesantren models, or explore the long-term impact of educational transformation on students' religious attitudes and social engagement to further enrich and generalize these findings.

## REFERENCES

- Aldyandra, Aldyandra, dan Muhammad Sirozi. 2024. "Adaptasi Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Terhadap Kebutuhan Generasi Milenial." *Jurnal Inovasi, Evaluasi Dan Pengembangan Pembelajaran (JIEPP)* 4 (3): 443-50. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiepp.v4i3.567>.
- Amaludin, Asep, dan Sofianatul Adaniyah. 2025. "Transformasi Manajemen SDM di Pondok Pesantren: Antara Tradisi dan Inovasi." *Tadbir: Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah FDIK IAIN Padangsidempuan* 7 (2): 243-56. <https://doi.org/10.24952/tadbir.v7i2.17084>.
- Anwar, Heru Saiful, Raja Denata, dan Andi Ikhwanul Islam Firdaus. 2023. "Digitalisasi Pendidikan Pesantren Melalui Sistem Pembayaran Cashless Menggunakan Ngabar Smart Payment Di Pondok Pesantren Wali Songo Ngabar." *MA'ALIM: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4 (1): 43-53. <https://doi.org/10.21154/maalim.v4i1.6678>.
- Arifin, Bustanul, Ali Imron, Achmad Supriyanto, dan Imron Arifin. 2022. "Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Budaya Pada Pondok Pesantren Nurul Hakim Kediri Lobar." *CENDEKIA: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Bahasa Dan Pendidikan* 2 (4). <https://prin.or.id/index.php/cendikia/article/view/452>.
- Asdlori, Asdlori. 2023. "Pendidikan Islam Sebagai Pilar Pembangunan Berkelanjutan: Peran Sistem Pendidikan Pesantren Dalam Implementasi SDGs." *JURNAL PENDIDIKAN ISLAM AL-ILMI* 6 (1): 124-30. <https://doi.org/10.32529/al-ilm.v6i1.2530>.
- Bali, Muhammad Mushfi El Iq, dan Nurul Fadilah. 2019. "Internalisasi Karakter Religius di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Nurul Jadid." *Jurnal Mudarrisuna: Media Kajian Pendidikan Agama Islam* 9 (1): 1. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jm.v9i1.4125>.
- Emzir. 2019. *Metodelogi Penelitian Pendidikan Kualitatif Dan Kuantitatif*. Rajawali Pers.
- Indrawan, Jerry, Ruth Elfrita Barzah, dan Hermina Simanihuruk. 2023. "Instagram Sebagai Media Komunikasi Politik Bagi Generasi Milenial." *EKSPRESI DAN PERSEPSI: JURNAL ILMU KOMUNIKASI* 6 (1): 170-79. <https://doi.org/10.33822/jep.v6i1.4519>.
- Kholifah, Azhar. 2022. "Strategi Pendidikan Pesantren Menjawab Tantangan Sosial di Era Digital." *Jurnal Basicedu* 6 (3): 4967-78. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i3.2811>.
- Lailiyah, Siti, dan Agus Sulthon Imami. 2023. "Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Di Lembaga Pendidikan Pesantren Dalam Meningkatkan Mutu." *EDUKASIA Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 4 (2): 2737-46. <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v4i2.664>.
- Manan, Abdul. 2024. "Peran Pendidikan Islam Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Generasi Milenial." *SCHOLASTICA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan* 6 (1): 33-45.

