

## Tradition and Modernity: the Role of NU in Cultural Transformation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century

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### Abstract

This article examines the role of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in maintaining and transforming religious and social culture in Indonesia in the modern era. Using a qualitative approach with literature study methods, in-depth interviews, and discourse analysis, this study explores the expectations of the people towards NU as an institution that must be able to bridge tradition with modernity. The findings show that the people expect NU to maintain religious values and local wisdom while accommodating global dynamics and technological developments. The implications of this study highlight the need for innovative strategies in tradition management, religious education reform, and openness to cross-cultural dialogue to meet the challenges of the second century. In the context of preserving traditions, religious values and local wisdom are the foundation of identity that must be maintained. NU, through educational institutions, da'wah programs, and media management, plays an important role in transmitting cultural heritage to the younger generation.

**Keywords:** NU, tradition, modernity, cultural preservation, cultural transformation.



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## Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji peran Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) dalam mempertahankan dan mentransformasikan budaya keagamaan yang sosial di Indonesia pada era modern. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur, wawancara mendalam, dan analisis wacana, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi harapan masyarakat terhadap NU sebagai institusi yang harus mampu menjembatani tradisi dengan modernitas. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat berharap NU dapat mempertahankan nilai-nilai agama dan kearifan lokal sekaligus mengakomodasi dinamika global dan perkembangan teknologi. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menyoroti perlunya strategi inovatif dalam manajemen tradisi, reformasi pendidikan agama, dan keterbukaan terhadap dialog lintas budaya untuk menjawab tantangan abad kedua. Dalam konteks pelestarian tradisi, nilai-nilai agama dan kearifan lokal merupakan fondasi identitas harus dipertahankan. NU, melalui lembaga pendidikan, program dakwah, dan pengelolaan media, berperan penting dalam mentransmisikan warisan budaya kepada generasi muda.

**Kata kunci:** NU, tradisi, modernitas, pelestarian budaya, transformasi budaya.

## Introduction

In the context of Indonesia's social and cultural development, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has long been known as a religious institution that has a strategic role in maintaining traditional values while responding to the dynamics of modernity. The existence of NU is not only as a guardian of traditional Islamic teachings, but also as an agent of change in facing the challenges of the times.<sup>1</sup>

The era of globalization and the information technology revolution has brought significant changes in people's lives, thus creating a tension between the preservation of tradition and the need to adopt modern innovations. This phenomenon underlies the need for an in-depth analysis of the role of NU in the transformation of contemporary culture.<sup>2</sup>

Modernity, which is characterized by technological advancements, rapid information flows, and globalization of values, often shifts the position of local values and traditional wisdom. In this context, the people hope that NU will be

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Khoirul Mustamir, "Islam Nusantara: Strategi Perjuangan 'Keumatan' Nahdlatul Ulama," *Jurnal Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman* vol. 9, no. 3 (2019), <https://ejournal.iai-tribakti.ac.id/index.php/intelektual>.

<sup>2</sup> Jaka Maulana and Rustam Ependi, "Peranan Nahdlatul Ulama dalam Pengembangan Islam Nusantara Pada," *Al-Muaddib: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial Dan Keislaman* vol. 9, no. 1 (2024): 268–81, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.31604/muaddib.v9i1>.

able to bridge the gap so that it remains relevant in the midst of the flow of change.<sup>3</sup>

Historically, NU has played an important role since its founding in shaping the religious and cultural identity of Muslims in Indonesia. This historical footprint is a strong foundation in NU's efforts to maintain tradition while responding to the demands of modernity.

The changing times require religious institutions to not only maintain the heritage of values, but also innovate in order to compete with the forces of globalization. The people's expectations are getting higher for NU's ability to adapt to an environment that continues to develop technologically and socially.

