# THE ROLE OF GONTOR PESANTREN ALUMNI IN THE EFFORT OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT   TOWARDS THE INDEPENDENCE OF SANTRIPRENEUR: A CASE STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

*This study presents the importance of the role of alumni in self-development efforts toward the independence of entrepreneurs. Even though extensive studies on the role of Pesantren alumni have been discussed, few discussions on the areas of self-development efforts towards entrepreneurs have been paid. For this reason, this study aims to explore the role of alumni of the Gontor Islamic boarding school in developing themselves towards the independence of entrepreneurs. This study employs a qualitative research design using a case study approach. Four participants, the Gontor Islamic Boarding School alumni who are members of the Business Forum (FORBIS) of the Gontor Modern Pondok Families Association (IKPM), were involved in various business fields recruited. The result shows that the role of alumni involved in the FORBIS forum significantly contributes to the independence of entrepreneurs that involves business development, business entrepreneurship, business finance, and business marketing. It contributes significantly to society, government, boarding schools, and self-development.*

*Keywords*: *Islamic Boarding School, Self Development, Entrepreneur, Gontor*

## INTRODUCTION

An institution's progress cannot be separated from the role of its alumni. Alumni are students who have completed their studies at an institution. According to Subari (2015), Director of Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyyah Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, alumni are students or students who have experienced education and teaching at Gontor even though it is only for a day, can already be called alumni and can become members of the IKPM (Family Association of Modern Boarding Schools). ) Gontor. At the same time, an alumnus indicates more than one person, while an alumnus is a singular form that shows only one person. In other words, alumni are alumni or a collection of alumni. So alumni can mean students/students who have not completed their studies and can also mean students/students who have completed their studies who can contribute to institutions, institutions such as Islamic boarding schools, whether they are thought

or financial contributions, as well as contributions in raising the good name of the institution or boarding school.

One of the goals of every pesantren or school is to produce the best graduates. The best graduates can be seen from various academic and non-academic factors. Another factor that is no less important is the quality of alumni in facing the demands of higher education or competition in the world of work. Are alumni from certain institutions able to penetrate various quality competitions with alumni from other institutions or not. It is common for this to become the leading benchmark for the community; in this case, the community will be the suppliers or users of students or students and at the same time as users of the institution. In the final stages of educational institutions, such as Islamic boarding schools and public schools, the benchmark most used by the community is the gait of the alumni. So the role of alumni in society

can be used as an indicator or benchmark for the success of a pesantren or institution.

Ministry of National Education (2021). According to Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 57/2021 SISDIKNAS (National Education Standards) concerning Graduation Competency Standards (SKL) in education units at the general secondary education level, adjustments to the dynamics and development of science, as well as people's lives for the benefit of improving the quality of education. Furthermore, Article 6, paragraph 2 explains that the Competency Standards of Graduates in secondary and vocational education units are focused on skills to improve students' competence to live independently. The independence of alumni can be seen from their role in society as users of graduates, such as graduates from schools or Islamic boarding schools that do not become unemployed and can even create jobs or find work. Thus, the indicators used by the community as alumni users are whether graduates from the pesantren or school can quickly get jobs or create jobs to achieve independence competencies.

Alumni have an essential role in the existence of an educational institution because alumni will be a beacon for the community. To take advantage of new alumni as their workforce or to enter into students or students at the educational institution. The alumni of an institution will undoubtedly consider the pesantren or school to be the parent or mother. She gave birth to him so they would have an inner and emotional bond with the educational institution. This inner bond will give rise to the urge to take part in maintaining the existence of the pesantren or school that has given him knowledge and life lessons. Therefore, alumni need to form organizations to bind and maintain relationships between alumni and these educational institutions.

Alumni organizations are not only trapped in reunion or nostalgia events but there must be helpful values in them even though they cannot be separated from nostalgia. Therefore, the independence of alumni can be gathered in an organizational forum that will lead alumni to have the spirit of alumni independence. Based on the results of research conducted by Primasari (2018), the role of alumni is vital for educational institutions. One indicator of the quality of a pesantren or school is the quality of its alumni. Because of the importance of the role of alumni, it would be nice if the pesantren had an organization to connect alumni with their alma mater, both with fellow alumni, ustadz, and other relevant alumni organizations.

