

INTEGRATION OF TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL VALUES AND MODERN PHILANTHROPIC PRACTICES AT THE DARUNNAJAH AMIL ZAKAT INSTITUTION (LAZ)

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INFO ARTIKEL	ABSTRAK
<i>Sejarah Artikel: (Diisi Editor)</i> Diterima: 15 Maret 2026 Direvisi: 28 Maret 2026 Disetujui: 28 Juni 2026 Tersedia Daring: 12 Juli 2026 Kata Kunci: <i>filantropi Islam; lembaga amil zakat; tradisi pesantren; modernitas; integrasi nilai</i>	Hubungan antara tradisi dan modernitas dalam studi Islam sering disajikan secara dikotomi, seolah-olah keduanya saling dapat dinegosiasikan. Penelitian ini menawarkan pembacaan yang berbeda dengan menempatkan keduanya sebagai hubungan yang terintegrasi. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana nilai tradisi pesantren dinegosiasikan dengan praktik filantropi modern di Darunnajah Amil Zakat Institute (LAZ), serta merumuskan pola integrasi yang terbentuk. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan tipe deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan dari empat informan yang dipilih secara purposif, terdiri atas dua pengelola lembaga dan dua penerima manfaat program, melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan analisis dokumen kelembagaan, kemudian dianalisis secara tematis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai tradisi pesantren, seperti keikhlasan, keberkahan, otoritas kiai, dan etika kemandirian, tidak hilang ketika lembaga mengadopsi instrumen modern berupa tata kelola perusahaan, digitalisasi koleksi, dan zakat produktif. Program zakat produktif Kampung Sukses, UMKM Berdaya yang menyalurkan modal usaha kepada delapan pelaku UMKM merupakan contoh konkret integrasi tersebut. Tradisi berfungsi sebagai semangat yang memberikan legitimasi dan arahan, sedangkan modernitas berfungsi sebagai instrumen yang memperluas jangkauan dan akuntabilitas. Pola yang terbentuk bukanlah dikotomi, melainkan koeksistensi fungsional. Temuan ini mendukung tesis multi modernitas dalam konteks lembaga filantropi Islam berbasis pesantren dan menawarkan model tata kelola yang menyatukan nilai ibadah dengan profesionalisme modern.
Keywords:	ABSTRACT
<i>Islamic philanthropy; zakat institution; pesantren tradition; modernity; value integration</i>	<i>The relationship between tradition and modernity in Islamic studies is often framed as a dichotomy, as if the two cancel each other out. This study offers a different reading by positioning them as an integrable relationship. The objective is to describe how the traditional values of the pesantren are negotiated with modern philanthropic practices at the Darunnajah Zakat Institution (LAZ), and to formulate the resulting pattern of integration. The study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were gathered from four purposively selected informants, comprising two institutional managers and two program beneficiaries, through in-depth interviews, observation, and analysis of institutional documents, then examined thematically. The findings show that pesantren values such as sincerity, blessing, the authority of the kiai, and the ethic of self-reliance do not disappear when the institution adopts modern instruments such as corporate governance, digital fundraising, and productive zakat. The Kampung Sukses, MSMEs Productive Zakat program, which channels business capital to eight micro-enterprises, serves as a concrete example</i>

of this integration. Tradition functions as the spirit that grants legitimacy and direction, while modernity serves as the instrument that widens reach and accountability. The pattern is not a dichotomy but a functional coexistence. These findings lend support to the thesis of multiple modernities in the context of pesantren-based Islamic philanthropic institutions and propose a governance model that unites the value of worship with modern professionalism.

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1. Introduction

The discourse on the relationship between tradition and modernity has long occupied a central position in the study of Muslim society. The dominant tendency presents the two as two opposite poles. Tradition is considered a static legacy of the past, while modernity is understood as a forward movement that demands a reliction of old things. This kind of binary perspective simplifies reality and ignores many practices in the field that actually combine the two. In the case of Islamic education, (Pomalingo et al. 2024) show that pesantren navigate the intersection between tradition and modernity, rather than choosing one between them.

