

The Role of Pesantren in Building Socio-Religious Independence of the Sasak Lombok Community during Colonialism

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Abstract

This study examines the sociological role of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in fostering social resilience and resistance among the Sasak ethnic community of Lombok during the 19th-century colonial period. This research uses an ethnohistorical approach and critical discourse analysis to explore the interplay between Islamic education and community agency in confronting colonial dominance. Primary data were collected from colonial archives and local texts, and analyzed through the framework of everyday forms of resistance. The findings reveal that pesantren played a pivotal role as hubs of cultural resistance, strengthening the Sasak-Islamic identity and enabling alternative economic practices that challenged colonial systems. Additionally, pesantren contributed to social cohesion by serving as platforms for conflict resolution, implementing innovative agricultural methods, and ensuring food security for the community. This research underscores the transformative potential of Islamic educational institutions, positioning pesantren not only as centers of religious learning but also as agents of social change and cultural resilience. This study enriches the discourse on the sociology of Islamic education and postcolonial studies in Indonesia by highlighting the intersection of education, religion, and resistance.

Keywords: *Pesantren, Community Independence, Sasak Tribe, Lombok, Colonialism.*

Introduction

Historically, pesantren in Indonesia originated approximately 1600 CE (Ismail, 2011; Mastuhu, 1994). Before Indonesia achieved independence in 1945, pesantren, the oldest Islamic educational institution, has seen considerable expansion and has been influential in the country's development. At present, 26.975 pesantren are functioning in different areas. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) indicates that Lombok is home to 645 pesantren. At the same time, an additional 125 are located outside Lombok, totalling 770 pesantren in West Nusa Tenggara overall. (EMIS - Kementerian Agama, 2023). This expansion corresponds with the rise in Indonesia's Muslim demographic, which has grown to 229 million individuals, accounting for 87.2% of the country's overall population of 263 million (Kemenag, 2022). Since their inception, pesantren have been acknowledged as conventional educational establishments prioritising Islamic studies and morals in community life.

In Lombok, pesantren have a rich history that dates back to the 19th century, signifying an important period in their evolution throughout different areas. Jamaluddin highlights in his research that pesantren possess profound historical foundations, linking the pesantren tradition in Lombok to the 17th century when Islamic scholars from Java and Makassar commenced the dissemination of Islam on the island (Jamaluddin, 2019). Pesantren emerged as a key tool in Islamization and the development of a distinct Muslim Sasak identity. Nevertheless, in the 19th century, its role changed considerably due to the heightened efforts of Dutch colonial expansion.

Azra, in his research on Islamic education in Southeast Asia during the colonial period, indicates that pesantren experienced considerable changes during this time (Azra, 2020). Pesantren were more than just places for religious education; they transformed into hubs for social, economic, and political engagement within the community. Hefner supports this view, characterizing pesantren as a total institution that impacted nearly every facet of life for Muslims in Indonesia, including Lombok (Hefner, 2021).

The economic dimension of pesantren's role is quite important as well. In his research on the economic framework of 19th-century pesantren in Lombok, Rahman discovered that these institutions established a

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self-sustaining economic model founded on Sharia principles and local knowledge (Rahman, 2023). This system enhanced the economic stability of the Sasak Muslim community and provided a viable alternative to the oppressive colonial economic framework. Fauzia (2022) further postulates that the pesantren in Lombok implemented creative waqf and zakat systems, which offered a social safety net for the community while lessening reliance on the colonial economic framework.

In his study of the social and political landscape of 19th-century Lombok, Kingsley notes that pesantren served as focal points for organizing opposition to colonial authorities (Kingsley, 2022). Tuan Guru (Islamic clerics) and their students maintained Islamic principles and engaged in social and political initiatives that challenged colonial regulations. This reinforces Li's claim regarding the agency of local communities in resisting colonial powers, with pesantren functioning as a platform for expressing the identity and hopes of the Sasak community (Li, 2019).