The theoretical framework of tradition and modernity has been widely discussed in the scientific literature. Previous research by Serly Adhariaty<sup>4</sup> and Sukma Indah<sup>5</sup> revealed that the dynamics between the two concepts are not always antagonistic, but can be synergized to produce an inclusive cultural transformation. In an increasingly plural and complex society, the role of NU is very crucial as a mediator between traditional religious values and modern demands that are global.<sup>6</sup> This role includes efforts to strengthen cultural identity and align religious values with contemporary reality.

The gap between the expectations of the people and the internal practices of religious institutions has caused debate among academics.<sup>7</sup> stated that there is an urgency to carry out internal reforms to answer the expectations of the people who increasingly demand openness and adaptation to changing times. The relevance of this research is increasing along with the current of globalization that forces every element of society to adapt. In this perspective, NU must be able to provide a forum that not only preserves cultural heritage, but also accommodates the development of science and technology.<sup>8</sup>

The research method used involves a qualitative approach through literature study, discourse analysis. This approach is considered appropriate to

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<sup>3</sup> Mohammad Salik, *Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Gagasan Moderasi Islam*, (Malang: Edulitera, 2020): 90.

<sup>4</sup> Serly Adhariaty, "Dinamika Sosial Masyarakat Adat Dalam Menghadapi Modernisasi," *Teen Journal Solution*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2021): 1–10.

<sup>5</sup> Sukma Indah, "Dinamika Sosial Dan Budaya Masyarakat Urban," *Jurnal Kreativitas Kebudayaan* 3, no. 2 (2021): 1–3, <https://www.kompasiana.com/nur.ar-rohmah/54f75a32a33311d2358b45df/dinamika-sosial-dan-budaya>.

<sup>6</sup> Zainul Mu'ien Husni, "Nu Di Tengah Pusaran Ideologi-Ideologi Transnasional," *Jurnal Islam Nusantara* vol. 2, no. 1 (2018): 45, <https://doi.org/10.33852/jurnalin.v2i1.68>.

<sup>7</sup> Slamet Slamet, "Nahdlatul Ulama dan Pluralisme: Studi Pada Strategi Dakwah Pluralisme NU di Era Reformasi," *KOMUNIKA: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* vol. 8, no. 1 (2014): 60–78, <https://doi.org/10.24090/komunika.v8i1.749>.

<sup>8</sup> Fahrudin Hasan Aziz, "Modernisasi Media Massa Nahdlatul Ulama: Studi Kasus NU Online Tahun 2003-2018," *Karmawibangga: Historical Studies* vol. 3, no. 2 (2021): 101–2, <https://journal.upy.ac.id/index.php/karmawibangga>.

explore the perceptions, hopes, and challenges faced by NU in managing the dualism of tradition and modernity.<sup>9</sup> Research by Andi Eka Putra<sup>10</sup> states that cultural preservation is not only a matter of maintaining old values, but also how these values can be adapted to meet the needs of today. This provides the basis for thinking that NU must be a transformation agent that is responsive to the development of the times.

The Concept of Tradition in the Context of NU and Local Culture. Tradition is a collection of values, norms, and cultural practices that have been inherited from generation to generation and become the identity of a community. In Indonesia, tradition has an important role in shaping the character and morality of the community, as well as as a spiritual foundation that shapes religious life. In the context of NU, tradition is not only seen as a legacy of the past, but also as a source of inspiration in facing the challenges of modern times.<sup>11</sup>

Modernity and Dynamics of Globalization. Modernity is characterized by the rapid flow of information, technological advancements, and increasingly intense global interactions. The process of modernization brings fundamental changes in people's mindsets and behaviors, which often creates tensions between local values and global demands. This requires religious institutions such as NU to review their roles and strategies so that they can adapt without losing their identity.<sup>12</sup>

The role of NU in Cultural Preservation, NU as the largest religious organization in Indonesia, has a long history in preserving local religious and cultural traditions. The role of NU is not only limited to the spread of moderate Islamic teachings, but also includes the preservation of local customs and wisdom. A number of studies emphasize that NU has contributed significantly to maintaining the continuity of tradition through religious education and social programs<sup>13</sup>