This Alumni Association is critical in providing facilities for alumni to realize their independence in self-development, which includes all activities that increase awareness and self-identity, develop talent and potential, build human resources and facilitate performance, improve quality of life and contribute to realizing dreams and aspirations. Self-development can include the following activities, increasing self-awareness, increasing self-knowledge, improving skills or learning new skills, building or renewing identity or self-esteem, and developing strengths or talents. In addition, it can also improve welfare, identify or increase potential, build human resource performance, improve lifestyle or quality of life, improve health, fulfill aspirations, initiate personal courage, define and implement self-development plans and increase social skills. -desire.
Self-development activities are included in the types of activities outside the institution or institution/class. In general, each institution has activities to improve development. Personal development aims explicitly to support the education of santri or students in developing talents, interests, creativity, competence and habits in life, religious life skills, social skills, learning abilities, insight and career planning, problem-solving abilities, and independence.

Based on observations about Gontor alumni who have succeeded in developing themselves, it shows that self-development efforts are significant towards their independence which does not depend on anyone or any institution. They are equipped by Kyai to preach after graduating from Islamic boarding schools and maintain the title of santri and remain responsible for their Islam (fi ayyiardindato' wa anta mas'ulun an islamiha) (Subari, 2015), and do not forget to remain as teachers, so entrepreneurs are still become a teacher for his employees, to adhere to Islamic principles. As for the self-development of Gontor pesantren alumni, one of them is joining a business forum abbreviated as FORBIS, a Gontor boarding school alumni organization that focuses on developing the business of Gontor alumni.

Forbis IKPM Gontor is a forum for Gontor Islamic boarding school alumni to develop business and business. Forbis IKPM Gontor has the vision to become a center for information, education, consultation, coaching, mentoring, networking, and friendship, as well as synergy among entrepreneurs and professionals of Gontor alumni. Forbis' mission is to provide information on entrepreneurs and professional alumni of Gontor, their data and types of business, increase the quantity and quality of entrepreneurs and professional alumni of Gontor, conduct training for entrepreneurs and professional alumni of Gontor, etc. Forbis has a goal, namely the realization of entrepreneurs and professional alumni of Gontor who are moral, qualified, superior (Excellent), and have high competitiveness (competitive) in local, regional, national, and international business competition.

Although there have been many previous studies on entrepreneurs conducted by pesantren alumni, few discuss how alumni develop themselves to become independent santripreneurs. Furthermore, this study aims to explore how the alumni of the Gontor pesantren develop themselves into independent santri, the role of the Gontor pesantren alumni to develop themselves toward the independence of the santri, and in what ways the independence of the santripreneur is developed by the alumni of the Gontor pesantren.

Based on the background of the problem described above, the formulation of the problem from this research is:
1. How do the Gontor Islamic boarding school alumni develop themselves into independent students?
2. In what ways is the independence of the santripreneur developed by the alumni of the Gontor pesantren? What is the role of the Gontor Islamic boarding school alumni in self-development efforts toward student independence?

## THEORETICAL BASIS

Rifki and Mustianingsih (2016) with the title Modern and Salafi Islamic Boarding School Alumni Management (Studies at Nurul Jadid and Sidogiri Islamic Boarding Schools) Research has been carried out using a qualitative approach design method with multi-case study techniques because the backgrounds of the two institutions have differences in terms of modern and salaf pesantren. They result in the conclusion that the minimum alumni organization is formed by central management and regional management. Caregivers have an essential role in the development of alumni organizations. Aspects of development that need to be developed are related to the fields of religion, society, and the world of work. The development of alumni is adjusted to the area's character and the alumni's wishes. The second research conducted by Adawiyah (2018) with the title Entrepreneurship Education at the Sirojul Huda Islamic Boarding School concluded that students had been equipped with life skills to prepare them for when they graduate. The three studies by Widodo (2014) conducted under the title Entrepreneurial Education Model for Santri to Overcome Unemployment in Rural Areas resulted in the conclusion that the

entrepreneurship education model was prepared based on students' entrepreneurial spirit. Entrepreneurship education is shown in three aspects: character, concepts, and skills. Fourth, another research on developing pesantren independence through the santripreneur program carried out by Maksum (2018) uses a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods, which results in the conclusion that entrepreneurship is often translated as entrepreneurship at first, recently translated as entrepreneurship.

