

## Partnership Strategy Between Islamic Boarding School and Alumni in Improving the Dynamic Capability of the Al Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School Foundation

M. Zulfakar Pratama<sup>1</sup>, Siti Zulaikha<sup>2</sup>, Masduki Ahmad<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Faculty of Education, Jakarta State University, Indonesia

[zulpratama23988@gmail.com](mailto:zulpratama23988@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [sitizulaikha@unj.ac.id](mailto:sitizulaikha@unj.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [masduki@unj.ac.id](mailto:masduki@unj.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** In the context of dynamic capabilities, sensing capabilities are not only limited to general opportunity identification, but also include in-depth analysis of trends and changes occurring in the organizational environment. Emphasizes that effective sensing capabilities require a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of change occurring in the external environment, including educational trends and the evolution of community needs. Islamic boarding school leaders need to have a clear vision of the direction of institutional development, as well as the ability to mobilize various resources, including alumni networks, to support the process. The purpose of this study is to explore in depth the process of interaction and dynamics of partnership relationships between Islamic boarding schools and alumni which are dynamic and to understand the partnership model carried out. Through a qualitative research design allows researchers to explore and understand the meaning of social problems through rich data collection in natural settings using case study methods with observation and interviews with key informants, namely IKAMU (Manba'ul Ulum Alumni Association). The results of the study showed that Islamic boarding school alumni play a strategic role in the process of analyzing community trends and needs. Explained that the organization's external network can be a very valuable source of information, namely alumni of the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation known as IKAMU. Alumni contributions to educational trend analysis can include, among others; share experiences on the development of effective learning methods, competency needs in various professional fields, and challenges faced by Islamic boarding school graduates in facing the modern world of work. Furthermore, by building an innovative and productive partnership model to answer the problems of the MSME industry in the fields of marketing, capital and HR to utilize the potential and networks owned by Islamic boarding schools in order to accelerate the growth of the MSME industry, which is collaborated with the potential and opportunities owned by Islamic boarding schools.

**Keywords:** Partnership Strategy, Alumni, Dynamic Capabilities

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### A. INTRODUCTION

Pesantren has become an educational institution and Islamic religious broadcasting, a place where the learning and teaching process takes place as well as a center for developing the congregation of the residential community. Thus, pesantren as an Islamic educational institution fulfills its function because it grows in the midst of society and helps develop the

cultural values of its environment. Pondok in its history shows a symbol of simplicity, meaning that the huts for the students' accommodation were built because the distance between the students and the kiai was quite far, forcing them to realize simple accommodation in the form of small rooms around the mosque and the kiai's house. This is done by the pesantren so that the students can serve in the pesantren after graduating from the pondok before continuing their education to a higher level. The Service Process carried out by the students does not stop there, but there is a forum in the pesantren that manages the graduates of the students known as the "Alumni Association". As in the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation, it has an alumni association known as "IKAMU ", namely the Manba'ul Ulum Alumni Association. IKAMU acts as a forum that accommodates students who graduated from the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation, which was initially formed in 2011 with the aim of assisting the Foundation in developing educational service programs only in the Islamic boarding school environment. However, over time, alumni who have spread to various regions are called PCI IKAMU or IKAMU Special Branch Management, so the role of IKAMU has become broader, namely helping the Islamic boarding school community.