This critique of the binary view has a strong theoretical basis through the idea of multiple modernities. As redeveloped by (Jung 2023), this framework rejects the notion that modernization will uniformize all societies towards a single pattern centered on the West. Each civilization has developed its own pattern of modernity which is shaped by the premises of their respective cultures, religions, and religious traditions (Jung 2021). With this framework, religion and tradition are not positioned as barriers to modernity, but as sources that help shape the face of modernity itself. This view opens up space to read religious institutions not as remnants of the past, but as modern actors rooted in tradition.

Islamic philanthropy in Indonesia is the right arena to test this argument. The practice of zakat, infaq, alms, and waqf is rooted in long-standing normative teachings, but in the last three decades it has undergone rapid institutional transformation. (Maulida et al. 2024) noted that zakat management in Indonesia has undergone a digital transformation that still considers the goals of sharia, thus giving birth to a more organized institution. Other studies show that Islamic philanthropic institutions are growing to become important actors in the provision of welfare and public policies (Mufid and Muhammad 2023; Schaeublin 2020). This shift is clearly seen in the way funds are raised that now utilizes social media and digital platforms (Makhrus 2018; Triantoro, Fadhli, and Habibi 2021), as well as in the management of zakat that requires transparency and accountability following modern governance principles (Mardiansah, Pawenang, and Istiqomah 2021).

The Amil Zakat Institute (LAZ) is right at the meeting point between tradition and modernity. Normatively, LAZ carries out amil duties regulated in classical fiqh, complete

with the provisions of asnaf and worship intentions. Operationally, LAZ must comply with the state legal framework, namely Law Number 23 of 2011 concerning Zakat Management, and be required to implement public accountability standards (Qutaiba et al., 2024; Sawmar & Mohammed, 2021)(Qutaiba, Owais, and Muharam 2024; Sawmar and Mohammed 2021). This tension and unity is interesting to study. Many LAZ no longer simply distribute funds in a consumptive manner, but develop productive zakat programs that encourage beneficiaries towards economic independence (Iskandar et al. 2021; Salim et al. 2024), an orientation that is close to the logic of social entrepreneurship (Napitupulu et al. 2026; Setiawan et al. 2023).

The context becomes richer when LAZ is in the pesantren ecosystem. Pesantren is not just an educational institution, but a space where values meet, negotiate, and adjust to each other (Afandi 2023; Pasi, Rasyidin, and Harahap 2025). A number of studies show that pesantren are able to maintain classical traditions while adopting updates, ranging from the curriculum to the digitization of administration (Mujahid 2021; Yuwanda, Fadhlan, and Bundo 2023). LAZ Darunnajah, who was born and raised in the Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School, brings this character into his philanthropic practice. The values of pesantren such as sincerity, blessings, obedience to the authority of the kiai, and the ethics of independence are combined with modern philanthropic instruments in one institution.

Although studies on Islamic philanthropy and on Islamic boarding schools have developed, attention to the common ground between the two is still limited. Most of the zakat governance literature highlights managerial, transparent, and regulatory aspects (Mardiansah et al. 2021; Qutaiba et al. 2024), while the study of Islamic boarding schools focuses more on education and religious identity (Mujahid 2021; Munir and Nor 2021). Even scholarship that links pesantren with economic activity tends to concentrate on entrepreneurship and santripreneurship rather than on zakat governance (Falach, Ridwan, and Zenrif 2023; Hannan 2019), whereas the literature on digital zakat mostly remains at the level of technology and managerial accountability (Hadi et al. 2024; Maulida et al. 2024). Empirical studies that place pesantren-based LAZ as a locus of the integration of tradition and modernity, read through the framework of multiple modernities, therefore remain scarce. This is where this research gap lies. Most studies still get stuck on the binary framing between tradition and modernity, and few trace the concrete mechanisms of how the two are combined in a single philanthropic institution.

Departing from this gap, this study asks three questions. First, how is the value of pesantren traditions present in the governance of LAZ Darunnajah? Second, how does LAZ Darunnajah adopt modern philanthropic practices? Third, what kind of integration pattern is formed from the meeting of the two? The purpose of the research is to describe and interpret the integration process, not to test the relationships between variables.