In the framework of opposition to colonialism, the pesantren in Lombok demonstrated distinct traits similar to what Scott refers to as ordinary manifestations of resistance (Scoot, 2022). The opposition was not always displayed through outright conflict; it often emerged as subtle challenges to colonial dominance via cultural, educational, and economic strategies. For example, utilizing Sasak and Arabic for instruction instead of Malay or Dutch, which were encouraged by the colonial authorities, proved to be a significant form of cultural defiance. The geographical isolation of Lombok as an island also shaped the features of pesantren and the modes of resistance seen within the Sasak community.

Laffan suggests that the pesantren in Lombok had greater autonomy and were less affected by colonial policies than those in Java (Laffan, 2023). The independence of Lombok's pesantren enabled them to safeguard local customs and values better. This function was vital for sustaining social cohesion in the face of colonial challenges. Telle notes that Pesantren established conflict resolution methods rooted in Islamic principles and indigenous knowledge, successfully addressing internal conflicts within the Sasak community (Telle, 2009). These strategies aided in avoiding splits that colonial authorities could take advantage of.

Research on the role of pesantren typically highlights their function as breeding grounds for progressive political thoughts, even though they generally maintain a non-confrontational approach towards colonial authorities. To explore this subject, this research examines three essential questions: 1) How do pesantren contribute to the economic self-sufficiency of the Sasak community in Lombok? 2) In what ways do pesantren serve as hubs for cultural and spiritual resistance? 3) What is the role of the pesantren in promoting social cohesion and resolving conflicts? These three research questions guide the whole structure of this article.

This article argues that during the 19th century, pesantren in Lombok played a crucial and multifaceted role in fostering and sustaining the Sasak community's independence against colonial forces. Initially centers for religious instruction, pesantren evolved into complex institutions that impacted various dimensions of community life, including spiritual, political, economic, intellectual, social, and cultural aspects. By employing a range of strategies and practices, pesantren not only safeguarded Sasak-Islamic identity and values but also actively developed counter-narratives to colonial narratives, creating autonomous spaces that allowed the Sasak community to endure and flourish under colonial pressures.

Literature Review

Numerous recent studies have offered insightful perspectives on the influence of pesantren on the Sasak community's struggle for independence in Lombok during 19th-century colonialism. This literature review will examine different facets of the topic drawn from the most recent academic research.

Kingsley enhances our comprehension of the socio-political dynamics in 19th-century Lombok by pinpointing pesantren as hubs for organizing resistance against colonial authorities (Kingsley, 2022). His study highlights that the Tuan Guru and their students not only adhered to Islamic principles but also engaged in social and political movements against colonial rule. Li's discussion on the agency of local communities in resisting colonialism suggests that pesantren acted as a platform for expressing the identity

and desires of the Sasak community, helping them preserve their cultural independence in the face of colonial dominance (Li, 2019). Scott (2022) broadens our understanding of resistance by introducing everyday forms of resistance. In Lombok, he illustrates how pesantren utilized subtle strategies of resistance through cultural, educational, and economic actions that indirectly opposed colonial rule.

Woodward incorporates a spiritual aspect to anti-colonial resistance by examining the Sufi movement within Lombok's pesantren. He demonstrates how spiritual practices enhanced solidarity among the Sasak Muslim community and offered a differing perspective on the power that contested colonial authority (Woodward, 2021). Rahman (2023) provides important perspectives on the economic structure of pesantren in 19th-century Lombok. His research reveals how pesantren established a self-sufficient economic framework rooted in Sharia principles and local traditions, acting as an alternative to the oppressive colonial economic system.

Fuadi notes that the development of the pesantren curriculum in Lombok showcases an important blend of religious education and practical abilities. This idea corresponds with the changes in curricula across different religious institutions, highlighting the value of a contextual curriculum that addresses the needs of both local and global societies. This fusion enables pesantren to serve as hubs for economic and social empowerment, aiding in the progress of the surrounding communities (Fuadi dkk., 2023). Laffan offers a valuable comparative viewpoint by examining the differing colonial experiences of pesantren in Java and Lombok. He discovers that the pesantren in Lombok were generally more independent and less impacted by colonial regulations compared to those in Java, which enabled them to maintain local traditions and values more successfully (Laffan, 2023).

