

Cooperation and Partnership Patterns Between Thamavitya Mulniti School Islamic Boarding School Thailand in Education, Religion and Entrepreneurship with Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia

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Abstract. This study examines the patterns of cooperation and partnership between the Thamavitya Mulniti Islamic Boarding School in Thailand and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia in the fields of education, religion, and entrepreneurship. This partnership developed as an effort to strengthen the quality of regional Islamic education, expand the da'wah network, and increase the economic independence of students through the development of sharia-based entrepreneurship. Using a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews, document studies, and field observations, this study found that the collaboration between the two institutions is manifested in three main patterns: (1) teacher exchange, curriculum alignment, and strengthening pedagogical competencies, (2) religious development programs, including tahfiz, bahtsul masail, and the development of Al-Qur'an learning methods, and (3) potential cooperation in the field of joint entrepreneurship in the form of halal business training, development of student business units, and cross-border product marketing collaboration. Strengthening factors for the partnership include close Islamic values, similar scientific traditions, and a shared need to increase the capacity of institutions to face the challenges of educational globalization. The results of the study indicate that this partnership contributes to improving the quality of learning, strengthening religious traditions, and the growth of a more productive Islamic boarding school economic ecosystem. However, challenges remain in regulatory harmonization, funding sustainability, and differences in academic standards between countries. Overall, this collaboration model could serve as a potential and sustainable model for Islamic education collaboration in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: cooperation; international partnership; Islamic boarding schools; education, religion, Islamic boarding school, entrepreneurship, Thailand-Indonesia.

Abstrak. Studi ini mengkaji pola kerja sama dan kemitraan antara Pesantren Thamavitya Mulniti di Thailand dan pesantren di Indonesia di bidang pendidikan, keagamaan, dan kewirausahaan. Kemitraan ini dikembangkan sebagai upaya penguatan mutu pendidikan Islam regional, perluasan jaringan dakwah, dan peningkatan kemandirian ekonomi santri melalui pengembangan kewirausahaan berbasis syariah. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui wawancara mendalam, studi dokumen, dan observasi lapangan, studi ini menemukan bahwa kolaborasi kedua lembaga terwujud dalam tiga pola utama: (1) pertukaran guru, penyelarasan kurikulum, dan penguatan kompetensi pedagogik, (2) program pengembangan keagamaan, meliputi tahfiz, bahtsul masail, dan pengembangan metode pembelajaran Al-Qur'an, serta (3) potensi kerja sama di bidang kewirausahaan bersama berupa pelatihan bisnis halal, pengembangan unit usaha santri, dan kolaborasi pemasaran produk lintas negara. Faktor-faktor yang memperkuat kemitraan ini antara lain nilai-nilai Islam yang erat, tradisi keilmuan yang serupa, dan kebutuhan bersama untuk meningkatkan kapasitas lembaga dalam menghadapi tantangan globalisasi pendidikan. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa kemitraan ini berkontribusi pada peningkatan kualitas pembelajaran, penguatan tradisi keagamaan, dan pertumbuhan ekosistem ekonomi pesantren yang lebih produktif. Namun, tantangan yang masih ada adalah harmonisasi regulasi, keberlanjutan pendanaan, dan perbedaan standar akademik antarnegara. Secara keseluruhan, model kolaborasi ini dapat menjadi model yang potensial dan berkelanjutan bagi kolaborasi pendidikan Islam di Asia Tenggara.

Kata kunci: kerja sama; kemitraan internasional; pesantren; pendidikan, agama, pesantren, kewirausahaan, Thailand-Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Thamavitya Mulniti School (often referred to as Ma'had Al-Bi'that Addiniah Thamavitya Mulniti School) is an Islamic educational institution located in Yala, Thailand, that actively collaborates with several higher education institutions and Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Indonesia through international KKN programs, study visits, and the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). This collaboration opens up opportunities for pedagogical transfer, cultural exchange, and synergy in Islamic boarding school-based economic empowerment programs.

Cooperation between Islamic educational institutions in Southeast Asia is growing in line with the growing need to strengthen the competencies of students (students) in education, religion, and entrepreneurship. Thamavitya Mulniti School, a Thai Islamic boarding school, is one of the Islamic educational institutions that places a strong emphasis on character development, academic competency, and the integration of Islamic values with life skills. In Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools are also developing into educational centers that focus not only on religious knowledge but also on strengthening soft skills and empowering students economically. Therefore, the collaboration and partnership model between the Thamavitya Mulniti School Islamic Boarding School in Thailand and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia presents a strategic opportunity to build a productive regional educational network. This research aims to describe the collaboration patterns that can be established between the two parties, encompassing the fields of education, religion, and entrepreneurship.

Currently, collaboration between Islamic boarding schools is being intensively pursued for institutional development. The Thamavitya Mulniti School Islamic Boarding School in Thailand currently collaborates with several Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, such as the Ummul Quro Al-Islami Modern Islamic Boarding School (PM UQI) and the Ummul Quro Al-Islami Institute (IUQI) in Bogor, as well as the Shalahuddin Islamic Institute (INAIS) and the Islamic University of Malang (UNISMA). This collaboration includes student exchanges, international Community Service (KKN) programs, and joint curriculum development to strengthen global perspectives and intercultural understanding. Initial collaboration with UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau is also underway.

Some of the objectives achieved through this collaboration include: cooperation to strengthen intercultural understanding and Islamic studies in Southeast Asia, internationalizing Islamic education, encouraging students to have broader insights, strengthening the character, language, and self-confidence of students and providing cross-cultural learning experiences based on Islamic values..