Models and Theories of Integration of Tradition and Modernity, Several theoretical models in cultural studies emphasize the importance of synthesis between tradition and modernity. The theory of "hybridity", for example, explains how cultural elements can undergo a mixing that results in a new form without

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<sup>9</sup> Nurul Hidayat, "Tantangan Dakwah NU di Era Digital dan Disrupsi Teknologi," *J-KIs: Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* vol. 5, no. 1 (2024): 45–54, <https://www.nu.or.id/opini/tantangan-dakwah-nu-di-era-digital-dan-disrupsi-teknologi-y7mOz>.

<sup>10</sup> Andi Eka Putra, "Islam Nusantara Dan Apresiasi Atas Kebudayaan Lokal," *Al-Adyan: Jurnal Studi Lintas Agama* vol. 15, no. 1 (June 16, 2020): 49–68, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsla.v15i1.6016>.

<sup>11</sup> Idris Siregar, *Islam Nusantara Sejarah, Manhaj Dan Dakwah Islam Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Di Bumi Nusantara*, (Yogyakarta: Trussmedia Grafika, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.51925/inc.v10i02.73>.

<sup>12</sup> Zainul Mu'ien Husni, "Nu Di Tengah Pusaran Ideologi-Ideologi Transnasional," 45. <https://doi.org/10.33852/jurnalin.v2i1.68>.

<sup>13</sup> Putra, "Islam Nusantara Dan Apresiasi Atas Kebudayaan Lokal."

losing their original identity. The application of this theory in the context of NU allows for a dialogue between old values and new innovations, which is the key to cultural transformation in the second century.

Expectations of the People for Religious Institutions, The expectations of the people for religious institutions such as NU include aspects of value preservation, innovation, and responsiveness to social dynamics. The people want a synergy between traditional approaches that have been tested and innovative policies that are relevant in the digital era. This expectation underscores the importance of internal reforms that are not only cosmetic, but also fundamental in responding to the challenges of the times.<sup>14</sup>

From the presentation of the literature above, it can be seen that NU has great potential in managing dualism between tradition and modernity. The integration of traditional values with modern elements is the foundation to present a harmonious cultural transformation<sup>15</sup>. However, the challenges in its implementation require innovative strategies and commitments to internal reforms. The theoretical and practical implications of this literature synthesis provide a frame of reference for further research in understanding the expectations of the people for the role of NU in the second century.

The implications of this research are expected to contribute not only to the academic realm, but also to practical policies within NU. By understanding the expectations of the people, NU can formulate a more adaptive and innovative strategy in facing global cultural challenges. The structure of this research will be divided into several parts, where after the introduction, the theoretical foundation regarding tradition and modernity will be explained, followed by an empirical analysis of the expectations of the people and a case study of the application of innovation in the NU environment. This systematic approach is expected to produce a comprehensive understanding of the role of NU in the second century.

Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of balancing maintaining tradition and adopting modernity in order to strengthen NU's role as an adaptive religious institution. Thus, it is hoped that NU can continue to be relevant and contribute positively to the formation of Indonesian cultural identity in the era of globalization.

There has been a lot of research conducted on Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). However, there is still little research focused on NU's cultural transformation in the second century. Mahrus As'ad's writing is entitled 'Renewing Nahdlatul Ulama Education'. In this research, As'ad discovered the reforms carried out by NU in

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<sup>14</sup> Slamet, "Nadhlatal Ulama dan Pluralisme: Studi Pada Strategi Dakwah Pluralisme NU Di Era Reformasi."