The novelty of this research lies in three things. First, locusically, the study raised LAZ born from the womb of Islamic boarding schools, a combination that has not been widely researched compared to corporate LAZ or stand-alone LAZ. Second, in terms of framework, the research reads philanthropic practices through the lens of multiple modernities, so that the modernization of LAZ is not understood as the erosion of

tradition, but as the formation of modernity that is typical of Islam. Third, argumentatively, the research offers an integrative model that places tradition as spirit and modernity as an instrument, as an answer to the dichotomous framing that has been dominant so far.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type. This approach was chosen because the purpose of the research is to describe and interpret the meaning behind the practice, not to measure magnitude or test hypotheses. Descriptive qualitative research allows researchers to understand how actors interpret the values of tradition and modern practices in the daily life of institutions, as well as how they are negotiated in decision-making (Creswell and Poth 2018).

The research was conducted at the Amil Zakat Darunnajah Institute. This location was chosen purposively because it meets the criteria as a LAZ that operates in the pesantren ecosystem and has implemented modern philanthropic instruments. The selection of informants was also carried out purposively by considering their involvement and knowledge of the object of study. The research informants consisted of two managers and two beneficiaries. The managers interviewed were Assoc. Prof. Dr. K.H. Sofwan Manaf, M.Si., as the Head of the Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School, and Kiai Zakiyanto Arief, S.IP., M.M., as the Director of LAZ Darunnajah. The beneficiaries who became informants were Rifaldi Nurul Akbar and Muhammad Iman Kurniawan, both of whom are recipients of the Kampung Sukses Program, Empowered MSMEs managed by the institution. The relatively small number of informants is consistent with the logic of purposive sampling in qualitative case study research, which prioritizes the relevance and richness of information over numerical representation (Creswell and Poth 2018). In a single-institution case study, the unit of analysis is the institution rather than the individual, so the adequacy of the data rests on how information-rich and strategically placed the informants are, not on how many of them there are. The four informants were deliberately chosen as key actors with direct knowledge of the phenomenon under study, namely those who formulate institutional policy and those who directly experience its programs, so that both the design and the reception of the practice could be captured. General recommendations for a larger number of interviews are addressed to studies that pursue thematic saturation across a broad participant population (Guest, Bunce, and Johnson 2006), a purpose that differs from the case-oriented logic adopted here. To safeguard the trustworthiness of the data, the accounts of these four informants were treated as information-rich sources and cross-checked through triangulation of sources and techniques, so that interview data were confirmed against observation and institutional documents until the information stabilized and no substantially new themes emerged.

Data collection was carried out in stages between May and July 2026, so that the fieldwork could follow the development of the program under study. First, in-depth interviews with semi-structured guidelines were used to explore informants' understanding freely. The interview with the Director of LAZ Darunnajah was conducted on May 12, 2026, and the interview with the Head of the Darunnajah Islamic Boarding

School on May 15, 2026, to establish the institutional framework and the values that underlie it. Interviews with the two beneficiaries were carried out in the following stage, after the Kampung Sukses program funds were disbursed through Decree Number 183/SK/LAZNAS-DN/VI/2026 dated June 23, 2026, so that beneficiaries could reflect on their experience of the assistance they had received. Second, observation of collection and distribution activities was conducted to see the practice directly. Third, institutional documents, such as financial statements, program profiles, and publication materials, were reviewed to strengthen and cross-check information from the interviews.

The validity of the data is maintained through source triangulation and triangulation techniques. The information of one informant is cross-checked with the information of other informants and with relevant documents. Data analysis is carried out thematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The themes that emerge are then read through the framework of multiple modernities to interpret the pattern of integration of tradition and modernity. This research adheres to ethical principles, including informant consent and presenting citations as they are without changing the intent.

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the research and its discussion. The presentation is divided into four parts. The first part describes the presence of the traditional values of pesantren in institutional governance. The second part outlines the adoption of modern philanthropic practices. The third part formulates the pattern of integration that is formed. The fourth section discusses the theoretical, practical, socio-economic, and policy implications of research.

