



The Role of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry in Fostering Islamic Education at Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara Islamic Boarding School, Makassar

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Abstract

This study examines the role of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry in fostering Islamic education at Pondok Pesantren Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara Makassar. The study is important because pesantren leadership in Indonesia is not only related to institutional management but also to the transmission of Islamic values, regeneration of ulama, character formation, and the sustainability of religious educational traditions. This research employed a qualitative approach using historical and figure-study methods. Data were collected through documentation, observation, pesantren archival tracing, and in-depth interviews with family members, alumni, educators, and figures who understood the legacy of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry. The findings show that KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry played a fundamental role as founder, educator, spiritual leader, institutional manager, and initiator of ulama regeneration. His ideas were embodied in visionary, participatory, and exemplary leadership; the integration of religious and general knowledge; transparent financial management; humanistic human-resource development; and progressive infrastructure development. His educational legacy continues through the culture of discipline, teacher role modeling, integrative curriculum, Islamic character formation, alumni networks, and institutional adaptability without abandoning Islamic and Muhammadiyah values. Supporting factors included Muhammadiyah support, community participation, donors, loyal educators, alumni, dormitory-based education, and institutional partnerships. Inhibiting factors included funding limitations, human-resource gaps, infrastructure and technological constraints, resistance to change, managerial complexity, and internal institutional dynamics. This study affirms that KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry laid a holistic, character-based, and sustainable foundation for Islamic education in a Muhammadiyah pesantren context.

Keywords: KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry, Islamic education, pesantren, student development, educational leadership

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in Indonesia has historically developed through various institutions, including madrasah, schools, and pesantren. Among these institutions, pesantren has a distinctive role because it integrates religious instruction, moral habituation, social discipline, leadership formation, and community service in one educational ecosystem. Pesantren is not merely a place for transferring religious knowledge, but also a living environment where Islamic values are practiced through daily routines, teacher modeling, worship, discipline, and social responsibility.

In the context of Muhammadiyah, Islamic education is closely linked to *tajdid*, *da'wah*, and cadre formation. Muhammadiyah educational institutions are expected to produce Muslims who are faithful, knowledgeable, morally grounded, socially responsible, and capable of responding to modern challenges. This expectation becomes more complex in the pesantren context because pesantren must preserve Islamic traditions while adapting to social change, technological development, and the demand for broader competencies.

Pondok Pesantren Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara Makassar is one of the important Muhammadiyah pesantren in Eastern Indonesia. Its development cannot be separated from the figure of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry, an ulama, educator, and Muhammadiyah leader whose role was central in laying the foundation of Islamic education, cadre development, and institutional management at the pesantren. His life history, educational experiences in Muhammadiyah circles and Makkah, and concern for the regeneration of ulama became the basis for establishing a pesantren that combined religious depth, organizational discipline, and social commitment.

The establishment of Darul Arqam Gombara was motivated by the need to create a systematic institution for producing ulama, *da'i*, and future leaders. KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry viewed education as a long-term *da'wah* project, not simply as classroom activity. He believed that future Muslim leaders must be spiritually strong, intellectually competent, morally disciplined, and socially useful. Therefore, the pesantren was designed as a space for comprehensive formation through dormitory life, integrated curriculum, teacher role modeling, and community engagement.

Several studies have discussed pesantren development, Islamic educational leadership, and the role of ulama in shaping educational institutions. However, specific studies on KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry and his role in fostering Islamic education at Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara remain limited. This article therefore focuses on transforming the dissertation findings into an academic article that highlights his biography, educational ideas, institutional actions, relevance, continuity, and the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting pesantren development.

This study aims to describe the historical background of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry and the founding of Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara, analyze his ideas and actions in fostering Islamic education, examine the relevance and continuity of his ideas in the pesantren system, and identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the development of the pesantren. The study is expected to contribute to Islamic educational leadership studies, especially in relation to prophetic, transformational, and values-based leadership in pesantren management.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative approach with a historical and figure-study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study sought to understand the meaning, context, and educational legacy of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry in depth. The figure-study design enabled the researcher to examine the life history, ideas, leadership patterns, and institutional contributions of a significant Islamic education figure.

The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara Makassar. The object of the study was the role of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry in fostering Islamic education at the pesantren. The focus of the study included four aspects: the biography of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry and the historical background of the pesantren, his ideas and actions in institutional development, the relevance and continuity of his ideas, and the supporting and inhibiting factors in pesantren development.

Data sources consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews with family members, pesantren leaders, educators, alumni, and figures who had knowledge of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry and the development of Darul Arqam Gombara. Secondary data were obtained from documents, archives, books, journals, organizational records, and relevant historical materials.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to understand the pesantren environment and current institutional practices. Interviews were used to explore memories, interpretations, and testimonies regarding KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry's leadership and educational ideas. Documentation was used to trace institutional history, leadership records, pesantren development, and references related to Muhammadiyah education and pesantren studies.

Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis also used domain, taxonomic, and componential analysis to identify major themes, organize findings, and compare similarities and contrasts among sources. Data validity was strengthened through extended observation, increased persistence, source triangulation, and technique triangulation.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH FINDINGS

A. Biography of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry and the Historical Background of Darul Arqam Gombara

KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry was born in Rappang on 27 August 1916. His childhood name was Andu Lolo, which means young hope. He grew up in a religious family and received his first Qur'anic education from his father, H. Muhammad Ashiry, who had studied in Makkah. From an early age, he was trained to read the Qur'an correctly, especially in relation to makhraj and pronunciation. This early religious environment shaped his discipline, love of knowledge, and commitment to Islamic education.

His formal education began at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Muhammadiyah in Rappang from 1928 to 1933. He later continued his studies in Siwa, Sengkang, and studied under ulama who deepened his understanding of Islamic knowledge and religious leadership. In 1947, he traveled to Makkah not only to perform the pilgrimage but also to study. His experience in Makkah broadened his intellectual horizon and strengthened his commitment to Islamic da'wah and education.

The establishment of Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara was rooted in his concern over the limited availability of institutions capable of producing ulama and muballigh in a structured and sustained manner. He believed that the Muslim community needed a pesantren that did not only teach religious knowledge but also nurtured leadership, morality, discipline, and social responsibility. This concern was strengthened by Muhammadiyah's need for ulama regeneration.

The pesantren began modestly with a small number of students and limited facilities. However, through patience, community support, and persistent institutional work, it developed into a major Muhammadiyah pesantren. The pesantren eventually became a center for ulama regeneration, da'wah, and Islamic education, especially in Eastern Indonesia.

B. Ideas and Actions in Fostering Islamic Education

The educational ideas of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry were rooted in the integration of Islamic knowledge, character development, and institutional discipline. He viewed pesantren as a center for forming ulama, da'i, educators, and community leaders. Therefore, the pesantren was not only designed as a formal educational institution but also as a living community that trained students through daily worship, dormitory discipline, moral guidance, leadership practice, and social engagement.

His leadership style can be understood as visionary, participatory, transformational, and prophetic. He did not merely instruct teachers and students but modeled discipline, simplicity, sincerity, and service. His leadership emphasized uswah hasanah, meaning that the leader must first embody the values expected from students and educators. This made his leadership morally persuasive rather than merely administrative.

In institutional management, KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry paid attention to financial transparency, human-resource development, facilities, curriculum, religious guidance, research culture, and community service.

Financial management was conducted through careful recording, accountability, donor relations, and priority-based spending. Human-resource development prioritized dedication, loyalty, Islamic character, and willingness to serve the mission of education.

He also supported the development of facilities and infrastructure through community participation, donations, waqf, and cooperation with Muhammadiyah networks and public figures. The pesantren was gradually equipped with dormitories, classrooms, mosque facilities, administrative spaces, and other supporting facilities. These developments strengthened the pesantren as an educational environment capable of supporting both learning and character formation.

In the field of teaching and learning, KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry emphasized the integration of religious and general knowledge. This integrative orientation was important because he wanted students to master Islamic sciences while also being able to engage with modern knowledge and social realities. This idea remains relevant in contemporary pesantren education, where students are expected to be religiously grounded and intellectually adaptive.

C. Relevance and Continuity of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry's Ideas

The ideas of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry remain relevant because they address core issues in Islamic education: the need for ulama regeneration, character formation, integrative curriculum, teacher role modeling, institutional sustainability, and social responsiveness. His belief that pesantren should produce students who master both Islamic knowledge and broader social knowledge reflects a forward-looking educational vision.

The continuity of his ideas can be seen in the institutional culture of Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara. The pesantren continues to preserve discipline, dormitory-based education, Islamic habituation, and teacher modeling as important parts of student development. At the same time, it adapts to contemporary demands through curriculum development, institutional cooperation, digital awareness, and broader educational programs.

His ideas also continue through alumni networks. Many alumni have become muballigh, teachers, academics, community leaders, and professionals. This shows that the pesantren does not only produce graduates with religious knowledge, but also individuals who can contribute in broader social fields. The alumni network strengthens the continuity of the pesantren mission and expands its social impact.

The relevance of his educational vision is also visible in the emphasis on moderation, dialogue, and social responsibility. The pesantren tradition he built did not encourage exclusivism but nurtured students to become morally firm, intellectually open, and socially useful. This is particularly important in the contemporary era, where Islamic education must respond to pluralism, social change, and digital transformation without losing its religious foundation.

D. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Pesantren Development

The development of Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara was supported by several important factors. First, Muhammadiyah provided ideological, organizational, and social support. As a Muhammadiyah pesantren, Darul Arqam benefited from a strong network of da'wah, education, and community service. This network helped strengthen institutional legitimacy and expand cooperation.