<sup>15</sup> Ricco Andreas and Bambang Suryadi, "Nilai Islam Dan Pancasila: Pengaruh Globalisasi Dan Modernisasi Dalam Pembangunan Sistem Hukum Di Indonesia," *Nizham Journal of Islamic Studies* 7, no. 1 (2019): 80–97.

the educational aspect. NU carried out a paradigm shift in the implementation of its education which was more oriented towards quality. NU also attempted to correct the methods that had been used in its Islamic boarding schools by introducing new learning methods.<sup>16</sup>

The research by Luthfi Hadi Aminuddin and Isnatin Ulfah is entitled "Epistemology of Islam Nusantara: Transformation of Islamic Legal Thought in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)".<sup>17</sup> They researched NU with the concept of Islam Nusantara requires to open a space for dialogue between the principles of mu'amalah with local traditions and culture, to bear several peculiarities with mu'malah practiced in various countries.

Neng Hilma Mimar and Kristining Seva's research is entitled "The Role of Nahdlatul Ulama in Building a New Era Civilization: Application of Cultural Values and Its Impacts".<sup>18</sup> They researched about The application of NU's cultural values to the new era prioritizes belief as subordinate, driving societal aspects grounded in religious teachings. NU ensures its integrity by referring to the legacy of past scholars, making NU's thinking a rich identity and foundation for the NU movement in facing globalization challenges.

## Discussion

### Ummah's Expectations for the Preservation of Tradition

#### The Value of Tradition as the Root of Identity

In the context of Indonesian religion and culture, traditional values play a role as the main foundation that forms the collective identity of the people. Tradition is not just a series of rituals or customs, but also a manifestation of local wisdom, moral values, and ways of life that have been passed down from generation to generation. The ummah hopes that these values will be maintained and maintained by institutions such as NU, which has been known as the guardian of traditional Islamic traditions in the country.<sup>19</sup>

Traditional values have a strategic role in strengthening religious and cultural identity. Through religious practices that have stood the test of time, the faithful have found a sense of security and continuity, which is the basis for their understanding of themselves in the historical and cultural framework. In this case,

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<sup>16</sup> Mahrus As'ad, "Pembaruan Pendidikan Nahdlatul Ulama," *Nizham Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 2 (Juli-Desember 2014): 72–74.

<sup>17</sup> Luthfi Hadi Aminuddin and Isnatin Ulfah, "Epistemology of Islam Nusantara: Transformation of Islamic Legal Thought in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)," *Justicia Islamica: Jurnal Kajian Hukum dan Islam* Vol. 18, No. 2 (November 2021): 370. <https://doi.org/10.21154/justicia.v18i2.3095>.

<sup>18</sup> Neng Hilma Mimar dan Kristining Seva, "The Role of Nahdlatul Ulama in Building a New Era Civilization: Application of Cultural Values and Its Impacts", *Focus* Vol. 5 No. 1 (April 2024): 7. <https://doi.org/10.26593/focus.v5i1.7791>.

<sup>19</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen, *TRADISI Relasi-Relasi Kuasa Pencarian Waicana Baru*, ed. Arifudin, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: LKIS Yogyakarta, 1994).

tradition serves as an anchor that stabilizes social and technological change, while inspiring a new perspective on the future. The people hope that NU will be able to maintain the traditional essence as a symbol of the integrity and sustainability of ancestral values<sup>20</sup>

Along with the development of modernity that brings the flow of globalization and technological advancement, there is a dynamic between the desire to change and the need to maintain cultural roots. The cultural transformation that occurs often raises anxiety that traditional values will be sidelined or eroded by modernization. In this context, the role of NU is crucial as a bridge between the past and the present. The people hope that NU will not only respond to modern demands, but also integrate traditional values into every policy and practice, so that cultural identity is maintained even in the flow of global change.<sup>21</sup>

In the realm of religious education and teaching, the preservation of tradition is one of the main aspects that is expected to be passed on to the younger generation. Through educational institutions managed by NU, such as Islamic boarding schools and madrasas, traditional values can be taught systematically and in-depth. This educational approach that prioritizes cultural heritage is expected to be able to produce a generation that is not only intellectually capable but also has a deep love for tradition and cultural identity. Thus, education is a strategic means to instill values that have been proven to be authentic.<sup>22</sup>

In addition, the role of the media and communication is also considered very important in spreading and strengthening traditional values. In the challenging digital era, NU is expected to utilize conventional media and digital platforms to disseminate religious messages rooted in tradition. This effective communication strategy not only reaches traditional circles, but also the younger generation who are increasingly exposed to globalization and modern culture. Thus, the value of tradition as the root of identity can remain relevant and alive in the life of a dynamic society.