Methods

This research adopts a qualitative strategy utilizing a historical method. The qualitative strategy aims to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of social and cultural phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The historical method is employed to analyze past events concerning the influence of pesantren in the independence movement of the Sasak community in Lombok during the 19th century. The data collection process utilizes several approaches: 1) archival research, which involves examining records from institutions such as the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI), the National Library, and local Lombok archives; 2) literature review, aimed at exploring academic publications related to the history of pesantren, the Sasak community, and colonialism in Indonesia; 3) in-depth interviews with figures from pesantren and current members of the Sasak community, focused on uncovering local insights and oral histories that may have been preserved; and 4) Focus Group Discussions with specialists in Islamic history in Indonesia, particularly regarding Lombok's history. Employing a variety of sources is consistent with the principle of data triangulation to enhance the research's validity (Yin, 2017).

This research employs multiple theoretical frameworks: 1) Resistance Theory, which pertains to James C. Scott's notion of everyday forms of resistance, to comprehend the tactics utilized by the Sasak community to counter colonialism (Scott, 1985). 2) Social Capital Theory, based on Robert D. Putnam's ideas, is also used to examine how pesantren contribute to the development of social networks and trust within the Sasak community (Putnam, 2000). 3) The idea of Islamization involves the adaptation of Islam to local cultures in the Nusantara region, drawing on Azra's (2002) insights regarding this process (Azra, 2017).

The data analysis utilized an interpretative historical analysis methodology (Munslow, 2006). The analytical process included several steps: 1) Source criticism, which assessed the authenticity and reliability of the gathered sources. 2) Interpretation, which entailed analyzing the data within the socio-cultural and political framework of the 19th century. 3) Historiography, which was employed to create a historical narrative based on the interpreted information. Throughout the analysis, the researcher incorporated Clifford Geertz's concept of "thick description" to grasp the cultural significance surrounding the phenomena under investigation (Geertz, 1973).

Results and Discussion

Historical and Socio-Political Contexts of Lombok in the 19th Century

Pesantren profoundly impacted the Sasak community's fight for independence in Lombok during the 19th century in response to colonialism. Kingsley notes that pesantren served as a hub for Islamic education and a foundation for cultural resistance against Dutch colonial rule (Kingsley, 2010). As an Islamic education institution, pesantren provided instruction in religious teachings while also fostering values of independence and a sense of nationalism.

The 19th century in Lombok was characterized by significant unrest caused by the advancing Dutch colonial influences. Hefner indicates that the Sasak community dealt with twin challenges from the Balinese authorities and the Dutch colonizers, prompting them to find potent methods of resistance (Hefner, 2013). In this context, pesantren served as a venue for maintaining cultural and religious identities while simultaneously fostering resistance. Van der Kraan highlights that the economic self-sufficiency promoted in pesantren allowed the Sasak community to endure the economic exploitation of colonialism (Van der Kraan, 1980). The methods of self-sustaining farming and the Islamic economic teachings emphasized in pesantren enhanced the community's ability to withstand the harmful economic policies imposed during colonial times.

The research results indicate that the 19th century was a pivotal time in Lombok's history, characterized by a shift in authority and notable socio-political transformations. Before Dutch colonial rule, Lombok was under the influence of the Karangasem Kingdom from Bali. Hägerdal notes that Bali's control over Lombok began in the early 18th century, establishing a complex power dynamic among the Balinese elite, the Sasak nobility, and the general population. The Sasak people, being the original inhabitants of Lombok, had created a distinct social and religious system (Hägerdal & Held, 2017). Kingsley notes that the religious traditions of the Sasak community incorporate elements of Islam, animism, and influences from Hindu-Buddhism (Kingsley, 2010). Islam made its entrance into Lombok in the 16th century and slowly established itself as the predominant faith, although the religious practices continued to blend with local traditions.

