



The Role of KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid: Improving the Education Level of the People of Lombok

FUADUL UMAM, FIRMAN, BAIQ MADINATUL MUNAWARAH

Universitas Nahdatul Ulama Indonesia

Email: fuad@unusia.ac.id, firmanfekar63@gmail.com, baiqmadina114@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

This study aims to analyze the role of KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid in improving the educational level of the people of Lombok, focusing on his contributions to religious and social education. As a charismatic Islamic scholar, he not only focused on teaching religious knowledge but also pioneered the establishment of educational institutions that emphasized equal access to education for all segments of society. This research employs a qualitative method with a historical approach, using literature review of relevant documents, archives, and written sources. The findings show that KH. Zainuddin Abdul Majid successfully developed an integrated education system that combined Islamic values with the demands of modern education. He established pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), formal madrasahs for both male and female students, and trained teachers to respond to contemporary needs. His initiatives significantly increased public awareness of the importance of education and contributed to social and economic transformation in Lombok. The implications of this research highlight that the educational legacy of KH. Zainuddin remains relevant not only as a historical achievement but also as a value-based educational model for present-day community development.

Keywords: Education, Lombok, KH. Zainuddin Abdul Majid, pesantren, social transformation

ABSTRAK:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid dalam meningkatkan taraf pendidikan masyarakat Lombok, dengan menyoroti kontribusinya dalam bidang pendidikan agama dan sosial. Sebagai seorang ulama karismatik, beliau tidak hanya fokus pada pengajaran agama, tetapi juga memprakarsai pendirian lembaga-lembaga pendidikan yang menekankan kesetaraan akses bagi seluruh lapisan masyarakat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan historis, melalui kajian literatur terhadap berbagai dokumen, arsip, dan sumber-sumber tertulis yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa KH. Zainuddin Abdul Majid berhasil membangun sistem pendidikan terpadu yang menggabungkan nilai-nilai keislaman dengan tuntutan pendidikan modern. Beliau mendirikan pesantren, madrasah formal untuk laki-laki dan perempuan, serta melatih para guru agar mampu menjawab kebutuhan zaman. Upaya tersebut berdampak besar terhadap meningkatnya kesadaran masyarakat akan pentingnya pendidikan dan turut mendorong perubahan sosial dan ekonomi di Lombok. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa warisan pendidikan yang ditinggalkan oleh KH. Zainuddin tidak hanya relevan dalam konteks historis, tetapi juga menjadi model pendidikan berbasis nilai untuk pengembangan masyarakat masa kini.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan, Lombok, KH. Zainuddin Abdul Majid, pesantren, transformasi sosial

A. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human need and an essential tool for individual and societal development. In the context of nation-building, education plays a central role in shaping human resources, strengthening national identity, and supporting socio-economic transformation. The Indonesian constitution guarantees every citizen the right to education, and the government continues to promote equitable access to education across the archipelago. However, disparities in access and quality of education remain a challenge, particularly in historically marginalized regions such as Lombok Island (Alpian et al., 2019).

Lombok, located in West Nusa Tenggara, is known for its rich cultural heritage and its predominantly Muslim population. Islamic education has long served as the foundation of the community's identity and values. Historically, the development of education in Lombok was hindered by colonial policies that limited access to formal education, especially for indigenous communities. During the Dutch colonial period, schools were established only in urban centers such as Mataram and were mostly accessible to Europeans, aristocrats, and the children of local rulers (Fathurrahman, 2022). As a result, most of the local population lacked access to formal education and relied heavily on informal religious learning (Sopian, 2023).

In this context, KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid emerged as a transformative figure. Having studied at Madrasah as-Shaulatiyyah in Mecca, he returned to Indonesia with a vision to integrate Islamic scholarship with modern educational principles (Atsani & Nasri, 2023). His initiatives included establishing formal Islamic educational institutions such as Nahdlatul Wathan Diniyah Islamiyah (NWDI)

and Nahdlatul Banat Diniyah Islamiyah (NBDI), which offered structured education for both male and female students (Qudus, 2022). These efforts not only expanded access to education but also reshaped public perceptions of formal learning and gender inclusion in education.

Although KH. Zainuddin Abdul Majid has been widely recognized as a religious leader and national hero (Rahadi et al., 2022), academic discussions often emphasize his spiritual and political roles, while the structural impact of his educational reforms remains underexplored. This research seeks to fill that gap by critically examining his role in transforming the educational landscape of Lombok through institutional innovation, teacher training, curriculum development, and community engagement. Thus, this study contributes to the broader discourse on localized educational leadership and the integration of Islamic values into modern educational systems (Saihu & Abdushomad, 2021).