The Value of Islamic Boarding School Traditions in LAZ Governance

The first findings show that the value of pesantren tradition is the foundation that drives LAZ Darunnajah. The value of sincerity and the orientation of blessings is seen in the way *amil* interprets their work, not just as an administrative task, but as part of worship and devotion. This orientation is in line with the findings of Schaeublin (2020) (2020) who sees the practice of giving in Islam not always departing from the logic of profit-loss, but from religious awareness and institutionalized social relations. This kind of dimension of blessing and sincerity is also related to religiosity, which also affects people's trust in zakat institutions (Adiwijaya, Pratiwi, and Rosalina 2024).

The authority of the *kiai* and the leaders of the pesantren also play a role as a source of legitimacy. The public's trust to distribute zakat through the institution is largely based on the moral reputation of the parent pesantren. This places pesantren as social capital that strengthens public trust, something that in the context of zakat institutions is often a problem in itself (Bin-Nashwan, Abdul-Jabbar, and Aziz 2021). The ethics of independence instilled in the tradition of Islamic boarding schools also shape the philosophy of the program. This value is not merely normative, but is translated into a concrete distribution design that discourages beneficiaries from relying permanently on aid, for instance by channeling zakat into business capital rather than consumptive assistance. The principle of self-reliance long cultivated in the pesantren, where students are accustomed to managing their own affairs, thus becomes the ethical basis for the productive orientation

elaborated in the following section, so that the value of independence is visible not only in what is said but in how funds are actually distributed.

This view was affirmed directly by the Head of the Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School in an interview. He placed sincerity and blessings, not just the amount of funds, as a measure of the success of the management of the institution.

"In Islamic boarding schools, the management of LAZ is not only measured by the amount of funds that have been raised, but also by sincerity in serving muzakki and mustahik. We always instill that blessings are the main goal, so that every mandate must be carried out in accordance with the sharia and values of the Islamic boarding school. The kiai authority is a moral guideline so that all management remains on the right track and gains the trust of the community." (Sofwan Manaf, interview, May 15, 2026).

The statement shows three layers of value at once. Sincerity is the basic attitude in serving, blessings become the final orientation that goes beyond material measures, and kiai authority becomes a moral guideline that maintains public trust. These three things emphasize that the tradition of pesantren does not stop as a discourse, but becomes a framework that shapes the way the institution operates.

Adoption of Modern Philanthropic Practices

The second finding shows that LAZ Darunnajah adopts a number of modern philanthropic instruments. Institutionally, this institution has the status of a National Amil Zakat Institution (LAZNAS) based on the operational permit of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1208 of 2024, a formal recognition that demands the fulfillment of national-scale governance standards. The implementation of more orderly governance can be seen from the division of functions, recording, and reporting which leads to the principle of good governance (Abdulsalam Ahmed and Mustafa Omar 2021). This kind of accountability demand is also a concern in the study of waqf and zakat institutions (Ainol-Basirah & Siti-Nabiha, 2023; Bakar et al., 2020). The digitization of collections is the most visible marker. LAZNAS Darunnajah utilizes the Online Zakat platform as a digital channel so that muzakki can pay zakat without being bound by time and space, in line with the trend of Indonesian Islamic philanthropy which expands the donor base through online channels (Hadi et al. 2024; Makhrus 2018).

In addition to the collection side, modernization is also seen in the orientation of distribution. LAZ Darunnajah does not stop at consumptive assistance, but develops productive programs directed at increasing the economic capacity of beneficiaries. This orientation brings the practice of zakat closer to the framework of social entrepreneurship, where social funds are processed into leverage for independence (Falach et al. 2023; Salim et al. 2024). This logic also intersects with the idea of pesantren-based entrepreneurship and productive waqf instruments that grow businesses (Hannan 2019; Iman, Najiyah, and Asshiddiqi 2021).