**Alumni**

According to Suteja (2020), Alumni are a product of the educational process; it is an output, like a product, its existence must provide added value for those who use it. So the only quality output will be sought after by the market, in demand, and considered as part of the solution to the problems they face. According to Mulyani (2015), alumni are someone who graduated from school or college. Alumni are an inseparable part of an education cycle. Alumni also bring their benefits to schools or colleges in the form of academic or pragmatic fields, for example, updating the curriculum based on relevance to the needs of the market or the world of work, as well as continuing education, namely schools or colleges can be developed into lifelong learning media for alumni.

According to Prasojo (2020), an institution's success is not only the number of participants who pass but the extent to which these alumni can become agents of change in initiating changes and innovations in their institutions.

"So the training is not only a transfer of knowledge but also changes in the mindset and behavior of the participants. This is where the function of educational institutions touches not only on competence but also on cultural transformation and mental models such as a culture of non-corruption, a culture of meritocracy, a culture of prudence, and a culture of growth. Furthermore, regarding the development of digitalization in competency development, education and training institutions must respond to the development of the digital world, not only the learning process but also the objectives of the learning to be achieved, namely to prepare entrepreneurs who can utilize information technology in their business processes."

**Islamic boarding school**

Pesantren is a dormitory where students learn to recite the Koran. Pesantren is often also called Pondok Pesantren. It comes from the word santri. According to the Indonesian dictionary, this word has two meanings, namely 1) People who worship sincerely, pious people, 2) People who study their teachings in Islam by studying far away. According to several experts, as quoted by Zamakhsyari (1994), among others: Johns stated that the word santri comes from the Tamil language, which means teacher of the Koran.

Berg (1932) argues that this comes from the term santri, which in Indian language means a person who knows the sacred books of Hinduism or a scholar of Hindu scriptures. The word shantri comes from the word shastra, which means sacred books, religious books, or books about science.

According to Zaeni (1995), Pesantren is a complex with a location generally separated from the life around it. There are several buildings in the complex: the house of caretakers (in Javanese-speaking areas, it is called kyai, in Sundanese-speaking areas, it is legal, and in Madurese-speaking areas, it is nunatau bendara, abbreviated ra); a surau or mosque where instruction is given (Arabic madrasa, which also more often carries the connotation of school) and a dormitory where the students of the pesantren live.

The term Islamic boarding school is a traditional Islamic educational institution to study, understand, explore, appreciate and practice Islamic teachings by emphasizing the importance of religious morals as guidelines for daily behavior. The

characteristics and traditions of pesantren are divided into two types, namely:

## Traditional Islamic Boarding School

Traditional Islamic boarding schools are the oldest educational institutions in Indonesia that always teach traditional-based values (Muhakammurrohman, 2014) because pesantren use traditional systems and methods. In addition, the preservation of values can also be seen from the daily life of the pesantren community who live simply, learn selflessly, are full of responsibility, and are bound by a high sense of solidarity (Geertz, 1981).

## Modern Islamic Boarding School

Along with the development of the era, pesantren also experienced the impact of modernization; if the management and teaching of pesantren were centered on the kiai, in contrast to the management and teaching of modern pesantren, foundations were created to guard against the death of the kyai. The physical form, instructors, and systems of modern pesantren are very different from traditional pesantren; modern boarding schools usually have dormitories, classes, ready-to-eat kitchens, school uniforms, and magnificent auditoriums, sports fields, laboratories, talent and skill development rooms (Muhakammurohman, 2014). Modern Islamic boarding schools also include general subjects in the pesantren curriculum.