Academically, this research is significant for several reasons. First, it offers a historical account of Islamic education reform in eastern Indonesia—a region often underrepresented in educational literature. Second, it illustrates how religious leadership can act as a driving force for inclusive, community-based education aligned with national development goals. Third, it presents a model for harmonizing religious and cultural traditions with contemporary educational demands without compromising identity (Shubhi, 2017).

The implications of this study go beyond historical documentation. It offers insights for policymakers, educators, and religious leaders on how community-based education systems rooted in local wisdom can foster equitable and sustainable development. It also encourages further research into the

role of faith-based education in strengthening social cohesion and resilience in multicultural societies (Saidil. M & Yusoff, 2024).

Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the role and long-term impact of KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid in improving the educational level of the people of Lombok, with emphasis on his contributions to religious and social education, institutional development, and community transformation.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid in improving educational access and quality in Lombok. Specifically, the research aims to examine his contributions to expanding educational opportunities through the establishment of institutions and the development of an education system grounded in Islamic values. Furthermore, the study seeks to identify the strategies and forms of educational engagement initiated by KH. Zainuddin in both religious and social contexts. Using a historical and qualitative approach, this study also intends to assess the long-term impact of his educational initiatives on the social transformation of the Lombok community and to position his efforts as a model of community-based education rooted in local values.

B. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design with a literature study approach, in which data are collected from various written sources and analyzed critically to explore a holistic and contextual understanding of the research topic. Qualitative literature research is not aimed at statistical generalization but rather at interpreting and understanding social phenomena through in-depth and

inductive analysis. In this context, the researcher acts as the key instrument by gathering, organizing, and synthesizing data from relevant literature such as books, journals, articles, archives, and previous studies (Adlini et al., 2022). The literature study technique was chosen because the research focuses on exploring the historical role and educational contributions of KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid, which are primarily documented in written sources.

The data used in this research are secondary data derived from a variety of documented materials. These include books, scientific journals, historical archives, articles, biographies, and official documents related to the life and educational efforts of KH. Zainuddin Abdul Majid. Data were collected through careful reading, selection, and classification of relevant literature, both printed and digital, with particular emphasis on credible academic sources. The selection criteria focused on literature that directly discusses the educational initiatives, institutional contributions, and socio-religious impact of KH. Zainuddin in the context of Lombok.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method that identifies, interprets, and organizes patterns or themes within the data to explore the depth and complexity of a phenomenon (Heriyanto, 2018). The analytical procedure consisted of several stages: 1) Data reduction. Extracting relevant information and categorizing it according to themes such as educational strategy, social transformation, religious influence, and institutional development; 2) Data display. Organizing the findings in a structured manner to highlight the contribution of KH. Zainuddin across different educational aspects; 3) Interpretation and conclusion drawing.

Synthesizing the findings to reconstruct the historical narrative of his role in the development of education in Lombok.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the data, source triangulation was employed by comparing and corroborating information from multiple documents. This strategy enhances data accuracy, reduces researcher bias, and strengthens the overall validity of the findings (Dyah, 2014).

This research aims not only to document historical facts but also to explore the educational philosophy and inspirational values embedded in KH. Zainuddin's contributions. By systematically analyzing textual data, the study provides insights into how local Islamic figures played a transformative role in shaping education and community development in Indonesia.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid was one of the pioneering Islamic reformers in Indonesia who made a substantial contribution to improving the quality of education in Lombok, both religiously and socially. His role and thoughts reflected a firm response to the inequalities in access to education during the colonial period and the urgent need for a system that shaped holistic individuals. The following discussion is presented in accordance with the research problems raised in this study.

1. The Role of KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid in Expanding Access and Improving the Quality of Education in Lombok

KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid was born on April 20, 1908, in Pancor, East Lombok, to the respected scholar Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Madjid and Hajjah

Sa'diyah (Muhtar, 2022). From an early age, he received religious instruction from his father and formally studied at a public school in Selong. At the age of 15, he continued his studies in Mecca, enrolling in the Madrasah as-Shaulatiyyah, where he studied for six years an institution renowned for producing reform-minded Islamic scholars. Upon returning to Lombok in 1934, he immediately founded the Al-Mujahidin Islamic boarding school (Adet, 2021). Just three years later, in 1937, he established the Nahdlatul Wathan Diniyah Islamiyah (NWDI) for male students, followed by the Nahdlatul Banat Diniyah Islamiyah (NBDI) for female students in 1943 (Qudus, 2022).