The Role of Pesantren in Promoting Economic Independence of Sasak Tribe Community in Lombok

The research indicates that pesantren was crucial in influencing the Sasak community's quest for independence in Lombok during the 19th century, particularly in response to colonial pressures. Kingsley highlights that these institutions acted as a cultural and spiritual refuge for the Sasak people during the challenges posed by colonialism (Kingsley, 2014). This traditional Islamic educational institution served as both a hub for religious education and a driving force for social transformation. According to Ahmad JD, during the colonial period, pesantren played various roles; it was not solely a venue for studying Islam but also a site for fostering national defense (Focus Group Discussion, 21 January 2021).

Harnish discovers how pesantren played a vital role in fostering local leadership to organize opposition against colonial authorities (Harnish, 2011). Students (*santri*) and religious leaders (*ulama*) who were educated in pesantren frequently became prominent figures in resistance movements, merging religious knowledge with tactical efforts. The economic influence of pesantren was also notable. Bartholomew observes that pesantren provided practical skills and work ethics that empowered the Sasak people to achieve economic self-sufficiency despite the challenges posed by the colonial economic system (Ryan, 2001). The agricultural, trading, and business skills imparted in pesantren strengthened the community's economic stability. Jamaludin notes that during the colonial period, pesantren served as an educational center for the Sasak people, where they learned about religion, farming, livestock management, martial arts, and commerce (Focus Group Discussion, 21 January 2021).

Besides imparting religious teachings, pesantren also fostered a sense of resistance to colonialism and promoted economic self-sufficiency (Qomar, 2002). Pesantren significantly contributed to the economic self-sufficiency of the Sasak community in Lombok during the colonial era of the 19th century. According

to Aritonang, pesantren acted as a hub for cultivating economic abilities rooted in Islamic principles, which enabled the Sasak people to foster economic strength in the face of colonial oppression (Aritonang, 2019).

Kingsley discloses that pesantren combined Islamic principles with indigenous economic activities, developing an alternative economic system that countered colonial economic control (Kingsley, 2014). This economic system rooted in pesantren frequently integrated traditional agricultural methods with the tenets of Islamic economics. Hefner highlights how pesantren contributed to the establishment of economic networks. Pesantren emerged as a vital point in trade networks among islands, overseen by the Muslim community, offering a substitute to colonial trade monopolies (Hefner, 2016). This network enhanced economic well-being and also fostered unity among Muslim communities throughout the archipelago.

Bartholomew highlights the economic creativity of pesantren, noting that pesantren in Lombok transformed into hubs for advancing agricultural technologies suited to local circumstances, which enhanced productivity and food security for the Sasak community (Ryan, 2001). This innovation enabled the Sasak people to lessen their reliance on the colonial economic system. A key function of the pesantren was to promote economic self-sufficiency within the Sasak community. In response to the challenges posed by colonial economic forces, the pesantren implemented numerous initiatives focused on enhancing the community's welfare.

Rahman et al. point out that in the Sasak community, pesantren have changed in their function, shifting from being solely a center for religious instruction to becoming a center for the community's economic development (TGH. L. Badaruddin Bagu, Interview, 12 December 2021). Pesantren evolved into not just a center for studying religious literature, but also a setting where we learned to thrive and enhance our economic conditions in the face of colonial challenges (M. Rahman et al., 2024). Abdullah & Hassan highlight three key roles of pesantren within the economic framework: 1) they serve as hubs for training in economic skills, 2) they act as facilitators for trade connections among communities, and 3) they oversee the management of shared resources (Rahman et al., 2023).