Overall, the value of tradition as the root of identity is the basic hope of the people for cultural preservation in the midst of modernity. The people want NU to continue to play a role as an institution that maintains the integrity of noble values and local wisdom, as well as being able to innovate to adapt to the challenges of the times. By maintaining a balance between maintaining tradition and adopting modern elements, NU is expected to be at the forefront of preserving the cultural identity of the people and creating harmony between the past and the future.

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<sup>20</sup> Maimun Maimun, "Islam Nusantara in Islamic Law Epistemology Perspective," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 11, no. 2 (2017): 392, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-ihkam.v11i2.779>.

<sup>21</sup> Salik, *Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Gagasan Moderasi Islam*.

<sup>22</sup> Mahrus As'ad, "Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam Nahdlatul Ulama," *NIZHAM* 3, no. 02 (2014): 209–45, <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/154416-ID-pembaruan-pendidikan-islam-nahdlatul-ula.pdf#page=4.41>.

## **The Role of NU as a Guardian of Cultural Heritage**

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has long been known as a religious institution that focuses not only on spreading Islamic teachings, but also on preserving local cultural values and traditions. As an institution deeply rooted in the history of traditional Indonesian Islam, NU views cultural heritage as an integral part of the religious and cultural identity of the people. Thus, NU's role as a guardian of cultural heritage is the foundation to maintain the continuity of ancestral values in the midst of the ever-growing current of modernity.<sup>23</sup>

Historically, NU has played a central role in maintaining and developing local culture through various religious and educational activities. Islamic boarding schools, taklim councils, and various religious discussion forums organized by NU have become a forum to instill traditional values in the younger generation. Traditions such as routine recitations, celebrations of religious holidays, and the preservation of traditional Islamic arts are tangible manifestations of NU's efforts to maintain cultural heritage.<sup>24</sup>

In facing the challenges of the era of globalization and modernity, NU not only maintains traditional values, but also adopts innovative approaches to convey cultural messages. NU has utilized information technology and digital media to expand the reach of da'wah and cultural preservation, so that existing religious traditions can be enjoyed by the younger generation. This integration effort shows how NU balances between maintaining cultural heritage and welcoming the changing times.<sup>25</sup>

Although it has an important role as a custodian of cultural heritage, NU is faced with various challenges, especially in the midst of the dynamics of modernity that can erode traditional values. Challenges such as globalization currents, lifestyle changes, and the penetration of foreign cultures require careful adaptation strategies. The hope of the people for NU is that every step of reform and innovation remains rooted in tradition, so that cultural heritage is not lost, but continues to develop in the context of a modern and dynamic era.

## **Integration of Tradition and Modernity in the Context of NU**

The integration of tradition and modernity is a key aspect that reflects NU's efforts to maintain traditional religious values while accommodating the times. NU seeks to harmonize cultural heritage and Islamic traditions with innovation

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<sup>23</sup> Karimullah Susanto, Edy, "Islam Nusantara: Islam Khas Dan Akomodasi Terhadap Budaya Lokal," vol. 16, 2016, <http://journal.iaingorontalo.ac.id/index.php/au>.

<sup>24</sup> Maulana and Ependi, "Peranan Nahdlatul Ulama dalam Pengembangan Islam Nusantara Pada."