The establishment of NBDI by KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid marked a significant milestone in the history of formal education for women in Lombok, who previously had very limited access to structured religious education (Hayyi, 21 C.E.). During the colonial period, educational access was heavily restricted—schools existed primarily in urban centers like Mataram and were only accessible to Europeans, native aristocrats, or the children of local rulers (Fathurrahman, 2022).

KH. Zainuddin Abdul Madjid responded to the limited access to education in Lombok by establishing the Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) madrasah, which integrated both religious and general sciences. This educational system was designed to reach a broad segment of society, including santri, farmers, and rural communities. The education he pioneered aimed to overcome the legacy of the colonial system, which was restricted to the elite, by emphasizing Islamic values that are moderate, nationalist, and inclusive of all social classes (Tamim, 2024). For him, education was not merely instruction it

was a form of jihad to liberate the ummah from backwardness.

His leadership was shaped by the spirit of the times, which demanded reform. When the local Muslim community was marginalized and faced an identity crisis under colonial rule, KH. Zainuddin introduced a vision that integrated Islam, nationalism, and grassroots empowerment (Saihu & Abdushomad, 2021). He became not just a preacher but a builder of institutions that endure to this day.

2. Educational Strategies and Contributions in Religious and Social Contexts

KH. Zainuddin's educational strategies were rooted in the conviction that education is the key to transforming both individuals and society. He did not merely establish educational institutions, but also developed a comprehensive and value-based system grounded in Islamic teachings, integrating religious and secular sciences. One of his core strategies was strengthening the role of teachers. In his religious songs (nasyid), he emphasized that a teacher must be sincere, honest, and spiritually connected through a chain of transmission to the Prophet Muhammad (Adet, 2021). Islamic education teachers were not merely transmitters of knowledge, but also served as moral and spiritual role models. Students, in turn, were expected to demonstrate noble character as a fundamental requirement in the process of acquiring knowledge (Pebriyanti, 2022).

KH. Zainuddin was also a prolific scholar. He authored numerous works on Islamic theology, jurisprudence, inheritance law, and Qur'anic recitation. His major works include *Risalah at-Tauhid*, *Sullam al-Hija*, *Fathu Rabbani bi Rinjani*, and *Wasiat Renungan Masa* (Saidil. M &

Yusoff, 2024). These writings were not only scholarly but also deeply humanistic and inspirational. In *Wasiat Renungan Masa*, he advocated for patience, sincerity, and collective struggle as essential foundations for Islamic education (Hapizin & Ihsan, 2017).

To further expand his impact, he established the *Nahdlatul Wathan* (NW) organization, which evolved from NWDI and NBDI into a broad-based Islamic social movement. NW became the largest educational and da'wah organization in West Nusa Tenggara. By 1998, it had more than 800 active institutions ranging from kindergartens to universities (Isnaini & Suparto, 2024). KH. Zainuddin Abdul Madjid's efforts to establish Islamic educational institutions were not without challenges. The Dutch colonial government viewed the NWDI madrasah as a threat, believing it could awaken Islamic consciousness and anti-colonial sentiment among the people. Surveillance and restrictions were imposed, yet these obstacles did not deter him from advancing Islamic education rooted in national and communal values (Rahman, 2020). Additionally, he faced resistance from local cultural beliefs rooted in animism and patriarchy. He addressed these not through confrontation, but through gradual, value-based education that won hearts and minds.

His most groundbreaking act was the establishment of formal education for women an act of resistance in a patriarchal society that expanded women's roles in religious and public life (Qudus, 2022). KH. Zainuddin demonstrated that Islam advocates for women's right to education and participation. For him, education was not just about classrooms. It was a tool for social transformation, ideological resistance, and the preservation of

identity. While the colonial state used missionary-style education as a means of control, KH. Zainuddin's madrasahs built a stronghold of Islamic knowledge and identity (Fathurrahman, 2022).

3. Long-Term Impacts and the Leadership of KH. Zainuddin in Lombok's Social Transformation

KH. Zainuddin's educational reforms played a transformative role in shaping the socio-cultural fabric of Lombok. His efforts went beyond merely increasing access to education; they challenged prevailing norms particularly regarding women's education. The establishment of NBDI in 1943 marked a significant step toward gender equality and symbolized a progressive redefinition of knowledge and its societal value (Umam, 2020). He also changed community perceptions of formal education. Initially, many people relied on informal religious learning or local beliefs, but the presence of inclusive, value-based madrasahs shifted education into a collective social necessity (Adet, 2021).