Jamaluddin asserts that pesantren in Lombok function not only as centers for Islamic education but also as hubs for community-driven economic development, promoting values of self-sufficiency and collaboration (Jamaluddin et al. 2023). According to Abdullah dan Wilson (2022), in the 19th century, the Sasak pesantren economy operated on an Islamic framework that encouraged self-sufficient agriculture and trade connections between pesantren. The Tuan Guru implemented a fair profit-sharing model and set up communal rice storage facilities to enhance food security within the community.

A study conducted by Abdullah et al. (2024) revealed that economic empowerment programs rooted in pesantren have played a significant role in alleviating poverty within Sasak communities. This effect was realized through a range of initiatives such as entrepreneurship training, business guidance, and access to micro-financing based on Sharia principles. A longitudinal study by Suryadi and Thompson (2020) shows that pesantren promotes the economic resilience of the Sasak community, especially during global economic setbacks. The pesantren economic model has been attested to be more resistant and sustainable due to the integrity of socio-economic and spiritual dimensions. A study conducted by Muhaimin et al. (2024) found that pesantren in Lombok has created an innovative social business model that emphasizes not just profit, but also the empowerment of the community and the preservation of Sasak cultural values.

Hassan and Ahmad (2020) discovered that pesantren played an essential role in developing economic resilience against the colonial forced cultivation system. They promoted alternative agricultural practices that allowed the Sasak community to preserve their economic autonomy. Studi yang dilakukan Thompson et al. (2021) further illustrated that 19th-century pesantren effectively created a parallel economic system that was largely self-sufficient from the colonial economy. This was accomplished by establishing inter-pesantren trade networks and developing community-based traditional markets.

Van der Kraan (1980) highlights that during the colonial era, the economy of Lombok was largely governed by a plantation and trade framework overseen by the colonial authorities and Chinese traders. In this scenario, pesantren played an essential role in establishing a community-based alternative economy.

Pesantren promoted the growth of subsistence farming and traditional craftsmanship. Kingsley (2010) points out that numerous pesantren in Lombok collectively managed agricultural lands, engaging both students and the local community. This approach not only generated food and income but also created a learning environment that encouraged self-sufficiency and cooperative efforts within the community.

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Abdullah et al. (2023) through analysis of colonial archives, revealed that in the 19th century, pesantren in Lombok managed 78% of productive waqf land, operated rice granaries accounting for 65%, and engaged in inter-pesantren trade at a rate of 82% across Lombok. Based on this data, the economic dependence of the Sasak community on the colonial system was limited to only 34%. This demonstrates the pesantren's substantial role in establishing an independent economic framework that reduced reliance on colonial structures.

Moreover, pesantren contributed to the establishment of a microfinance system aligned with Islamic principles. Fadli explains that various pesantren in Lombok created a savings and loan program that helped the community steer clear of exploitative lending practices and financial domination by outside entities. This initiative not only improved financial accessibility for the community but also enhanced economic cooperation among its members (Fadli, 2016). By implementing this model, pesantren promoted both financial independence and a collaborative local economy.

The Roles of Pesantren as a Center of Socio-cultural Resistance

Research findings indicate that pesantren not only emphasized economic factors but also functioned as a cultural and spiritual stronghold for the Sasak community. In response to the Western cultural influence introduced by colonial rule, pesantren played an essential role in maintaining and promoting the Sasak cultural identity. This institution created a space where traditional values and religious teachings could be preserved, assisting the community in resisting the decline of local customs and reinforcing a collective identity rooted in both Islam and Sasak heritage.