The most concrete form of this productive orientation is the Kampung Sukses Program, Empowered MSMEs. Through this program, LAZNAS Darunnajah distributed financing funds to eight beneficiaries with a total of IDR 40,000,000, each of which received IDR 5,000,000 as business capital, as stipulated in Decree Number 183/SK/LAZNAS-

DN/VI/2026 dated June 23, 2026. The determination of recipients is carried out through the evaluation and selection of business proposals by the Incubator Team with LAZNAS Darunnajah, then ratified in the determination meeting. This mechanism shows orderly governance, because the distribution follows the Standard Operating Procedures for the Distribution of Productive Zakat Funds and is based on Law Number 23 of 2011. Details of beneficiaries are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Beneficiaries of the Kampung Sukses Program, Empowered MSMEs LAZNAS Darunnajah

No.	Owner Name	Status	Business Name	Business Sector	Funding
1	Muhamad Zidni Ilman	Teacher	PT. Rental Playstation Spartan	Rental PS	IDR 5,000,000
2	Dahlan	Students	Gayo Origin Coffee	FnB	IDR 5,000,000
3	Rifaldi Nurul Akbar	Lecturer	Hanna Ryan	Fashion	IDR 5,000,000
4	Muhammad Yogi Ramlan Hamdani	Teacher	MoneyBot	Services	IDR 5,000,000
5	Nila Anggun Nalarati	Teacher	Mukena Albarra (Mukena Santriwati)	Fashion	IDR 5,000,000
6	Muhammad Iman Kurniawan	Lecturer	Healthy.realfood	FnB	IDR 5,000,000
7	Emyr Muhammad	Teacher	Grand Ravine Beans	FnB	IDR 5,000,000
8	Doni Ulul Albab	Teacher	Catering	FnB	IDR 5,000,000
Total Funding					IDR 40,000,000

The data in Table 1 shows that zakat funds are not distributed consumptively, but are directed to grow businesses in various sectors, ranging from food and beverages, clothing, services, to rental. Two of the beneficiaries, namely Rifaldi Nurul Akbar with the Hanna Ryana fashion business and Muhammad Iman Kurniawan with the healthy food business Healthy.realfood, became informants in this study. This kind of business capital provision shows a shift in the role of zakat from compensation to economic leverage, in line with the framework of zakat-based empowerment and pesantren entrepreneurship (Sucipto 2024). This approach that targets mustahik in a measurable manner is also in line with efforts to contextualize zakat beneficiaries in modern amil institutions (Mubin and Siddiq 2022). The existence of an Incubator Team that selects proposals and assists businesses emphasizes that the modernization of distribution does not stop at the disbursement of funds, but also includes coaching so that the recipient's business can be sustainable.

Integration Patterns: Tradition as Spirit, Modernity as Instruments

The third finding is at the heart of the research argument. The meeting between traditional values and modern instruments at LAZ Darunnajah does not result in a clash that negates each other, but rather a functional division of roles. The traditional value of pesantren works as a spirit that gives direction and legitimacy, while modern instruments act as tools that expand reach and strengthen accountability. Sincerity and blessing remain

value references, while digitalization and corporate governance are ways to realize those values more effectively.

Within the limits of a single-institution study, this pattern offers illustrative empirical support for the thesis of multiple modernities (Jung 2023). LAZ's modernization does not run by eroding tradition, but instead utilizes tradition as a source of meaning that distinguishes it from secular philanthropic institutions. What appears to be modernization is actually the formation of a distinctive modernity, namely Islamic modernity based on the tradition of Islamic boarding schools (Jung 2021). These findings strengthen Pomalingo et al. (2024) reading of pesantren as a space that navigates, not separates, tradition and modernity, and is in line with studies that place pesantren as institutions that are adaptive to renewal without losing identity (Pasi et al. 2025).

Thus, the dichotomy of tradition and modernity that has been dominant is not sufficient to explain the practice at LAZ Darunnajah. What happens is not a choice between one, but a complementary coexistence. Tradition gives reasons why institutions exist and what they work for, while modernity gives a way of how institutions carry out their work. This is the integrative model proposed by this study.

The logic of this integration was clearly expressed by the Director of LAZ Darunnajah. For him, modern professionalism and the value of pesantren are not two contradictory things, but support each other.

"For us, professionalism does not mean abandoning pesantren values. In fact, the trust, honesty, and sincerity taught by Islamic boarding schools are our basis in implementing a work system that is transparent, administratively orderly, and accountable. So, we run modern standards, but the spirit of the pesantren is still a handhold." (Zakiyanto Arief, interview, May 12, 2026).

