

Article

**Paradigmatic Evidence of Nationalism at Pesantren Ngruki**

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Received: 16 August 2024

Accepted: 27 January 2025

**Abstract:** The controversy surrounding Pesantren Ngruki inspired this study. This Pesantren was accused of being a terrorist den, making it difficult to defend itself. On this basis, an opportunity to refute any accusations was created by analyzing the pesantren through the lens of nationalism. This article explains how Pesantren Ngruki, one of Indonesia's Islamic educational institutions, approaches nationalism in social, political, and theological contexts. This study aims to thoroughly and comprehensively present Pesantren Ngruki's nationalism through an objective-critical approach that lends meaning to the reality of Pesantren's schooling while also addressing the specific practice of nationalism. This qualitative study aims to reveal evidence. The controversy surrounding Pesantren Ngruki inspired this study. This Pesantren was accused of being a terrorist den, making it difficult to defend itself. On this basis, an opportunity to refute any accusations was created by analyzing the pesantren through the lens of nationalism. This article explains how Pesantren Ngruki, one of Indonesia's Islamic educational institutions, approaches nationalism in social, political, and theological contexts. Another goal is to thoroughly and comprehensively present Pesantren Ngruki's nationalism through an objective-critical approach that lends meaning to the reality of Pesantren's schooling while also addressing the specific practice of nationalism. This qualitative study aims to reveal evidence.

**Keywords:** Evidence; nasionalism; Pesantren Ngruki; education; santri

## Introduction

Issues of nationalism persist alongside the challenges we face. Traditional and modern Pesantren consistently strive to nurture a knowledgeable and national generation. Their dedication is evident in their commitment to providing benefits and *maslahat* for the community, even amid trials. As pillars of Indonesia's cultural and religious heritage, pesantren balance religious and secular education. This fosters a worldview where nationalism becomes a moral and ethical commitment to the nation's welfare.

Pesantren and the community coexist harmoniously, free from mutual suspicion or harm. Both parties collaborate to maximize benefits and shared values. Pesantren's nationalism is evident through established national indicators that reflect the nation's identity. This spirit of nationalism is integrated into educational curricula in schools, madrasas, and pesantren. These efforts nurture students' awareness and love for their homeland, fostering unity and national pride (Nasor, 2020) The idea behind this approach is that living in Indonesia helps students develop a strong sense of belonging to their country, encouraging them to contribute to the nation and understand their role in Indonesian society.

Pesantren Ngruki is an important institution in Indonesia, especially known for shaping students' ideologies and identities. Nationalism is taught here by fostering a love for the country. The pesantren's history is closely tied to Indonesia's political landscape and often sparks discussions. It provides insight into how Islamic education connects with political and social changes, influencing the nationalism and political views of its students. Given Indonesia's ethnic and religious diversity, Pesantren Ngruki is key in promoting national unity and inclusive thinking. It demonstrates how pesantren can blend local traditions with global influences while preserving national identity. This makes Ngruki an important example for studying how Islamic education shapes national identity in diverse societies. It offers valuable lessons on managing multiculturalism, ideological differences, and identity challenges, contributing to global conversations about tolerance, integration, and interfaith relations.

## Literature Review

The study of nationalism at Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki has garnered considerable attention from researchers. Various studies, each with its own focus and perspective, have sought to unravel the dynamics and manifestations of nationalism within this Islamic educational institution. Some investigations highlight the aspects of education and teaching, while others examine the school's interaction with broader political and social dynamics.

Research conducted by in his work "Educational Patterns of Islamic Boarding Schools in the Contemporary Era (Case Study: Al-Mukmin Ngruki Islamic Boarding School)" (Wicaksono, 2023) delves into the educational patterns of this school, including the possible internalization of national values. Similarly, Supaat (2023) in his study "The Dynamics of Islamic Education at Ngruki Islamic Boarding School" (Supaat, 2023) also highlights the dynamics of education at the school, which naturally includes values related to identity and nationality.

In addition to academic research, media attention has also been directed toward this issue. An article in *Kompas.com* (2022), for example, highlights how Pesantren Ngruki instills the values of nationalism among its students. This article provides a glimpse into the practices and efforts of the school in fostering a sense of love for the homeland.