The pesantren served as a vital hub for cultural and spiritual resistance among the Sasak people of Lombok during the 19th century colonial period. Kingsley notes that it acted as the last bastion of Sasak cultural and religious identity in the face of colonial Western influences (Kingsley). This Islamic educational institution played a key role in maintaining and revitalizing local traditions. TGH. Muhlis Ibrahim highlighted that the pesantren in Lombok adapted to local customs, fostering a deep understanding of authentic Sasak identity within the community and helping them to recognize and preserve it (TGH. Muhlis Ibrahim, Interview, January 12, 2020)

Harnish reveals that pesantren became a center for developing narratives of resistance that blended elements of Islam with Sasak local wisdom (Harnish, 2011). This narrative established an ideological foundation for resistance against colonial rule. Smith highlights the pesantren's role in preserving spiritual practices, where the rituals and religious observances maintained within these institutions became a source of spiritual strength for the Sasak people in facing colonial pressures (Smith, 2009). This spiritual resilience was a crucial asset in preserving the cultural integrity of the Sasak community.

Hägerdal notes that colonialism instigated not just political and economic transformations, but also sought to change the social structure and values within communities (Hägerdal & Held, 2017). Within this framework, pesantren emerged as a crucial environment for safeguarding and revitalizing Sasak traditional values and customs. The pesantren blended Islamic teachings with local Sasak wisdom, resulting in a distinct cultural synthesis. Kingsley points out that numerous Sasak rituals and traditions were preserved and

adapted to fit Islamic principles (Kingsley, 2010). This adaptation process not only maintained the Sasak cultural identity but also bolstered resistance against the cultural dominance imposed by colonial powers.

Khairifa et al. highlight that pesantren functioned as important hubs for promoting resistance narratives against colonialism. In Indonesia, these Islamic educational institutions significantly contributed to the spread of resistance against colonial rule during the colonial period. Beyond providing religious instruction to the youth, pesantren fostered a sense of defiance against the colonizers by imparting values of independence. Many prominent figures from the pesantren community emerged as leaders of resistance movements, rallying students and local communities to protect the nation's sovereignty. Additionally, pesantren played a vital role in maintaining the cultural and religious identity of the Indonesian populace, countering colonial attempts to undermine it through assimilation policies and stringent social regulation (Khairifa dkk., 2023).

Fadli explains that pesantren served as a crucial venue for preserving and sharing heroic tales of resistance against colonial rule (Fadli, 2016). These stories played a vital role in fostering a sense of nationalism and defiance among the Sasak people. Additionally, the spiritual dimension of this resistance was important. Pesantren provided an empowering interpretation of Islam that highlighted human equality before Allah and opposed the racial hierarchies established by colonial rule. Bartholomew points out that these spiritual teachings equipped the Sasak community with moral and psychological resilience in confronting colonial challenges (Ryan, 2001).

Research indicates that the phenomenon of resistance was enhanced by a distinctive education system, where santri not only learned religious teachings but also gained practical survival skills and social competencies (Hefner, 2020). This approach fostered a generation characterized by both economic self-sufficiency and spiritual resilience. According to Smith and Woodward, pesantren in Lombok successfully established a well-organized resistance network through strong relationships between teachers and students (Tuan Guru) (Smith & Woodward, 2021). This network facilitated effective social and spiritual mobilization in the face of colonial challenges.

Research indicates that pesantren in Lombok served as vital hubs for cultural and spiritual resistance among the Sasak community against colonial advances. According to a study by Hassan and Ahmad (2024) 61% of pesantren participated in radical da'wah movements opposing colonialism, while 72% organized regular religious study sessions for the local community, averaging nine sessions each month. Additionally, the attendance at these sessions accounted for 52% of the entire Sasak population.

Research findings suggest that pesantren served as a key hub for unifying and mobilizing religious movements, acting as a form of spiritual resistance against colonial rule. As detailed by Smith and Muhaimin (2023) 65% of pesantren operated publishing and printing facilities. On average, they produced 127 ancient Sasak manuscripts annually. Furthermore, 89 titles focusing on religious and cultural traditions were published, with 71% of these reaching the Sasak community. These statistics highlight the role of pesantren in generating and sharing Sasak cultural heritage. Overall, the findings indicate that pesantren played a crucial role in sustaining the cultural and spiritual resilience of the Sasak community amid colonial pressures.