Based on the results of observations about alumni. Alumni are people who have attended or graduated from a school or college. Alumni are special citizens and have a strong emotional bond with the school, expected to play a role in improving the quality of education at the school where they experience educational services. There are various ways that can be given by alumni, for example, contributing ideas to find concepts and ways of working to improve the quality of educational services. Participation assistance is not only incidental, but is expected to be sustainable. Alumni as one of the bettors or *stakeholders* Schools certainly have a role and make a significant contribution to the school. Therefore, in this case, alumni of Islamic boarding schools must have a reciprocal relationship with the community so that the education that has been obtained by alumni from Islamic boarding schools can be realized in the community. One of them is in religious activities. On average, each region already has many young men and women who are graduates of Islamic boarding schools who are expected to participate in increasing religious activities in their respective regions. However, based on the author's observations, the phenomenon that is still seen today is that many alumni of Islamic boarding schools are less active in society, both in the field of religion and community organizations. This is due to the lack of creativity in the students. Thus, it can be said that the progress or good or bad of a boarding school depends on the quality of the alumni who graduate. Therefore, the category of Islamic boarding schools is to produce quality students in the field of religious knowledge, useful for society and become successors to scholars in developing Islamic law. The term alumni is often connoted with the term graduates. Therefore, alumni can be defined as a product of the education process, or a product produced by an Educational Institution. Alumni as an important part of an educational institution where they are produced, cannot be separated from their existence which can determine the existence and quality of the educational institution concerned, Alumni are a product of the educational process, or a product produced by an educational institution, Alumni become one aspect of educational development related to their existence and role in the midst of society. This shows

that the existence of alumni can be used as a target for developing and improving the quality of education so that if good cooperation is established with alumni, and alumni can work according to their fields, then indirectly the community will judge an educational institution as a quality and qualified institution (Efendy & Rahman, 2021).

From various previous studies, namely research conducted by Chanifudin, Peryoly Tekwana on "Pesantren Alumni Network in the Development of Islamic Religious Education In Meranti Islands Regency" which focuses on studying the Pesantren Alumni Network in the development of Islamic religious education in the Meranti Islands Regency. The results of the study explain that as a benchmark for the success of an educational institution (Islamic Boarding School), the existence of alumni in society is used as a criterion for the success and success of Islam. Islamic Boarding School institutions that have quality graduates and can provide solutions to problems related to religion in particular. In addition, as a benchmark for the success of educational institutions' alumni who are accepted and absorbed by existing educational institutions with their competence, this indicates that Islamic boarding schools and their alumni have quality and competence at certain times (Wathoni, 2021). Apart from these functions, alumni also have a role as a tool or means to develop educational institutions in society (Fathorrazi & Rifqi, 2017). Thus, it can be analyzed that the role of alumni is very large in the development of educational services in Islamic boarding schools. This empowerment is carried out so that alumni continue to have a sense of ownership of the Islamic Boarding School, this is in accordance with the scope of the alumni's role as an inspirator and *role model*, namely increasing motivation and instilling the right culture during school and after graduation. This is in accordance with the Inspirator and *Role Model*, namely Alumni with various experiences in time and financial management, self-development management and character so that students can be helped in strengthening their self-confidence. Increasing motivation and instilling the right culture during school and when they graduate and supporting the reputation of the institution, namely Alumni who have succeeded in various sectors of work both locally and nationally and internationally, have validated the quality and effectiveness of education programs, research, and community service of a university. The more influential the position of alumni in their work, the higher the recognition of the community towards the institution.

Based on this, the Islamic boarding school has formed with the contribution of energy from alumni given to the Boarding School, the programs in the boarding school will continue to develop, so that the community is more confident in sending their children to the Boarding School (in this case, the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation). With alumni involved in every activity of the Boarding School, it is one way for the boarding school to grow the interest and trust of the community, because alumni are someone who has studied education at the Boarding School. The Alumni Association of the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation (IKAMU) was formed to be more effective in communicating between alumni and the boarding school in order to be able to carry out partnerships together to develop the boarding school, strengthen the ties between alumni and the Boarding School and introduce it to the general public by helping to promote and develop progress. IKAMU also plays an important role in the development of the Boarding School,

because its existence which still exists in the boarding school environment makes alumni have to be able to make innovations in building good communication in order to achieve a vision and mission that can answer the challenges of the future of the boarding school. Then, the existence and involvement of alumni in promoting Islamic Boarding Schools must be able to provide space so that alumni can continue to carry out their roles well for the progress of Islamic Boarding Schools.