This quote is the most concise formulation of the integrative pattern found. Trust, honesty, and sincerity that come from the tradition of Islamic boarding schools are actually the foundation for the implementation of a modern work system that is transparent and accountable. Modern standards are implemented, but the spirit of the pesantren remains the hand. This statement shows that accountability is not perceived as an unfamiliar burden, but as another form of long-held trust. This pattern reflects how religiosity is the foundation of Muslim business behavior in carrying out modern practices (Adi and Adawiyah 2018). Thus, tradition and modernity do not compete for places, but occupy different but complementary roles.

Research Implications

The research findings bring a number of implications that can be mapped into four domains. This mapping is summarized in Figure 1, which shows the flow of the two poles of value towards integration and its implicit derivatives.

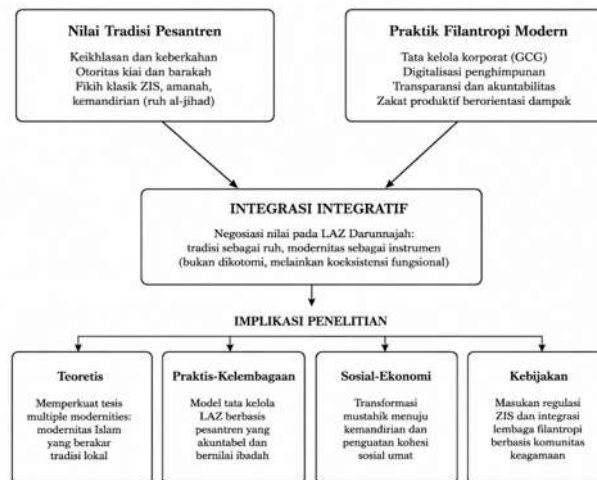


Figure 1. Framework for the Implications of Integrating Islamic Boarding School Traditional Values and Modern Philanthropic Practices

In the theoretical realm, the research offers a concrete case that supports the thesis of multiple modernities in the form of Islamic philanthropic institutions based on Islamic boarding schools. The modernity carried out by LAZ Darunnajah is not a copy of the Western model, but a modernity that grows from the premises of local culture and religion (Jung, 2023; Jung, 2021). In the practical and institutional realms, the research offers a LAZ governance model that unites the value of worship with modern professionalism, so that accountability is not contrary to sincerity, but becomes a form of trust.

In the socio-economic realm, the orientation of productive zakat contributes to the transformation of beneficiaries towards independence. The Kampung Sukses, Empowered MSME program, which distributes business capital to eight MSME actors, is a concrete example of how social funds are processed into economic leverage, not just momentary compensation (Salim et al., 2024; Falach et al., 2023)(Falach et al. 2023; Salim et al. 2024). Assistance through the Incubator Team strengthens business sustainability opportunities. Distribution that relies on the network of Islamic boarding schools also strengthens the social cohesion of the people. In the policy realm, this finding provides input that zakat management regulations provide adequate space for religious community-based philanthropic institutions, considering that such institutions have trust capital that is difficult to build by purely formal institutions (Bin-Nashwan et al. 2021; Mulazid et al. 2026).

4. Conclusion

This research shows that the relationship between tradition and modernity in the Amil Zakat Darunnajah Institution is not dichotomous, but integrative. The traditional values of pesantren, such as sincerity, blessings, kiai authority, and the ethics of independence, are present as a spirit that gives direction and legitimacy. Modern

philanthropic practices, in the form of corporate governance, digitization of collections, and productive zakat, are present as instruments that expand reach and strengthen accountability. The pattern that is formed is functional coexistence, where tradition and modernity complement each other and do not eliminate each other.

Within the scope of a single-institution study, these findings lend contextual support to the thesis of multiple modernities in the field of pesantren-based Islamic philanthropy and offer an integrative model that places tradition as the spirit and modernity as an instrument. This study is limited to one institution with a descriptive approach, so its conclusions are not intended to be generalized widely. Further research can expand the scope with comparative studies between Islamic boarding schools, or examine the impact of productive programs on beneficiaries in a more measurable way.

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