The Role of Pesantren in Social Cohesion and Conflict Resolution

The research highlights that pesantren, beyond its economic and cultural functions, plays an essential role in promoting social unity and resolving conflicts within the Sasak community. During colonial times, when tensions and conflicts were prevalent, pesantren emerged as a significant institution that connected different societal groups. By encouraging solidarity and a spirit of mutual understanding, it contributed to reducing social rifts and created an environment for dialogue and reconciliation, thereby enhancing the community's resilience against colonial pressures.

This study, grounded in primary data, highlights the pivotal role that pesantren in Lombok plays in fostering social cohesion and resolving conflicts. As noted by Abdullah et al., pesantren acts as a primary mediator in disputes among community groups, employing cultural and religious methods (Abdullah et al., 2023).

Hasan points out that the leaders of the pesantren, known as tuan guru, possess significant moral authority when mediating conflicts influenced by ethnic and social hierarchies (Hasan, 2022). Moreover, pesantren has served as a venue for addressing a range of community challenges, encompassing both internal matters within the Sasak ethnic community and issues stemming from colonialism (L. Wijaya, Interview, January 21, 2021).

Wong and Rahman's study illustrates how pesantren established an arbitration system grounded in sharia that is embraced by various segments of society. This system integrates Sasak customary law with Islamic values, serving as an effective means for resolving conflicts (Wong & Rahman, 2021). Nurjannah and Smith further discuss how pesantren fosters social solidarity through initiatives aimed at economic empowerment and education (Nurjannah & Smith, 2020). Additionally, Mitchell notes that pesantren has successfully created opportunities for dialogue among different groups through forums focused on religious studies and social-religious activities (Mitchell, 2019).

An examination of primary sources indicates that pesantren plays a significant role in fostering social cohesion and resolving conflicts within communities. By promoting strong interpersonal relationships and cultivating values of tolerance, pesantren acts as a mediator during disputes, drawing on religious teachings to facilitate dialogue and understanding among various groups (Kleinhempel & Nicolaides, 2024). Pesantren also creates a platform for community involvement, where religious education merges with social responsibility, contributing to an atmosphere that encourages peaceful coexistence. The education provided at pesantren not only supports spiritual growth but also equips individuals with the necessary skills to manage conflicts and enhance harmony within their communities (Rahman, 2002).

Bartholomew observes that pesantren have emerged as key hubs for fostering solidarity networks among villages in Lombok, thereby reinforcing the overall social unity of the Sasak community (Ryan, 2001). These networks not only boost social resilience but also aid in gathering resources to tackle challenges posed by colonial rule. Hefner highlights the importance of moral education within pesantren, noting that they cultivate social ethics that guide interactions among various groups in the Sasak community, thereby minimizing the chances of internal conflicts (Hefner, 2016). This foundation of moral education is vital for creating a cohesive and resilient society.

Kingsley argues that Tuan Guru, or pesantren leaders, frequently serve as intermediaries in local disputes, broadening their influence beyond just conflicts within the Sasak community to include negotiations with colonial authorities (Kingsley, 2010). The capacity of pesantren leaders to fulfill this role is rooted in the spiritual and moral authority they possess. Additionally, Fadli highlights that pesantren play a significant role in fostering robust social networks among different communities in Lombok (Fadli, 2016). Through a variety of religious and social events, pesantren strengthen connections among diverse groups, promoting a sense of unity that surpasses ethnic and social class divisions.

Research indicates that while pesantren were crucial to Sasak society, they also encountered several challenges during the colonial period. Hägerdal points out that the Dutch colonial authorities often regarded pesantren with distrust, seeing them as potential centers of opposition (Hägerdal & Held, 2017). In light of this pressure, pesantren in Lombok showcased remarkable adaptability. Van der Kraan highlights that some pesantren incorporated aspects of modern education by introducing general subjects, allowing them to address current needs while still preserving their foundational values (Van der Kraan, 1980).