Second, community participation, donors, and waqf played an important role in supporting facilities and operational needs. The pesantren was built not only by individual initiative but also through collective support. This social capital became a major strength in the early development of the institution and continues to support its sustainability.

Third, loyal educators, alumni, dormitory-based education, and institutional partnerships contributed to the continuity of the pesantren. The presence of teachers who were willing to serve with sincerity and the involvement of alumni helped maintain the educational culture and expand the pesantren's influence.

However, the pesantren also faced inhibiting factors. These included financial limitations, unequal human-resource competencies, limited infrastructure and technology, resistance to change, managerial complexity, and internal institutional dynamics. These challenges indicate that pesantren development requires not only spiritual commitment but also modern institutional management, sustainable funding, human-resource upgrading, and strategic planning.

Theme	Main Findings
Biography and Founding	Religious family background, Muhammadiyah education, Makkah learning experience, concern for ulama regeneration, and establishment of Darul Arqam Gombara.
Educational Ideas	Integration of religious and general knowledge, holistic student formation, Islamic discipline, da'wah orientation, and cadre development.
Leadership Model	Visionary, participatory, transformational, prophetic, exemplary, adaptive, and spiritually grounded leadership.
Institutional Management	Transparent finance, humanistic human-resource management, progressive facility development, curriculum integration, and community service.
Continuity	Discipline culture, teacher modeling, alumni networks, Muhammadiyah values, curriculum adaptation, and social responsiveness.
Challenges	Funding limitations, HR gaps, infrastructure and technology constraints, resistance to change, and managerial complexity.

Discussion

The findings show that KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry's role in Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara was multidimensional. He was not only a founder, but also an educator, manager, spiritual guide, and institutional architect. This multidimensional role is typical of pesantren leadership, where institutional authority is closely related to moral authority, religious knowledge, and personal example.

His leadership reflects prophetic and transformational characteristics. Prophetic leadership is visible in the emphasis on sincerity, morality, worship, da'wah, and service. Transformational leadership appears in his ability to inspire change, build institutional vision, mobilize community support, and develop future leaders. His leadership was not limited to maintaining tradition; it also involved renewal and adaptation.

The integration of religious and general knowledge was one of his most important educational contributions. This idea challenged the dichotomy between religious and secular sciences. In the Muhammadiyah pesantren context, this integration is consistent with the spirit of *tajdid* and *Islam berkemajuan*, which encourages Muslims to master religious values and modern knowledge in order to contribute to society.

The pesantren development model also illustrates the importance of collective leadership and community-based education. Darul Arqam Gombara developed through the involvement of Muhammadiyah figures, donors, teachers, families, alumni, and surrounding communities. This shows that pesantren sustainability depends on shared ownership and social trust, not merely on formal institutional structures.

The challenges identified in the study indicate that pesantren must continuously strengthen governance. Financial transparency, human-resource development, infrastructure improvement, digitalization, and strategic partnerships are necessary for ensuring long-term sustainability. Without these, pesantren may struggle to maintain relevance in a changing educational environment.

Overall, the role of KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry provides a model of Islamic educational leadership that combines religious vision, moral authority, organizational discipline, participatory management, and social

commitment. His legacy remains important for Muhammadiyah pesantren and for Islamic education institutions seeking to balance tradition and modernity.

Conclusion

This study concludes that KH. Abdul Djabbar Ashiry played a fundamental role in fostering Islamic education at Pondok Pesantren Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara Makassar. His role was not limited to establishing the institution, but also included designing educational direction, building institutional culture, managing resources, guiding teachers and students, and strengthening the pesantren as a center of ulama regeneration and Muhammadiyah cadre formation.

His educational ideas were realized through visionary and participatory leadership based on example, integration of religious and general knowledge, transparent and accountable financial management, humanistic human-resource development, progressive facility development, and holistic student development. These ideas have remained relevant and continue to shape the pesantren through discipline, teacher role modeling, integrative curriculum, alumni networks, community engagement, and institutional adaptability.

The development of the pesantren was supported by Muhammadiyah networks, community participation, donors, alumni, loyal educators, dormitory-based education, and institutional partnerships. However, it also faced challenges such as limited funding, human-resource gaps, infrastructure and technological limitations, resistance to change, managerial complexity, and internal dynamics. These findings indicate that the sustainability of pesantren education requires both spiritual commitment and strong institutional governance.

The study recommends that Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Gombara and other Islamic educational institutions continue to strengthen integrative education, improve digital-based management, develop teacher capacity, expand alumni and partnership networks, and maintain the values of sincerity, discipline, service, and Muhammadiyah-based Islamic renewal. Future studies may compare the leadership models of several Muhammadiyah pesantren or examine the long-term social impact of pesantren alumni.

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