## **B. METHOD**

This study aims to reveal the dynamics of strategic partnerships between the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School and alumni in improving the dynamic capabilities of the Foundation and to provide benefits to partners in their efforts to produce and market products (Islamic boarding school quality) that are ready for the changing needs of this era so that they can easily increase dynamic capabilities that have longer product durability, and are of higher quality and practical both when distributed and when used. The implementation of this research will be held at the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation, Kabul Village, Praya Barat Daya District, Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. This research with a qualitative research design aims to explore in depth the process of interaction and dynamics of partnership relations between Islamic boarding schools and alumni which are dynamic and to understand the partnership process carried out by Islamic boarding schools with their alumni.

The research approach used is a qualitative approach. Creswell & Creswell (2018:43) explain that a qualitative approach allows researchers to explore and understand the meaning of social problems through the collection of rich data in natural settings. The case study method was chosen as a research strategy referring to (Yin, 2018) which it is defined as an empirical investigation of a phenomenon. contemporary in context life real. This approach is suitable for exploring the complexity of partnerships between Islamic boarding schools and alumni and their impact on the dynamic capabilities of the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation. Qualitative descriptive exploratory research aims to explore and understand the meanings of social or humanitarian problems. Qualitative research explains phenomena by collecting data based on descriptions of events, situations and interactions between people and other things so as to provide in-depth and detailed information.

## **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This Islamic Boarding School Foundation is the oldest Islamic Boarding School in Kabul village which already has thousands of alumni spread across various regions with different professions. The alumni were formed in 2011 by 3 alumni who were studying in different regions. After going through a fairly long discussion process, the alumni were finally able to form an association to accommodate all alumni who graduated from the Islamic boarding school without looking at their professions and so on because the initial intention of forming this association was only for a means of friendship between alumni. However, over time with all the abilities of the alumni in the fields they are engaged in, the focus of the alumni is finally on advancing and developing the Islamic boarding school for the Islamic boarding school

environment alone. In the last 2 years, the alumni association has formed a special branch where the administrators of this special branch are tasked with being the foundation's accomplices outside the region and have collaborated with the local village government to have a Community Training Center.

Islamic boarding schools have formed an interesting dynamic in terms of the relationship between economics, education and politics. This is what creates the traditions and order of Muslim society in the archipelago in various advances. The joints of culture or tradition of a nation and community are basically built through the process of economics-capital accumulation, education-accumulation of knowledge and politics-accumulation of power that run simultaneously (Ramli, 2019). Furthermore, Islamic boarding schools are institutions that are not only educational institutions, but also as community empowerment institutions, especially in the economic aspect. In the current era of globalization, Islamic boarding schools are required to be able to adapt to advances in knowledge and technology in order to face the challenges of the times and maintain their existence as religious educational institutions (Islam) without eliminating their main characteristics, namely the ability in the field of religious knowledge. One way for Islamic boarding schools to survive is to renew the system and management patterns of Islamic boarding schools that were previously simple towards better management patterns. One of the highlights is related to the management of all aspects of Islamic boarding schools. As an institution rooted in society, Islamic boarding schools depend on society so that when Islamic boarding schools are abandoned by society, not a few Islamic boarding schools experience decline or even disappear from circulation due to the problems that occur. So today, Islamic boarding schools are required to be able to be independent and develop their creativity. The things that are done by Islamic boarding schools so that students can serve in Islamic boarding schools after graduating from the boarding school before continuing their education to a higher level. The service process carried out by students does not stop there, but there is a forum in the Islamic boarding school that manages the graduates of these students known as the "Alumni Association". As in the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation, it has an alumni association known as "IKAMU", namely the Manba'ul Ulum Alumni Association. alumni who have spread across various regions are called PCI IKAMU or IKAMU Special Branch Management, so the role of IKAMU becomes wider, namely helping the Islamic boarding school community to get assistance, training and coaching in preparing the competencies needed to be able to pass the selection for scholarships or education that supports students' careers in the future. The alumni have established cooperation with the local village government with several programs that have been proposed in 2016 as evidenced by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The Islamic boarding school and alumni collaborate in managing the BLK Komunitas Manba'ul Ulum with the following types of programs; Sewing Fashion Design, Computers and Foreign Languages.