In the 19th century, pesantren played a crucial role in promoting social harmony and resolving conflicts within the Sasak community. These educational and social hubs helped shape cultural identities, maintain traditions, and build social networks in the community. Furthermore, they acted as platforms for conflict resolution, with kyai (religious leaders) serving as esteemed mediators who imparted moral and ethical Islamic values conducive to peace. An analysis of primary data indicates that a significant number of pesantren alumni, specifically 72%, took on leadership positions in local social and religious organizations (Hefner, R. W. 2019). This active participation helped in upholding the Sasak people's traditions, values, and cultural identity.

Research findings show that pesantren played a crucial role in mediating conflicts within the Sasak community. Analysis of data indicates that 65% of conflicts at the village level were effectively resolved by Tuan Guru (religious leaders) (Jabali, F. 2021). This points to the significant impact of pesantren and respected Tuan Guru in the community's conflict resolution efforts. Fahrurrozi emphasized the vital function of pesantren in promoting social unity and aiding conflict resolution among the Sasak people of Lombok during the 19th century colonial era (Interview, October 29, 2021). Kingsley noted that pesantren served as mediation institutions, helping to bridge differences between social groups and encouraging dialogue within Sasak society (Kingsley, 2014).

The descriptive analysis revealed that pesantren not only acted as intermediaries but also fostered Islamic moral and ethical principles that encourage peace. Around 82% of alumni from these pesantren engaged in community-level peace and reconciliation initiatives (Wahid, 2019). The internalization of Islamic teachings that highlight tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution seems to have played a significant role in The pesantren in Lombok not only played a crucial role in promoting social harmony but also was instrumental in resolving conflicts within the Sasak community during the 19th century. Firstly, the Tuan Guru (The chairman of the pesantren), frequently served as respected mediators for resolving disagreements among community members (Jabali, F. 2021). Their respected and impartial status allowed them to encourage dialogue and reach compromises between those in conflict. Secondly, the pesantren taught Islamic moral and ethical principles that highlighted the importance of peace, tolerance, and amicable conflict resolution (Masyhuri, A. 2017). These values were later embraced and practiced by the Sasak community when dealing with disputes (Interview, Kamaruddin, July 30, 2021). Third, pesantren played a significant role in educating and training young leaders. The leadership skills acquired by alumni of these institutions were subsequently used to promote peace and resolve conflicts in their communities (Wahid, 2019). The influence of pesantren was vital in enhancing social unity and addressing conflicts among the Sasak people. Their existence indicated a positive relationship with the degree of social cohesion seen during the 19th century.

Conclusion

Pesantren were crucial in nurturing the resilience and self-sufficiency of the Sasak community as they opposed Dutch colonial rule in 19th-century Lombok. These institutions acted as multifaceted centers that provided not only Islamic education but also facilitated the socio-political and economic organization of the Sasak people. Built upon self-reliance and mutual assistance principles, pesantren laid the groundwork for the community's economic independence. This structure enabled them to withstand colonial economic exploitation by promoting independent agriculture and creating trade networks centered around the pesantren. Pesantren played a significant role in mobilizing resistance against Dutch colonialism in Lombok. Tuan Guru, or pesantren leaders, emerged as key figures in leading anti-colonial efforts, using the spread of religious values to strengthen Sasak cultural identity. They effectively fostered a collective consciousness within the community about the necessity of defending their sovereignty.

Pesantren played a vital role in strengthening social ties within the Sasak community, enabling them to uphold their cultural identity and counter colonial dominance through various visible and hidden means. Additionally, pesantren became essential hubs for preserving Sasak culture and local traditions, which were crucial for maintaining the community's collective identity in the face of colonial pressures. Through a comprehensive approach that combined education, economic practices, and socio-cultural activities, pesantren empowered the Sasak people to develop resilience against colonial rule. This achievement was primarily due to the leadership of the Tuan Guru, who effectively combined religious principles with the ethos of resistance and self-sufficiency, creating a cohesive framework for spiritual development and opposition.

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