Furthermore, the educational institutions founded by TGKH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid became centers of resistance against colonialism. During the Japanese occupation, he established Laskar Al-Mujahidin, a militia composed of students and community members trained within the madrasah environment. This reflected his educational vision, which aimed not only to produce religious individuals but also patriotic citizens, ready to defend their homeland for the sake of independence and national dignity (Nasri et al., 2023). This illustrated how he used education not just for intellectual growth, but also for national liberation.

During a time when colonial powers utilized education as a means of cultural assimilation and religious conversion,

particularly in Eastern Indonesia, KH. Muhammad Zainuddin's educational model stood in stark contrast by reinforcing Islamic identity, preserving local traditions, and fostering a strong sense of national consciousness (Saihu & Abdushomad, 2021). He built a social and spiritual foundation that prepared the ummah for independence and progress. His leadership is now recognized nationally. In 2017, the government of Indonesia officially named KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid a National Hero (Mashuri, 2021). Yet, his true legacy lies in the living system of Islamic education he established.

His educational institutions NWDI and NBDI grew into a robust system. As of 1998, Nahdlatul Wathan oversaw more than 800 schools and universities across various levels (Isnaini & Suparto, 2024). His approach remains relevant today: integrating Islamic values with modern social needs through adaptive curricula, teacher development, and community involvement (Saihu & Abdushomad, 2021). KH. Zainuddin proved that a religious scholar is not just a spiritual guide, but a social architect. He envisioned education as a battlefield for dignity, identity, and empowerment. That is why, even today, his name is not only remembered his legacy continues to inspire.

D. CONCLUSION

KH Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid played a very crucial role in improving the educational level of the people of Lombok, whose impact is felt to this day. Through the establishment of Madrasah Nahdlatul Wathan in 1953, he not only created a formal educational institution, but also built an educational system that integrated religious, moral and local

cultural values. This initiative became an important milestone in the history of education in Lombok, which previously experienced limited access and quality of education.

He understands that education is the key to empowering society. By establishing various madrasas and other educational institutions, KH Muhammad Zainuddin succeeded in creating an extensive educational network, covering various levels, from primary to higher education. This not only increased enrolment rates among children and youth, but also provided opportunities for the community to access quality education.

Apart from the formal aspect, KH Muhammad Zainuddin also played a role in raising public awareness of the importance of education. Through da'wah and social activities, he invites people to value education as a means to achieve progress and prosperity. This approach

KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid succeeded in transforming access to and perceptions of education in Lombok through the establishment of inclusive, value-based Islamic institutions. His educational reforms emphasized moral integrity, teacher quality, and the integration of religious and social values. These efforts not only increased educational participation but also fostered long-term cultural and ideological resilience in the community. His legacy continues through the ongoing development of Nahdlatul Wathan, which stands as a testament to his vision and influence in shaping a sustainable Islamic education system in Indonesia.

E. REFERENCES

- Adet Tamula Anugrah. (2021). Pembaharuan pendidikan Islam di Indonesia Perspektif TGKH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid. *Tarbiyyatuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 14(Agustus), 101–122.
<https://www.ejournal.iaisyarifuddin.ac.id/index.php/tarbiyatuna/article/download/1026/505>
- Adlini, M. N., Dinda, A. H., Yulinda, S., Chotimah, O., & Merliyana, S. J. (2022). Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka. *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 6(1), 974–980.
<https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v6i1.3394>
- Alpian, Y., Anggraeni, S. W., Wiharti, U., & Soleha, N. M. (2019). PENTINGNYA PENDIDIKAN BAGI MANUSIA Oleh. *Jurnal Buana Pengabdian*, 1(1), 1–23.
- Atsani, L. G. M. Z., & Nasri, U. (2023). Relevansi Konsep Pendidikan Islam TGKH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid di Era Kontemporer Lalu. *AL-MUNAWWARAH: JURNAL PENDIDIKAN ISLAM*, 15(1), 89.
- Dyah Budiastuti, A. B. (2014). Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Matematika. In *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Matematika*. Mitra Wacana Media.
- Fathurrahman. (2022). Perkembangan Madrasah Di Indonesia: Kajian Historis Pada Madrasah Nahdlatul Wathan Lombok. *TAJDID: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman Dan Kemanusiaan*, 6(2), 255–273.
<https://doi.org/10.52266/tadjud.v6i2.1105>
- Hapizin, K., & Ihsan, M. (2017). Khairul Hapizin & Muh. Ihsan ,Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Ta'dib: Volume 15, No 2 (Juli- Des 2017). *Ta'dib*, 15(2), 87–126.