The general definition of *an Islamic Boarding School* is an Islamic Education Institution with a dormitory system, Kyai as the central figure, and the mosque as the central point that animates it (Zarkasyi, 1965). We cannot define *Islamic Boarding School* as the definition given by orientalists, for example, Snouck (1911), which only pays attention to the form of the birth of the Islamic Boarding School (for example, the material and shape of the house where the students live with all their static traditions). However, the essence of Islamic Boarding School is an institution that has provided many services to the Indonesian people, especially regarding religious education and the nation's morals.

## Islamic Boarding School Alumni

Pesantren alumni are students who have received education in Islamic boarding schools and practice the knowledge that has been obtained in the community, even though they have not completed it until they are finished if they practice the knowledge that has been obtained, they can be called pesantren alumni (Subari, 2015).

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has two graduation levels, four and six years. Four years for those who enter after graduating from junior high school or high school and the equivalent are called intensive classes. Six years for those who enter after elementary school are called ordinary classes. So, officially, the Gontor Islamic boarding school alumni have completed their studies both at the regular level (6 years) and at the intensive level (4 years).

## Self-development

Self-development can be seen as ability growth that occurs far beyond what is required in a job. It represents efforts to increase an entrepreneur, businessman, or teacher's ability to handle various types of assignments. Self-development is beneficial for both organizations and individuals. Lecturers, entrepreneurs, business people, and managers with appropriate experience and abilities will improve the organization's ability to compete and adapt to changing competitive environments. In the process of self-development, individual careers also get focused and improve.

## Entrepreneurship

The word entrepreneur comes from the French, Enterprise, known since the 17th century, which means trying. In business terms, it means starting a business. The Merriam Dictionary (2011) defines an entrepreneur as someone who organizes and bears the risk of a business or venture.

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According to Andrew (2005), an entrepreneur is someone who establishes and runs an innovative business. Entrepreneurship combines creativity, innovation, and the courage to face risks with hard work to form and maintain new businesses. From the views of experts, it can be concluded that entrepreneurship is the ability to think creatively and behave innovatively, which is used as the basis, resources, driving force, tactical goals, tips, and processes in facing life's challenges.

**Independence of Santripeneur**

According to Novan (2013), Independence is the ability to make choices and accept the consequences that accompany them. Santripreneur has the meaning of santri (people who study at Islamic boarding schools) who have their own business, students who dare to open independent, productive activities. It can also be interpreted as a student who dares to take risks to run his own business by taking advantage of opportunities to create new businesses or with an innovative approach so that the managed business grows to be large and independent in facing the challenges of competition.

Independent santripreneur are students who have a desire to have their own business with their own hard work without dependence on others; multiplying relationships is the main key to opening their own business. A santri already has the provision of religion, so he needs seriousness to apply it in his business field.

**METHOD**

This research uses qualitative research and case study research. The location of this research was carried out to alumni of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor who are members of the Business Forum (FORBIS) of the Darussalam Gontor Modern Boarding Family Association (IKPM) are domiciled in Malang Raya. This research was conducted from September 2021 to June 2022.

Participants in this study were alumni of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor who are members of the Business Forum (FORBIS) who already have businesses and are engaged in various fields, including Information Technology, Property, Livestock, and Photocopying. The reasons for selecting participants are:

1. They are the owner or owners of the business, so the information obtained is valid.
2. Gontor alumni who are engaged in the business world so that they can help people around them get jobs.
3. Apart from being in the business world, they are also active in social and religious activities.
4. The researcher is one of the administrators of Forbis, so it is easy to access data from participants.

The data collection source in this study was to meet the chairman of Forbis IKPM Malang to ask for research permission by showing a research proposal to convince the chairman to assist in the implementation of the research. The next step is to ask for information for members who already have a business so that they can be asked for information to be able to obtain research data. In this study, the researcher will use a semi-structured interview technique because it will be more open to getting the data needed and find new problems openly to provide more helpful input.