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach using a limited interview method, namely in the form of interview simulations with the management of Thamavitya Mulniti School and several Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia to explore the needs and potential for collaboration and is complemented and supported by a literature study that examines references related to Islamic educational institution collaboration, the concept of modern Islamic boarding schools, and international partnership models and is supported by documentation that examines curriculum documents, work programs, and regulations related to educational institution collaboration in Indonesia and Thailand. Data were analyzed using the Miles & Huberman interactive model through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The collaboration between the Thamavitya Mulniti School in Thailand and various Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia demonstrates significant collaborative development across three main focuses: education, religion, and entrepreneurship. This partnership is part of an effort to improve the quality of human resources in Islamic boarding schools while strengthening the Islamic education network between countries in Southeast Asia. The collaboration is motivated by the need for both parties to share their strengths: Indonesia, with its strong Islamic boarding school tradition, and Thailand, with its development of integrative Islamic education and strengthening of minority Muslim communities.¹

In the field of education, the partnership's results are reflected in student and teacher exchanges, the development of an integrated curriculum, and training in the use of digital learning media. The student exchange program allows Thai students to learn about Indonesian Islamic boarding school traditions, particularly in areas such as mastery of the yellow books (*kitab kuning*), memorization of the Quran, and religious learning based on *halaqah* (religious circle). Conversely, Indonesian students have the opportunity to deepen their Malay-Thai language skills and understand the student-centered learning system developing in Thailand.² This synergy enriches the learning experience and supports the creation of an Islamic boarding school education model that is adaptive to global demands.

The curriculum collaboration also resulted in the integration of tradition-based learning and innovation. The Thai side adopted some of the learning methods of classical Indonesian Islamic boarding schools, while the Indonesian side studied the digital learning practices already developed at Thamavitya Mulniti School. This collaboration fostered the creation of a modern curriculum design that remains grounded in Islamic values while remaining responsive to technological developments.³



Figure 1 Directions from the Head of the Thamavitya Mulniti School Thailand Islamic Boarding School

In the religious sphere, religious activities such as international seminars, *bahtsul masail* (religious discussion), and training for young preachers are important outcomes of the partnership. These forums strengthen the dissemination of moderate Islamic values (*Islam Wasathiyah*), which has become a reference for Indonesia in the ASEAN context.⁴ The training for young preachers also produces *da'wah* cadres capable of adapting to the multicultural contexts of both Thailand and Indonesia.⁵ This is crucial because both countries face different challenges in socio-religious life, particularly Thailand, which has a minority Muslim community in certain regions.

Meanwhile, in the entrepreneurship sector, the partnership has resulted in a business incubation program for Islamic boarding school students (*santri*), cooperative management training, halal product development, and the establishment of international market networks. Thailand, as one of the countries with a growing halal market in ASEAN, provides access to knowledge regarding international halal standards. Indonesia, through its Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) that have established independent businesses, provides experience in managing Islamic boarding school

business units.⁶ Through this collaboration, Islamic boarding school students from both countries are equipped with Sharia-based business skills, digital marketing, and the development of creative Islamic boarding school products.

Discussions regarding the partnership model indicate that this relationship operates on a model of mutual collaboration, a mutually beneficial relationship based on equality. This pattern is characterized by the sharing of resources, pedagogical experience, and economic opportunities.⁷ This collaborative pattern not only strengthens the internal capacity of each institution but also expands the role of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Islamic education diplomacy at the international level.

However, several challenges emerged during the implementation process, such as language differences, educational regulations, and funding for exchange programs. These challenges require strategies to strengthen communication, professional mentoring, and support from the government and private sector to ensure a more stable and sustainable partnership.⁸

Overall, the results of this partnership demonstrate that the collaboration between Pesantren Thamavitaya Mulniti School in Thailand and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia not only has a positive impact on improving academic and religious quality, but also strengthens the economic independence of students and fosters a harmonious and moderate ASEAN Islamic education network. This partnership has the potential to become a model for regional collaboration that can be replicated by other Islamic educational institutions.

This collaboration is firmly grounded in the need to strengthen the quality of Islamic education in the Southeast Asian region. Southern Thailand, where Thamavitaya Mulniti School is located, has a sizable Muslim population, enabling a cross-border Islamic education network to strengthen the identity and quality of students' education.

Furthermore, Indonesian Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) possess a rich educational model, extensive networks, and extensive experience in developing Islamic boarding school-based entrepreneurship. This has significant potential to be shared with Islamic educational institutions in other countries. The teacher-student exchange model is considered the most strategic because it directly impacts cultural understanding, global adaptation, and international communication skills. Meanwhile, entrepreneurial collaboration can open new economic opportunities for Islamic boarding schools, particularly in the context of the growing halal industry in the ASEAN region. Thus, this partnership not only strengthens ties between educational institutions but also supports Islamic cultural diplomacy in Southeast Asia.

CONCLUSION

1) Conclusion

The collaboration between the Thamavitaya Mulniti School Islamic Boarding School in Thailand and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia can be developed through three main areas: education, religion, and entrepreneurship. These three areas complement each other and have the potential to positively impact institutional capacity building and the formation of a generation of globally competitive Islamic students. This collaboration deserves to be continued and expanded as it can strengthen regional Islamic education networks and support the economic empowerment of Islamic boarding schools.

2) Recommendations

- Cross-border educational collaboration can improve the academic quality of Islamic boarding school students through cultural exchanges and learning methods.
- Collaboration in the religious field is a means of strengthening moderate and multicultural Islamic preaching.

- Entrepreneurial partnerships have the potential to open new economic opportunities and support the independence of Islamic boarding schools.
- Implementation of this collaboration requires government policy support and formal agreements between institutions.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure effective and sustainable collaboration..

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