Other studies, such as those conducted by Akbar (Akbar, 2018), Julie (Hwang, 2018), (Murtadlo, 2017), and Sidney Jones (2010) (Barton, 2020; Zakiyah, 2016), while not explicitly discussing nationalism, contribute to our understanding of Pesantren Ngruki. These works, including articles published by *NU Online* (2021), (Akbar, 2018), provide a broader context regarding this school, including its interactions with the community, religious views, and involvement in various social and political issues. This context is crucial for understanding how nationalism is manifested at Pesantren Ngruki.

The synthesis of these various studies suggests that nationalism at Pesantren Ngruki is a complex and multidimensional construct. It is not only related to the teaching of national values and ideology but is also closely linked to the school's interaction with local and national political dynamics, as well as its response to global social change. Further research is needed to understand more deeply how these factors interact and shape the manifestations of nationalism at Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki.

## Methodology

### 1. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, (Tracy, 2024), utilizing a case study method to explore the paradigmatic evidence of nationalism in Pesantren Ngruki. The case study method is well-suited to examining complex social phenomena within their natural settings, providing a deep understanding of how nationalism is taught, understood, and practiced in the pesantren environment (Hancock, D. R., 2021; Sayidah, 2018; Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2011). The research focuses on the pesantren's structure and culture, its perceived connections with radicalism and terrorism, and the impact of negative media portrayals. Fieldwork and data collection precede the finalization of research questions and hypotheses, allowing the study to adapt to emerging findings. (Arthur, 2012; Barroga, E., Matanguihan, 2022)

## 2. Sample and Sampling Technique

The research uses a purposive sampling technique to select informants who are directly relevant to the study’s objectives (Campbell, 2020; Rukin, 2019; Sirozi, 2020; Thomas, 2022). The founders and caregivers of the pesantren were chosen for their foundational role in establishing the pesantren and shaping its vision, particularly in integrating nationalism into the curriculum. Teachers or lecturers were included as they are instrumental in delivering education emphasizing nationalism and pesantren ideology. Students were selected as the primary recipients of this education, offering perspectives on how these values are internalized and applied in their lives. Alumni were also included to provide insights into the long-term effects of nationalism education on their views and practices in broader social and professional contexts. This diverse sampling ensures a well-rounded understanding of the research topic.

## 3. Data Collection Process

The research employs multiple data collection methods to understand the topic comprehensively. (Mazhar, 2021). Participant observation is used to study the social structures, interactions, and daily practices within the pesantren environment. Unstructured interviews with the head of the foundation, teachers, alumni, and students provide rich, qualitative insights into the perspectives of various stakeholders. Document analysis is conducted on organizational policies, archival materials, and related records to offer additional context and validate findings from other sources. Data is collected in the natural setting of the pesantren, ensuring authenticity and contextual relevance. (Morgan, 2022; Tracy, 2024)

## 4. Data Analysis

The analysis focuses on interpreting the relationship between religious education and nationalism as it is expressed within Pesantren Ngruki. Insights from observations, interviews, and document analysis are synthesized to create a cohesive narrative. (Karppinen, 2019). The thematic analysis identifies key patterns and recurring themes, such as integrating nationalism into the curriculum and its impact on students and alumni. Contextual interpretation examines external factors, such as media narratives and societal perceptions, and their influence on the pesantren's approach to nationalism. An iterative process ensures that the analysis remains aligned with emerging insights, offering a thorough and nuanced understanding of the topic. The goal is to provide a detailed account of how nationalism is cultivated, understood, and manifested within the pesantren, (Luthfi, 2024), contributing to broader discussions on the intersection of education, religion, and national identity.

## The Findings

Despite its controversial past, Pesantren Ngruki provides deep religious education and teaches strong moral values. In terms of nationalism, the pesantren emphasizes the importance of national unity, even when there are different views on religious teachings. Nationalism at Pesantren Ngruki is taught through a combination of religious lessons and activities that incorporate nationalist values. While the pesantren faces challenges from public and media opinions, it remains committed to fostering patriotism among its students. The goal is to balance religious and national identity, though there is still room to improve and tailor this approach. (see table 1).