- Mansyuri, Aulya Hamidah, Beta Ardana Patrisia, Binti Karimah, Defi Vita Fitria Sari, dan Wahyu Nur Huda. 2023. "Optimalisasi Peran Pesantren Dalam Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Di Era Modern." *MA'ALIM: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4 (1): 101–12. <https://doi.org/10.21154/maalim.v4i1.6376>.
- Manullang, Lovianna, Martina Simamora, Kiran Giovany Sitompul, Lisabeth Sitompul, Leo Situmorang, dan Damayanti Nababan. 2022. "Pembentukan Karakter Generasi Milenial: Upaya Mendidik Dan Mendewasakan." *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Dan Humaniora* 1 (4): 61–71. <https://doi.org/10.35931/pediaqu.v1i4.33>.
- Maulidin, Syarif, Deni Januar Darma Surya Siregar, dan Prayitno Prayitno. 2024. "Analisis Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter Di Pondok Pesantren." *Bustanul Ulum Journal of Islamic Education* 2 (2): 136–55. <https://doi.org/10.62448/bujie.v2i2.117>.
- Muhammad, Chanra, dan Ramsiah Tasruddin. 2025. "Peran Media Sosial Sebagai Platform Dakwah Di Era Digital: Studi Kasus Pada Generasi Milenial :." *Jurnal Kolaboratif Sains* 8 (1): 872–81. <https://doi.org/10.56338/jks.v8i1.6862>.
- Muhammad, Giantomi, Asep Dudi Suhardini, Andewi Suhartini, dan Nurwadjah Ahmad E. Q. Ahmad E.q. 2023. "Implementasi Pendidikan Pesantren Salaf Pada Pondok Pesantren Khalaf Di Era Globalisasi." *At Turots: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, Desember 29, 1131–41. <https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v5i2.275>.
- Muid, Abdul, Bustanul Arifin, dan Amrulloh Karim. 2024. "Peluang Dan Tantangan Pendidikan Pesantren Di Era Digital (Studi Kasus Di Pondok Pesantren Al-Islah Bungah Gresik)." *MODELING: Jurnal Program Studi PGMI* 11 (1): 512–30. <https://doi.org/10.69896/modeling.v11i1.2254>.
- Muntolib, Muntolib, Sapiudin Sidik, Muhammad Zuhdi, dan Armai Arief. 2024. "Model Pesantren Tanpa Perundungan Dalam Pembentukan Santri Milenial." *EDU SOCIETY: JURNAL PENDIDIKAN, ILMU SOSIAL DAN PENGABDIAN KEPADA MASYARAKAT* 4 (3): 1863–74. <https://doi.org/10.56832/edu.v4i3.579>.
- Niswah, Choirun, Muhammad Sholihin, M. Yazid Zaszvenda, Erwindo Amirullah, dan Ahmmad Dani. 2025. "Analisis Peran Lembaga Pendidikan Pesantren Dalam Membangun Karakter Dan Ilmu Pengetahuan." *Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisipin* 3 (6): 308–16. <https://doi.org/10.60126/jim.v3i6.984>.
- Primarni, Amie, Sugito Sugito, M. Daud Yahya, Nurul Fauziah, dan Syamsul Arifin. 2022. "Transformasi Filosofi Pendidikan Islam Pada Pondok Pesantren Di Era Society 5.0." *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11 (01). <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v11i01.2812>.
- Roby, Aba Fahmi, dan Abdul Muhid. 2022. "Pendidikan Karakter Siswa Pondok Pesantren Dalam Upaya Mencegah Radikalisme." *Al Yasini : Jurnal Keislaman, Sosial, hukum dan Pendidikan* 7 (1): 1–1. <https://doi.org/10.55102/alyasini.v7i1.4523>.

- Rochmania, Desty Dwi. 2022. "Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Pondok Pesantren." *Jurnal Basicedu* 6 (2): 1687-95. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i2.2293>.
- Selamat, Selamat, Syamsul Arifin, Abdul Haris, Muhammad Qorib, dan Munawir Pasaribu. 2023. "Model Pendidikan Karakter Santri Di Pesantren Modern Muhammadiyah Kwala Madu." *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12 (04). <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v12i04.5268>.
- Syagif, Ahmad. 2022. "Strategi Penguatan Literasi Berbahasa Arab Bagi Santri Milenial." *Fitrah: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan* 13 (1): 73-86. <https://doi.org/10.47625/fitrah.v13i1.375>.
- Triono, Andit, Annisatul Maghfiroh, Maratus Salimah, dan Rohman Huda. 2022. "Transformasi Pendidikan Pesantren di Era Globalisasi: Adaptasi Kurikulum yang Berwawasan Global." *Al-Tarbawi Al-Haditsah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7 (1): 72-81. <https://doi.org/10.24235/tarbawi.v7i1.10405>.
- Wahidah, Finadatul, Dewi Sinta, Babur Rohmah, dan Muhammad Nasikhul Ibad. 2022. "Pendampingan Dan Pengembangan Komunitas Santri Milenial Dalam Berliterasi Digital Berbasis Social Entrepreneurship." *AT TAMKIN: Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam Dan Perubahan Sosial* 1 (2): 78-85.
- Waruwu, Elfin Warnius, dan Mozes Lawalata. 2023. "Peran Guru Pendidikan Agama Kristen dalam Membangun Kesadaran Spiritual bagi Generasi Milenial dan Generasi Z di Era 5.0." *EDULEAD: Journal of Christian Education and Leadership* 4 (2): 144-55. <https://doi.org/10.47530/edulead.v4i2.166>.
- Widodo, Ari Abdi, dan Muhammad Husni. 2025. "Strategi Digitalisasi Pendidikan Pesantren Dalam Internalisasi Nilai Aswaja Bagi Generasi Z Di Era Teknologi." *IHSAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3 (1): 375-86. <https://doi.org/10.61104/ihsan.v3i1.851>.
- Zubedi, Zulkifli, Nina Lamatenggo, dan Arifin Arifin. 2022. "Kepemimpinan Kyai Dalam Transformasi Pondok Pesantren." *Student Journal of Educational Management* 6 (2): 65-79. <https://doi.org/10.37411/sjem.v2i1.1187>.
- Zulkarnaen, Moh. 2022. "Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Kearifan Lokal Di Era Milenial." *AL MA'ARIEF: Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Dan Budaya* 4 (1): 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.35905/almaarief.v4i1.2518>.