<sup>25</sup> A. Khoirul Anam, "Tradisi Ziarah: Antara Spiritualitas, Dakwah Dan Pariwisata," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 8, no. 2 (2015): 389–411, <http://jurnalbimasislam.kemenag.go.id/index.php/jbi/article/view/179>.

and adaptation to global dynamics, so that NU's role remains relevant and adaptive in facing the challenges of the second century.<sup>26</sup>

First, NU implements traditional values through education, religious rituals, and community activities that emphasize the importance of local wisdom. Through Islamic boarding schools and madrasas managed by NU, the students are not only equipped with classical religious knowledge, but also with 21st century competencies. This approach allows them to understand the context of modernity without leaving their long-established cultural roots.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, NU utilizes information technology and digital media as a means to spread traditional values more widely. The use of digital platforms allows NU to convey religious messages that have stood the test of time to the younger generation, thus creating a bridge that connects traditional values with modern innovations. This approach optimizes NU's role in the digital era while maintaining the sustainability of cultural heritage.<sup>28</sup>

NU's integrative approach is also reflected in the communication strategy and development of religious programs. Through the use of conventional and digital media, NU disseminates various activities and initiatives that emphasize the importance of preserving traditions. This strategy not only strengthens cultural identity among the people, but also opens up space for dialogue and collaboration across generations that support adaptive cultural transformation.<sup>29</sup>

Finally, the integration strategy carried out by NU is a response to the challenges of globalization and rapid social change. By combining the strength of tradition and modern innovation, NU seeks to form a religious paradigm that is able to maintain its historical identity while responding to the dynamics of the times. This approach is expected not only to maintain the continuity of the noble values of the past, but also to open up opportunities for wider innovation and collaboration in building a harmonious and cultured society in the second century.

Through the integration of tradition and modernity, NU affirms its commitment as a relevant and adaptive institution. This effort is a strategic foundation in preserving cultural heritage while optimizing the potential for innovation, so that NU is still able to become an agent of cultural transformation that prioritizes religious values and local wisdom in facing global challenges.

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<sup>26</sup> Sudarto Murtaufiq, "Islam Nusantara Antara Ideologi Dan Tradis," n.d.

<sup>27</sup> Ahmad Khoirul Mustamir, "Islam Nusantara: Strategi Perjuangan 'Keumatan' Nahdlatul Ulama."

<sup>28</sup> Hidayat, "Tantangan Dakwah NU Di Era Digital Dan Disrupsi Teknologi."

<sup>29</sup> Slamet, "Nahdlatul Ulama dan Pluralisme: Studi Pada Strategi Dakwah Pluralisme NU Di Era Reformasi."

## Education as a Means of Preserving Tradition

Education has a central role in transmitting traditional values from generation to generation<sup>30</sup>. In the context of NU, religious educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and various da'wah programs are strategic platforms to teach cultural heritage and traditional Islam. The people hope that education will not only prioritize the mastery of classical religious science, but also be able to integrate local values that have been tested by time into the modern learning system.<sup>31</sup>

First, education at NU functions as a means to maintain the continuity of religious traditions. The curriculum prepared in NU institutions generally includes materials sourced from classic books, oral traditions, and moral values that have long been the identity of the people. By instilling a deep understanding of tradition, NU education not only produces intellectually intelligent students, but also has a high love for the cultural heritage of their ancestors.<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, the pedagogical approach used by NU is expected to create a balance between traditional values and the demands of modernity. The people expect a renewal in teaching methods that not only focus on memorization, but also on the development of critical and innovative thinking. Thus, the students can understand the context of changing times without losing their cultural roots. This integrative approach provides opportunities for the younger generation to internalize traditional Islamic values while being ready to face global dynamics.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, education as a means of preserving traditions also plays a role in building the collective identity of the people. Through education, cultural values that have been inherited can form social character and ethics, which are the foundation in community life<sup>34</sup> NU, through its religious education program, not only educates individuals to become spiritual leaders, but also forms a collective awareness of the importance of preserving and preserving cultural heritage. This is a tangible form of the hope of the people so that the religious identity that has been formed for hundreds of years is maintained and continues to develop in the midst of globalization<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Willy Ramadan and Ali Mustofa, "Internalisasi Pluralisme Agama Dalam Pembelajaran Sosial Dan Emosional," *Nizham Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 02 (2022): 13, <https://doi.org/10.32332/nizham.v10i02.5424>.