Table 1. Understanding Nationalism in Pesantren Ngruki

Aspect	Dimension	Indicators
Understanding Nationalism	1. Truth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of speech and expression</li> <li>• Belief and worship</li> </ul>
	2. Equality and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality in law</li> <li>• Fairness</li> </ul>
	3. Respect for Dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect for human dignity in a natural way</li> <li>• Nurturing and respecting the work of others</li> </ul>
	4. Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moral responsibility</li> <li>• Ethical behaviour</li> </ul>

5. Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal responsibility</li> <li>• Accepting the risk of action</li> </ul>
6. Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honest</li> <li>• Consistent between words and deeds</li> </ul>
7. Accept and appreciate diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect for minorities/disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Accept, and appreciate differences</li> </ul>
8. Responsible freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating an atmosphere free from fear of expressing ideas</li> <li>• Responsibility towards others</li> </ul>
9. Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation readiness</li> <li>• Practise positive cooperation with all parties</li> </ul>

The sense of nationality in Pesantren Ngruki is instilled through the integration of national values in religious education and extracurricular activities. Despite challenges, particularly related to public and media perceptions, this pesantren shows significant efforts to instill a sense of patriotism and national awareness in its students. Nationalism education in this Pesantren seeks to create harmony between religious and national identity, and although there is still room for improvement, these efforts demonstrate a commitment to the development of a sense of nationalism among students. (see table 2)

Table 2. The Sense of Nationalism at Pesantren Ngruki

Aspect	Dimension	Indicators
Sense of Nationalism	1. Love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good manners in behaviour</li> <li>▪ Loyal and willing to sacrifice for peace</li> </ul>
	2. Compulsion/compassion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing support and nurturing</li> <li>▪ Sensitised to the needs of others</li> </ul>
	3. Harmony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mutual trust and understanding</li> <li>▪ Prioritising consensus</li> </ul>
	4. Tolerance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Respect personal and cultural differences</li> <li>▪ Accept pluralism</li> </ul>
	5. Caring and sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caring</li> <li>▪ Generous</li> </ul>
	6. Interdependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Connect with people</li> <li>▪ Active participation</li> </ul>
	7. Recognition of other people's souls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Belief in material and spiritual potential</li> <li>▪ Belief in the human spirit</li> </ul>
	8. Gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Awards</li> <li>▪ Willingness to accept</li> </ul>

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Table 3. The Spirit of Nationalism at Pesantren Ngruki

Aspect	Dimension	Indicators
Spirit of Nationalism	1. Respect for the law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respect for collective decisions</li> <li>- Respect for those in authority</li> </ul>
	2. Responsible freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freedom to express intent clearly</li> <li>- Democratic living/ disadvantaged groups</li> </ul>
	3. Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Belief in human dignity</li> <li>- Recognition of minority rights</li> </ul>
	4. Self-control (discipline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Polite interaction with fellow human beings</li> <li>- Non-violent dispute resolution</li> </ul>
	5. Active citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary readiness</li> <li>- Civic awareness</li> </ul>
	6. Openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on dialogue and consultation</li> </ul>

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7. Critical thinking	- Open to universal scientific truths - Have a strong drive to know - Use correct information as a basis for decision-making
8. Solidarity	- Making collective decisions - Prioritises working in teams

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Many pesantren in Indonesia teach nationalism in line with the state ideology, emphasizing Pancasila and Unity in Diversity. This approach contrasts with pesantren like Ngruki, which focuses more on religious values in understanding nationalism. Studies show that different pesantren teach nationalism in various ways, depending on their ideological stance and policies. For example, some traditional pesantren integrate nationalism with religious teachings, while others focus primarily on religious education, especially those that only study the “Kitab Kuning.” These differences highlight the diverse ways pesantren in Indonesia understand and practice nationalism.

## Discussion

According to Dault, nationalism is the collective desire of a group to build an independent nation based on unity and solidarity. In Indonesia, nationalism played a crucial role in uniting people during the independence movement. Various organizations and youth movements helped shape national identity and strengthen resistance against colonial rule. The proclamation of independence in 1945 was the peak of this nationalist spirit and collective struggle. Today, nationalism remains essential in maintaining Indonesia’s sovereignty and unity amid global challenges. (Dault, 2017; Liana, 2024)

Nationalism (Liana, 2024; Malek, 2023) not only unites people but also provides a moral foundation for justice and resistance to oppression. The desire for freedom is in line with religious values that emphasize justice and the rejection of harm, as reflected in the teachings of the Qur'an: "neither cause harm nor suffer loss" (Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 279). Figures at Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki have reinforced this perspective, highlighting the role of religious education in fostering unity (Noor, 2022).