- Hayyi, A. A. (21 C.E.). *nbd-i-jtihad-pendidikan-hamzanwadi-untuk-perempuan-indonesia*. Antarantb 87.
- Heriyanto, H. (2018). Thematic Analysis sebagai Metode Menganalisa Data untuk Penelitian Kualitatif (Thematic Analysis as a Method for Analyzing Data for Qualitative Research). *Anuva*, 2(3), 317.
- Isnaini, M. rahmat, & Suparto. (2024). gerakan dakwah organisasi nahdlatul wathan. *Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu*, 2(12), 275–278.
- Mashuri, S. (2021). Pendidikan Islam di Pulau Lombok. In *literasi nusantara* (Vol. 11, Issue 1). http://scioteca.caf.com/bitstream/handle/123456789/1091/RED2017-Eng-8ene.pdf?sequence=12&isAllowed=y%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeo.2008.06.005%0Ahttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/305320484_SISTEM_PEMBETUNGAN_TERPUSAT_STRATEGI_MELESTARI
- Muhtar, F. (2022). Tuan Guru Zainudin Abdul Majid'S Epistemological Views on Integration of Islamic Education in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. *Muslim Heritage*, 2(2), 347–378. <https://doi.org/10.21154/muslimheritage.v7i2.5026>
- Nasri, U., Atsani, L. G. M. Z., Fahrurrozi, & Thohri, M. (2023). the Educational Thoughts of Tgkh. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid in the Willful Reflections of New Experiences. *Jurnal Tatsqif*, 21(2), 169–188. <https://doi.org/10.20414/jtq.v21i2.8883>
- Pebriyanti, R. (2022). *PERAN GURU PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM DALAM MEMBINA AKHLAK SISWA DI SMP ISLAM AL – ATTASIYAH KOTA DEPOK UNIVERSITAS NAHDLATUL ULAMA INDONESIA JAKARTA 2022*.
- Qudus, M. (2022). Pendidikan Islam dan Transformasi Sosial di Lombok: Peran Madrasah NWDI dan NBDI dalam Modernisasi Pendidikan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(02), 155–170.
- Rahadi, I., Ali Sukran, M., Adi Junaidi, M., Basri, H., Ramli, M., & Birrul Walid Sugandi, Y. (2022). Enrichment: Journal of Management is Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) Enrichment: Journal of Management Descriptive Statistics For Demographic Tourist Visits On New Religious Segment: Evidence From TGKH. M. Zainuddin Abdul Madjid Tomb, Lombok Timur. *Enrichment: Journal of Management*, 12(2), 1734–1741.
- Rahman. (2020). Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam KH. Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid. *Jurnal Al-Tarbiyah*, 29(1).
- Saidil, M., & Yusoff, Z. J. M. (2024). Pendidikan Karakter dan Transformasi Sosial: Pengalam Masyarakat dan Transformasi di bawah Kepemimpinan Tuan Guru Kiai Haji Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid. *Global Journal of Educational Research and Management (GERMANE) 2024*, 4(1), 44–55.
- Saihu, M., & Abdushomad, M. A. (2021). Al-Thab'û Dalam Pemikiran Pendidikan TGKH Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid Dan Relevansinya Dengan UU Sisdiknas No 20 Tahun 2003. *Kordinat: Jurnal Komunikasi Antar Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam*, 20(1), 147–166. <https://doi.org/10.15408/kordinat.v20i1.20651>
- Shubhi, M. (2017). *Biografi Tokoh untuk Pendidikan Menengah Tuan Guru Kyai*

Haji Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid.
<https://repositori.kemdikbud.go.id/15080/1/14>. Tuan Guru KH. M. Z. Abdul Madjid.pdf

Sopian, H. (2023). Tantangan Gender Dalam Pendidikan Islam di Pulau Lombok. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 4(05), 514–527.
<https://doi.org/10.59141/japendi.v4i05.1844>

Tamim, A. (2024). Islamic Education Insights: TGKH . Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid ' s Vision for the 21st Century. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 4(2), 123–136.

Umam, M. I. (2020). Pendidikan Islam dan Perubahan Sosial: Analisis Praksis Pendidikan Islam di Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin Nahdlatul Wathan Pancor Lombok Timur. In *Repository.Uinjkt.Ac.Id*.