<sup>31</sup> Mahrus As'ad, "Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam Nahdlatul Ulama."

<sup>32</sup> Ali Rahim, "Nahdlatul Ulama (Peranan Dan Sistem Pendidikannya)," *Jurnal Al-Hikmah* 14, no. 2 (2013): 158–67, [http://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/al\\_hikmah/article/view/395](http://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/al_hikmah/article/view/395).

<sup>33</sup> Ima Rosila et al., "Kontribusi Nahdlatul Ulama Dalam Pengembangan Pendidikan Di Indonesia Pasca-Kemerdekaan : Sebuah Kajian Sejarah Dan Transformasi Sosial," *Jurnal Nakula : Pusat Ilmu Pendidikan, Bahasa Dan Ilmu Sosial* 3, no. 1 (2025): 191–209, <https://doi.org/DOI:https://doi.org/10.61132/nakula.v3i1.1495>.

<sup>34</sup> Anik Faridah, "Pesantren, Sejarah Dan Metode Pembelajarannya Di Indonesia," *Al-Mabsut Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 13, no. 2 (2019): 78–90.

<sup>35</sup> Muhammad Jamaluddin, "Metamorfosis Pesantren Di Era Globalisasi," *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture*, 2012, 127–39, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v20i1.57>.

No less important, education is also a medium to develop intergenerational dialogue. By involving educators, parents, and community leaders, NU education can create a constructive discussion space on how traditions can be maintained without hindering progress.<sup>36</sup> The dialogue is important to find a common ground between old values and the needs of the times, so that the preservation of tradition is not seen as an obstacle to innovation, but as a foundation that strengthens cultural sustainability.<sup>37</sup>

Overall, education as a means of preserving traditions reflects the hope of the people to maintain their religious and cultural identity through a comprehensive and adaptive learning process. By integrating traditional values into the modern curriculum, NU has the potential to produce a generation that is not only skilled in science, but also has a strong identity as the successor of the ancestral cultural heritage. This effort is a strategic step to ensure that the preservation of traditions can go hand in hand with innovation, so that religious identity remains relevant in the midst of the global dynamics of the second century.

The discussion above illustrates that education is not just a process of knowledge transfer, but also a strategic vehicle to maintain religious cultural heritage that has long been the identity of the people. By integrating traditional values and modern methods, NU is expected to meet the expectations of the people to maintain cultural continuity and produce the next generation who are ready to face the challenges of the times.

### **The Role of Media and Communication in Preserving Tradition**

Media and communication play a very important role in maintaining and spreading traditional values in the midst of the ever-evolving currents of modernity. In today's digital era, various media platforms—ranging from print media to online media—have become a strategic bridge that connects religious messages and local wisdom with the wider community. This is one of the hopes of the people so that institutions such as NU can effectively convey their traditional values to the generation that is increasingly exposed to technological innovation<sup>38</sup>.

On the one hand, traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, and television still have a role in maintaining the continuity of the spread of tradition. News about religious activities, cultural programs, and lectures from NU figures are often a source of information that strengthens the religious and cultural

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<sup>36</sup> Kiromim Baroroh, "Pendidikan Formal di Lingkungan Pesantren Sebagai Upaya Meningkatkan Kualitas Sumber Daya Manusia," *Jurnal Ekonomi & Pendidikan* 3, no. April (2006): 42–52.

<sup>37</sup> Moh. Slamet Untung, *Sejarah Sosial Pesantren Menurut Prof. KH. Saifuddin Zubri*, 2018.