H. Ibnu Hanifah, Director of the Pesantren Al-Mukmin, asserted, "This pesantren emphasizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of the nation, even though there are differences in some views." In line with this statement, KH Wahyuddin, Chairman of the Al-Mukmin Education Foundation, stated, "We equip the students with strong religious knowledge, but also provide an understanding of the importance of national unity." Likewise, KH. Muzayyin Marzuki, Chairman of the Kiai Council of Al-Mukmin Pesantren, "Patriotism is not only about loving the country, but also about how we contribute with good morals."

Education plays an important role in fostering nationalism. Without nationalism, education is difficult to develop in the midst of global competition. Islam and nationalism have a positive relationship, as seen in the history of the state of Medina founded by Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. Islam is universal but still encourages love and defense of the homeland. This principle is reflected in the phrase, "Love of country is part of faith." (Olomi, 2019; Putra, 2023)

From the perspective of the santri, "Here we are taught to love religion and also the country. Ustaz often reminds us that Islam and nationalism can go together," explained Rahma –a grade 12 santri. "Although there are different views, we are taught to respect the government as long as it does not conflict with Sharia," said Zaim –a grade 9 santri. Meanwhile, Rasyid –the head of the santri community– stated, "We participate in activities such as flag ceremonies and learn the history of the nation's struggle so that we still feel part of Indonesia."

Nationalism in pesantren is a deeply rooted spirit of devotion to the nation. Nearly all pesantren uphold this sense of patriotism. At Pesantren Ngruki, nationalism has undergone significant transformations, as noted by KH. Ibnu Hanifah. These changes stem from a broader and deeper understanding of Pancasila. This new perspective has fostered a more open and inclusive mindset. As a result, two main views on nationalism have emerged: the classic and contemporary paradigms. Both are reflected in the pesantren’s historical development.

## 1. Classical Paradigm

The strong classical pesantren understanding at Pesantren Ngruki, shaped by its founder's mindset, has led to rigid interpretations of religious and national philosophy –as explained by KH. Muzayyin Marzuki. This rigidity creates a lack of integration between religious and state dimensions, making its doctrines prone to misinterpretation. As a result, the pesantren's perspective on Indonesia's national ideology often appears inflexible. This has contributed to misunderstandings about its role in society and its stance on national values.

The challenge of maintaining a balanced view is heightened in an environment where the founder of Pesantren Ngruki cannot freely express opinions that challenge mainstream interpretations of Pancasila. Ustaz Abu, the founder, rejects Pancasila as the state's foundation, which has led to accusations of misinterpretation. This has caused the pesantren to be perceived as subversive or even as opposing the government. Some believe its teachings support the idea of an Islamic state, further fueling controversy. (Ichwan, 2013; Sukabdi, 2023).

This narrow perspective has led to resistance, particularly from the New Order regime, which labeled Pesantren Ngruki in ways that may not reflect its true nature (Adibah, 2021). Differences in ideology and actions associated with Ustaz Abu contributed to historical tensions. His refusal to sign the "Loyalty to Pancasila" statement should not be seen as mere defiance but rather as an expression of his interpretation. His stance, although controversial, can be understood as an effort to uphold his vision of the Republic of Indonesia. (Leliya, 2024; Tan, 2014).

Pesantren Ngruki maintains a strict and exclusive lifestyle that discourages moderation, making it difficult for students to adopt a balanced approach. This strictness has led some to label the pesantren as "radical," although this characterization is debated. Its exclusivity stems from its specialized learning model, which is tailored for advanced students. These unique aspects have led to differing opinions, assumptions, and accusations about the institution.

Despite these controversies, Pesantren Ngruki remains a significant part of Indonesia's religious and educational landscape. Its teachings continue to shape the perspectives of its students, influencing how they engage with society. While concerns about its interpretations persist, understanding its historical and ideological context is essential. A more comprehensive dialogue may help bridge misunderstandings and foster a more nuanced view of its role. The challenge remains in balancing religious commitment with national identity in a diverse and pluralistic Indonesia.

## 2. Contemporary Paradigm

Nationalism in Pesantren Ngruki (Nugroho, 2022b) is reflected in various aspects of santri life, which is shown through the values of truth. Santri is given freedom of speech and expression, especially in speech training. In addition, they also have strong faith and discipline in worship, which reflects the freedom of belief and worship in accordance with the teachings of their religion –based on observations of santri activities for 3 months, and have been crosschecked with the results of interviews and pesantren policy documents.