In this study, researchers will use documentation techniques to obtain data about Gontor alumni who are independently engaged in business in offices, warehouses, production sites, and others so that the data I will obtain produces complete data. Until now, so that it can be an example for beginners who want to start a business, In the data analysis process of checking the validity of the data, the researcher uses the triangulation method, namely a validity checking technique that utilizes something else, outside the data for checking purposes or as a comparison against the data (Moleong, 2007). So the triangulation technique in this study is to check the validity of the data obtained from

interviews, observations, and documentation. Therefore, the triangulation used in this study is technical.

*A research instrument* is a tool used to measure the observed natural and social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2010). In qualitative research, the main instrument is a person or human instrument, namely the researcher himself, meaning it is the researcher who collects data, presents data, reduces data, interprets data, and collects research results. Ask, analyze, photograph, and construct the social situation under study to be more precise and meaningful. The instruments used in this study were observation sheets, interview guidelines, and field notes. The instruments used in this study were observation sheets, interview guidelines, and field notes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo, founded in 1926, has a long history from the colonial era, the struggle to seize and maintain and maintain independence until the current era of globalization has given birth to thousands of Gontor alumni who are devoted to various fields and professions. The Gontor Modern Pondok Families Association (IKPM) is a forum for Gontor alumni that was founded on 25 Shafar 1367 to coincide with December 17, 1949, in Yogyakarta; among its aims is to enhance the character and intelligence of members in the context of devotion to religion, nation, and the state as well as seeking member welfare.

To achieve the above objectives and as the implementation of the Decree of the X IKPM Gontor General Meeting of 2014 concerning the IKPM Work Program in the Economic Business Sector, with a complete sense of responsibility while asking for taufiq and guidance and the pleasure of Allah the Almighty, the Central Management of IKPM Gontor formed a Business Forum Gontor Modern Pondok Family Association or Forbis IKPM Gontor. This organization is called the Darussalam Gontor Family Association

Business Forum, abbreviated as Forbis IKPM Gontor. Forbis IKPM Gontor itself was founded on 30 Dzulqa'dah 1437 H to coincide with September 2, 2016. Forbis itself is based on Islam and the 1945 constitution and applicable laws and regulations, as well as the IKPM's articles of association and by-laws (AD&ART) as the constitutional basis, as well as the decisions of the Forbis IKPM Gontor deliberation as the operational basis. This organization is a forum for alumni to interact; each city has an overseas branch of the IKPM regional organization. This Alumni Association Institute is led by the central leadership of IKPM, Dr. H. M. Adib Fuadi Nuriz, M.A., M. Phil.

## Organizational Vision and Mission

Vision

To become a center for information, education, consultation, coaching, mentoring, networking, and friendship, as well as synergies among entrepreneurs and professionals of Gontor alumni.

Mission
1. Please provide information on entrepreneurs and professionals of Gontor alumni, their data, and types of business or products.
2. We are improving the quantity and quality of Gontor alumni entrepreneurs and professionals.
3. We are conducting training for entrepreneurs and professionals of Gontor alumni.
4. Facilitate guidance, coaching, and mentoring from entrepreneurs and professionals of Gontor alumni who are already victorious/experienced to entrepreneurs and professionals of beginner Gontor alumni.
5. Facilitate the promotion and marketing of Gontor alumni products.
6. Provide advocacy and assistance for entrepreneurs and professionals of Gontor alumni.
7. Contribute to IKPM, Pondok Modern Gontor, and stakeholders.

8. Carry out other activities relevant to the vision to achieve organizational goals.

## Independence of Santripeneur
### The Role of Forbis in Building Santripreneur's Independence

The independence of modern Pondok Gontor alumni was formed through the alumni business forum initiated by a Forbis commission engaged in the business analysis division and the division of business synergy between members. This business analysis aims to identify weaknesses and shortcomings and look for opportunities and strengths to develop the business.

In this study, independence in building a business is carried out through two main elements, namely the alumni themselves and the role of Forbis in providing facilities for members in developing their business. The most crucial main element is the factor of the alumni themselves in developing their business through five strategies, namely: first, Sensitivity to opportunities and taking advantage of opportunities; second, Armed with knowledge and independence and discipline obtained when studying at Islamic boarding schools; third, Conduct a SWOT analysis; fourth, more focused and direct action or do something according to our passion or passion; and fifth, Collaboration between members.