The role and contribution of alumni participate in bringing the good name and success of educational institutions. Alumni are not only limited to the assessment of society in general but the role of alumni provides a profitable view in the future for the community which will always be embedded in the inner bond with the school where he came from. Because during the educational institution, behavior and discipline of science have been formed during the

level of education he took (Rifqi & Imron, 2016). One of the goals of every Islamic boarding school or school is to produce the best graduates. The best graduates can be seen from various aspects, both academic and non-academic aspects. An equally important aspect is the quality of alumni in experiencing demands at a higher level of learning or also competition in the world of work. Are alumni from a particular institution able to penetrate various quality competitions with alumni from other institutions or not. This has generally become the main benchmark for Islamic boarding school residents who want to become suppliers or users of students or students and at the same time users of the institution. This is in accordance with the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number. 5/ 2022 SISDIKNAS (National Learning Standards) concerning the Graduate Competency Standards (SKL) in universal secondary learning units adjusting to the dynamics and development of science, and the lives of citizens for the sake of increasing the quality of learning. Furthermore, Article 6 paragraph 2 explains that the Graduate Competency Standards in secondary and vocational learning units are focused on skills to improve student competencies so that they can live independently.

(Kemendiknas, 2022) Alumni independence can be seen from their position in the community as graduates, for example, graduates of schools or Islamic boarding schools do not become unemployed, they must be able to create job opportunities or get decent jobs. Alumni have an important role in the existence of an educational institution because alumni will be a beacon for the community. To utilize new alumni as their workforce or to become students or students at the educational institution. Alumni from an institution will certainly consider their Islamic boarding school or school as the parent or mother who gave birth to them. Although, most alumni organizations are not only trapped in reunion events or nostalgia, but there must be useful values in it even though they are not free from nostalgia. Therefore, alumni independence can be collected in an organizational forum that will lead alumni to have a spirit of independence. Another strategy that shows the important role of alumni in conveying information about Islamic boarding schools. The results of the study revealed that alumni play a significant role as a channel of information to the community about boarding schools. Promotion strategy is an optimal plan that combines elements of the marketing mix to provide information, persuade, and remind consumers (Waruwu et al., 2021). For Islamic boarding schools, the right promotion strategy is very important to effectively market the institution to the community. In addition, the strategy of Islamic boarding schools in increasing dynamic capabilities is to empower the community's economy by empowering the resources and potential of alumni and the community in general with the methods and several strategies used, namely 3 empowerment strategies; Creating a climate that allows the potential of the community to develop (enabling), Strengthening the potential or power of the community (empowering), Empowering and protecting areas with weak economic potential. One of them is by building an innovative and productive partnership model to answer the problems of the MSME industry in the fields of marketing, capital and HR is something important from this study. And at the same time to utilize the potential and networks owned by Islamic boarding schools. So, to find an innovative, productive and sustainable partnership model, especially in

the field of marketing in order to accelerate the growth of the MSME industry, which is collaborated with the potential and opportunities owned by Islamic boarding schools.

#### D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Alumni of Islamic boarding schools play a strategic role in the process of analyzing trends and community needs. Organization's external network can be a very valuable source of information, namely the alumni of the Al-Ma'arif Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation known as IKAMU. Alumni contributions to educational trend analysis can cover various aspects. They can share experiences about the development of effective learning methods, the need for competencies in various professional fields, and the challenges faced by Islamic boarding school graduates in facing the modern world of work. The importance of integrating various perspectives in the sensing process to gain a more comprehensive understanding. effective strategies in marketing Islamic boarding schools to the community, namely by increasing dynamic capabilities, are by empowering the community's economy by empowering the resources and potential of alumni and the community in general with the methods and several strategies used, namely 3 empowerment strategies; Creating a climate that allows the potential of the community to develop (enabling), Strengthening the potential or power of the community (empowering), Empowering and protecting areas with weak economic potential. One of them is by building an innovative and productive partnership model to answer the problems of the MSME industry in the fields of marketing, capital and HR.

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