The principles of equality and justice are highly upheld in pesantren, fostering a strong sense of fairness –as shown in Table 4. All santri are treated equally before the law, without any form of discrimination. Alfin, the head of security and discipline, ensures that these values are consistently applied. Santri are taught to practice justice in their daily lives and social interactions. This commitment shapes their character, instilling integrity and responsibility. By embracing justice, they contribute to a harmonious and united society. These values strengthen their sense of nationalism, inspiring them to uphold fairness for all.

Respect for human dignity is taught through harmonious living together in pesantren. Santri is taught to respect each other, appreciate the work of friends and pesantren managers, and protect the environment as a form of concern for others and the surrounding nature. This attitude forms the character of santri who can appreciate diversity and the existence of others –The results of interviews with Zaim (grade 11), Shilfi (grade 12), and Nida (grade 10) are in line with the statements of H. Zarodin (the principal who is also a member of the pesantren Foundation) and Ust. Ir. Darwis (teacher and administrative leader).

Likewise with integrity. This is an important part of the character building of santri at Pesantren Ngruki. According to Mr. Nurdin Urbayani, the head of the alumni organization of Pesantren Ngruki, santri are required to be morally responsible and demonstrate ethical behaviour in daily life. In social interactions, santri

always shows good morals, which reflect a personality with integrity and responsibility for the values they embrace. This is confirmed by Usth. Roisah Mufidah, the coach of the female boarding school students.

Accountability is also part of learning in pesantren. Santri is given responsibility for the goods entrusted by their parents, and those who break the rules will be given sanctions as a form of learning about the consequences of their actions –for example, as experienced by Fajar when he left the pesantren without permission and Bagus who once skipped school. This instills an awareness that every action has an impact and must be accounted for.

At Pesantren Ngruki, honesty is not just a theory, but a rule of life that every santri must live by. They are taught to always tell the truth, even though challenges come from all directions, even in exams without supervisors. Words and actions must be in harmony because in this pesantren, getting caught lying can lead to character-building punishment. Every santri is forged to have a strong character, not easily shaken by the temptations of the world, including in terms of trust and trust. Not just a place of learning, this pesantren is a crater of *candradimuka* that gives birth to a tough and trustworthy person in society. Here, honesty is not an option, but an obligation that is familiarised in all aspects, from small matters to big responsibilities. From this pesantren, a generation is born that is ready to face the world with an upright head, a clean heart, and unshakable principles.

In addition, pesantren also instill the value of accepting and respecting diversity. Santri live together in diversity without questioning their regional origin, ethnicity, or language. They are taught to cooperate in various tasks with straight intentions and team spirit. Responsible freedom is also taught through discussions, courage to speak in public forums, and safeguarding the common interest. All these values form santri who have strong nationalism and are ready to contribute to the nation and state.

So, what is the form of nationalism in Pesantren Ngruki? Nationalism or love for the country will appear when overseas, when there is a threat and requires defense, while in ordinary conditions (safe), love for the country is not so (far-fetched). One form of santri nationalism is using of Indonesian among santri – not their respective regional languages, to avoid the emergence of conflict. Nationalism is built based on the correct application of Islamic law so it will be like *'urf*. According to KH Muzayyin Marzuki, the development of nationalism and national insight in Ngruki is not termed or given a certain title but rather leads to a form of actualization.