### Independence in Entrepreneurship
### The Role of Forbis in Building Independence

The independence in entrepreneurship of the alumni of the Gontor Islamic boarding school is facilitated by the Forbis organization in the Training, Mentoring and Coaching Division. This division provides training, mentoring, and coaching so that alumni starting to open their businesses can be accompanied by experienced mentors. So the form of independence of the alumni in developing their business is taken in two ways: facilities from Forbis and the interests of the alumni themselves.

Facilities from Forbis through the division of training, mentoring, and coaching are external factors that can help alumni develop their businesses. However, the most important thing is the alumni's internal factor, which starts from a firm intention and entrepreneurial spirit by reading, asking questions, and discussing with colleagues.

### Independence in Capital

In terms of capital to build a business, alumni members of Forbis use several methods, including joint capital, cooperative borrowing, self-reliance, and joint ventures. Joint capital in question is capital that is jointly or jointly financed between members. This is done when the business is built together to share the capital. Meanwhile, independent capital is self-financed business capital, as was done by Participants 2 and participant 4. Participant 4, for example, uses his pocket money to invest in the livestock business and then develops it into business capital.

### The Role of Forbis Independence in Marketing

The independence of Gontor alumni in marketing their products through several strategies, namely:
1. Networking among alumni organized by the Forbis Expo Division
2. By doing people and users or it can be said to make sales to direct users
3. Conduct online marketing through advertisements on the web and applications
4. Posting on social media

### The Role of Forbis as a Gontor Alumni Organization
### Role in Society

The role of the Gontor Islamic boarding school alumni who are members of this business forum is to participate in the community, both individually and as an organization. In addition, alumni of the Gontor Islamic Boarding School also play a role in collaborating with various institutions of fellow Islamic boarding

schools, as stated in the Forbis work program of the Pondok Pesantren Cooperation Division.

## Role in Building Alumni Independence

To build the independence of the Gontor Islamic boarding school alumni, Forbis, through the Division of Training, Mentoring, and Coaching, plays a role in providing facilities for alumni to build independence through several work programs.

## Role in Pondok Contribution

The contribution of alumni to the Gontor Islamic boarding school through several activities, both inside the lodge and outside the cottage, by organizing expos and promos. By doing this expo and promo, it can be used as a medium to educate the public about the existence of the Gontor Islamic boarding school.

## Role in the Independence of Entrepreneurs

The independence of entrepreneurs in developing their business is built through several social networks or social networking, both offline and online. This social network is also facilitated by Forbis, the Inter-Institutional Cooperation division, the Public Relations and Publication division, the Hajj and Umrah Travel Division, and the online ta'lim division. Thus there is a balance between worldly affairs and hereafter affairs and, more specifically, business affairs to support and strengthen the affairs of the hereafter.

## CONCLUSION

Moreover, synergize with other divisions. In this study, pesantren alumni develop themselves to become independent students, namely by building a business where building a business is carried out through two elements, namely the first role of the alumni themselves and the second the role of the FORBIS management in providing opportunities and opportunities for alumni through the FORBIS division. The role of the Gontor Islamic boarding school alumni to develop themselves

towards the independence of students includes the role in society, the role in government, the role in building the independence of the alumni, and the role in contributing to the cottage. The independence of santriprenuer that has been developed by alumni of the Gontor Islamic boarding school includes, firstly, independence in building, secondly independence in entrepreneurship, thirdly independence in the capital, and fourthly independence in marketing.

Based on the results of the research that has been done, the authors realize that there are still many limitations and shortcomings that exist in this study. However, with this research, it is hoped that it can make a useful contribution, especially to alumni of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. For further research, it is necessary to explore more deeply the independence of students and entrepreneurs by using a multiple case study approach. The results of the research on "Santripreneur Independence" have been completed. Within certain limits, this paper still has the possibility of being perfect. The author hopes that future researchers will continue to do more detailed research related to aspects of santri religiosity and its influence on the independence of santripreneurs to add information on research results to increase the scientific treasures of Islamic Economics.

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