Table 4. Evidence of Nationalism in Pesantren Ngruki

Concept	Indicators	Evidence
1. Truth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freedom of speech and expression</li> <li>Belief and worship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students speak freely at speech rehearsal</li> <li>Students have strong faith and disciplined worship</li> </ul>
2. Equality and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality under the law</li> <li>Justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are treated equally before the law</li> <li>Students learn to be fair in every matter</li> </ul>
3. Respect for Dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect human dignity in a reasonable manner</li> <li>Nurturing and valuing the work of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students live with respect for each other</li> <li>Students appreciate the work of friends and administrators</li> </ul>
4. Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moral responsibility</li> <li>Ethical behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students protect the environment</li> <li>Students behave daily on the basis of morals</li> <li>Students show morals in their interactions</li> </ul>
5. Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal responsibility</li> <li>Accepting the risk of action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students maintain the trust of property entrusted by parents</li> <li>Students who are negligent and violate the rules are subject to sanctions</li> </ul>
6. Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Honest</li> <li>Consistent between words and deeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students live their daily lives in honesty</li> <li>Students learn to say and do things that are in line</li> <li>Students live together in diversity</li> </ul>
7. Accepting and Respecting Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect for minority disadvantaged groups</li> <li>Accept, and appreciate differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are ready to be placed in rooms with students who come from different regions</li> <li>Students never question the origin of the region, tribe, and language</li> </ul>
8. Responsible Freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating an atmosphere free from fear of expressing ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students learn to discuss in every lesson</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility towards others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students learn courage through speeches, memorization, being an imam</li> <li>- Students have an opinion based on ethics</li> <li>- Students maintain the common good</li> </ul>
9. Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation readiness</li> <li>• Practise positive cooperation with various parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students straighten their intentions in every task</li> <li>- Students work as a team on assigned tasks</li> </ul>

### 3. The Transformation of Education at Pesantren Ngruki: The Dynamics of Nationalism and National Insight

Pesantren Ngruki has undergone significant changes in its educational paradigm, particularly concerning the discourse of nationalism and national insight (Nugroho, 2022a). This transformation reflects efforts to adapt to contemporary challenges while enhancing the pesantren's contribution to shaping students who are religiously devout and also possess a strong sense of national awareness. Over the past few decades, two key dimensions have served as pillars of this change: curriculum reorientation and the transformation of social interaction patterns. These two aspects have played a crucial role in reshaping Pesantren Ngruki into a more inclusive Islamic educational institution with a strong national orientation (Abdillah, 2022; Wildan, 2022).

The first dimension is curriculum reorientation, which has shifted from an exclusive approach to a more open model that incorporates national insight. Previously, education at Ngruki primarily focused on classical interpretations and textual approaches to Islamic teachings (Hakim, 2023). However, its curriculum has now been modernized to include civic education, Indonesian history, and a more contextual understanding of Islam. Integrating national values into the curriculum aims to develop students who deeply understand religious teachings and recognize the importance of unity, tolerance, and contributions to the nation.

The second dimension that marks this transformation is a more open and adaptive pattern of social interaction among students and the broader community. Pesantren Ngruki, once known for its exclusive approach to external interactions, has now become more active in social and national activities. Students are encouraged to participate in community engagement programs, attend leadership training, and interact with various elements of society beyond the pesantren environment. This exposure allows students to develop a deeper understanding of Indonesia's diversity and reinforces their sense of tolerance in daily life.

Moreover, this transformation has also influenced the preaching methods practiced by Ngruki's alumni and educators. While past approaches were often ideological and rigid, there has been a shift toward a more moderate and dialogical method of delivering Islamic teachings (as stated by Irham, a community leader in Ngruki Village). Alumni spread across various regions now emphasize Islam as a religion of peace, advocating for national unity and social harmony (Sebastian, 2024). This more adaptive method of preaching has helped dismantle the exclusivist stigma once associated with the pesantren.

This significant transformation is not accidental; rather, it is the result of both internal and external dynamics within the pesantren. Internally, there is a growing awareness among stakeholders that the institution's sustainability depends on its ability to adapt to social changes and contemporary demands. Externally, government and societal encouragement have pushed pesantren to take a more active role in fostering nationalism among students. Collaboration with academics and other educational institutions has also accelerated this process, further enriching the pesantren's outlook on nationalism and education.

However, these changes do not come without challenges. Some groups within the pesantren community still struggle to balance the preservation of Islamic purity with the acceptance of nationalism as an integral part of education (Aimah, 2024). Striking a balance between Islamic values and nationalistic spirit remains a critical challenge for Pesantren Ngruki, especially in addressing various societal perceptions and stigmas. Nevertheless, the steps taken so far demonstrate the pesantren's strong commitment to producing a generation of Muslims with both a solid religious foundation and a broad national perspective.

Overall, the transformation at Pesantren Ngruki marks a new chapter in the evolution of pesantren education in Indonesia. By adopting a more inclusive approach to nationalism and national insight, the pesantren is increasingly proving itself as an adaptive Islamic educational institution in the modern era. If this trend continues, Pesantren Ngruki could serve as a model of how pesantren can evolve into centers of



progressive Islamic learning that contribute to both religious and national development while remaining rooted in core Islamic and national values.

#### 4. The Role of Pesantren Ngruki in Shaping Student Behavior and Nationalism

Pesantren Ngruki plays a pivotal role in shaping how students act and behave within its microenvironment. It emphasizes direct involvement, active participation, and real-life application of the knowledge gained through religious and general education. Students are not merely passive recipients of information; rather, they are encouraged to engage in daily pesantren activities, from religious rituals to community service and leadership training. This hands-on approach ensures that Islamic teachings are internalized not just as theoretical concepts but as guiding principles in every aspect of their lives. Through this method, Ngruki instills a sense of discipline, responsibility, and practical application of religious values.

The pesantren environment fosters a structured and immersive learning experience where students are placed in situations that demand direct action and decision-making. For instance, they are trained in self-management, social interactions, and leadership through various student organizations within the pesantren. By assuming roles such as group leaders, event organizers, or mentors for junior students, they learn the essence of accountability, teamwork, and problem-solving. These experiences bridge the gap between knowledge and practice, ensuring that students develop into individuals who embody both Islamic and national values in their daily conduct.

A crucial aspect of this learning model is its emphasis on collective responsibility and shared moral obligations. Students are taught to respect authority, uphold discipline, and contribute positively to their surroundings. This collective mindset not only strengthens the internal bonds within the pesantren but also prepares students to be proactive citizens within the broader national framework. They learn that nationalism and Islamic teachings are not contradictory but rather complementary, as both emphasize unity, justice, and the pursuit of a harmonious society.

Pesantren Ngruki also integrates a deep understanding of nationalism within its educational discourse, but it does so through an Islamic perspective. Rather than adopting a secular interpretation of nationalism, the pesantren reinforces the idea that loyalty to the nation must align with Islamic ethics and values. By presenting Islam as an integral force in building a just and moral society, the pesantren nurtures students who view nationalism not as blind allegiance to the state but as a commitment to collective welfare, social justice, and moral governance.

Despite these efforts, navigating the discourse on nationalism remains a challenge for Pesantren Ngruki. The historical perception of pesantren as exclusive religious institutions sometimes leads to misconceptions about their stance on nationalism. Some external observers still associate pesantren with a rigid interpretation of Islamic teachings that may be at odds with national identity. However, the reality within Ngruki tells a different story, where the pesantren actively engages in harmonizing religious commitment with a sense of national belonging.

Through its distinctive educational approach, Pesantren Ngruki offers both challenges and contributions to the broader discourse on nationalism in Indonesia. While it promotes Islamic principles as the foundation of character development, it also acknowledges the importance of national integration and participation in civic life. This dual commitment places the pesantren at the crossroads of religious and national identity, requiring continuous adaptation and dialogue to bridge differing perspectives on nationalism in Indonesia.

In conclusion, Pesantren Ngruki serves as an example of how Islamic education can cultivate both devout Muslims and responsible citizens. By emphasizing real-life application, social responsibility, and leadership, the pesantren ensures that students graduate with a holistic understanding of their role in both religious and national contexts. As Indonesia continues to grapple with the evolving dynamics of nationalism, Pesantren Ngruki's model of education provides valuable insights into how pesantren can contribute to shaping a national identity that is both Islamic and inclusive.

## Conclusion

In understanding the role of pesantren in shaping nationalism, it is essential to consider the broader social, political, and religious landscape of Indonesia. A nuanced approach, grounded in thorough research, will provide a clearer picture of how pesantren contribute to both national identity and religious values.

Pesantren serve as key institutions that blend religious teachings with general education, fostering a comprehensive understanding of nationalism. While some pesantren interpret nationalism through a religious lens, efforts have been made to align their teachings with Indonesia's national values. This reflects the country's foundational principle of Unity in Diversity, promoting inclusivity and social cohesion.

Through various educational and community initiatives, pesantren contribute to national development by instilling values of togetherness, tolerance, and civic responsibility. Addressing misconceptions and challenges, they continue to adapt while upholding both religious and national identities. Integrating nationalism within the pesantren curriculum requires sensitivity to their unique educational model, ensuring that patriotism and religious devotion can coexist harmoniously.

**Acknowledgment:** This research was supported by the Ministry of Religion RI through the Ministry of Religion Affair (MORA) grant.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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