<sup>38</sup> Aprina Sentia Dewi, "Peran Media Dalam Melestarikan Kebudayaan Tradisi Ba'arak Naga Banjarmasin Kalimantan Selatan," *Seminar Nasional Seni Dan Desain: "Kovergensi Keilmuan Seni Rupa Dan Desain Era 4.0"* 6 (2018): 259–62.

identity of the people<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, advances in digital technology provide new opportunities to optimize communication. Social media platforms, official websites, and mobile applications allow NU to reach a wider audience, especially the younger generation who are familiar with digital technology. The use of digital media not only accelerates the dissemination of information, but also creates an interactive space that allows for dialogue and active participation from the community<sup>40</sup>

In practice, NU has integrated conventional and digital media as a communication strategy to preserve tradition. For example, the dissemination of religious lectures and traditional studies through television and radio broadcasts combined with digital content in the form of videos, podcasts, and online articles that emphasize the values of local wisdom. This strategy allows traditional messages to be delivered in a more engaging and accessible format, making it easier to understand and accept by a wider audience. Thus, NU not only maintains its cultural heritage but also adapts delivery methods that are relevant to the demands of the times.

The role of the media is also very important in creating cross-generational dialogue.<sup>41</sup> Through online forums and interactive discussions on social media, the younger generation can interact directly with traditional scholars and educators. This opens up opportunities to transfer knowledge and instill a love for tradition from an early age, as well as providing space for innovative thinking that remains grounded in basic religious values. This intergenerational dialogue is key to maintaining cultural continuity and creating synergies between old values and modern approaches.<sup>42</sup>

However, there are also challenges in this process. One of them is the risk of simplification or even distortion of traditional messages when disseminated through the mass media. The limited space in delivery on some media platforms, especially social media, can result in the loss of the deep context that is often contained in oral delivery. Therefore, a careful communication strategy is needed so that every content disseminated still maintains the authenticity of traditional values without being reduced by a modern format that is concise and fast.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, to optimize the role of the media in preserving traditions, NU needs to develop an integrated communication policy. This includes training media cadres, developing educational content, and collaborating with various

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<sup>39</sup> Hasan Aziz, "Modernisasi Media Massa Nahdlatul Ulama: Studi Kasus Nu Online Tahun 2003-2018."

<sup>40</sup> Derry Ahmad Rizal, Rif Maula, and Nilna Idamatussilmi, "Transformasi Media Sosial Dalam Digitalisasi Agama ; Media Dakwah Dan Wisata Religi" 9, no. 2 (2024): 206–30.

<sup>41</sup> Rizal, Maula, and Idamatussilmi.

<sup>42</sup> Zainul Mu'in Husni and Iftaqur Rahman, "Islam, Kearifan Lokal, Komunikasi Dakwah; Menakar Konsep Islam Nusantara," *Islam Nusantara* 04, no. 01 (2020): 92–102, <https://doi.org/10.33852/jurnalin.v4i1.213>.

<sup>43</sup> Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma below the Winds*, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma below the Winds*, 2003, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203222577>.

parties who have expertise in the field of media and information technology. This strategic approach not only increases the effectiveness of disseminating traditional messages but also affirms NU's commitment to facing the challenges of modernity without sacrificing the cultural roots that have shaped the religious identity of the people <sup>44</sup>

Overall, the role of media and communication in preserving traditions is one of the important pillars that reflects the expectations of the people for the preservation of religious values. By integrating traditional and digital media synergistically, NU has the opportunity to effectively preserve and disseminate cultural heritage. This effort not only strengthens the cultural identity that has been formed over the centuries but also provides a platform for innovation that still respects historical values, thus ensuring the continuity of tradition in the midst of the global dynamics of the second century.

The discussion above underlines that the strategic use of media and communication is the key to realizing the people's expectations for the preservation of traditions. Through the integration of technological innovation with the delivery of authentic religious values, NU can play an active role in maintaining the continuity of cultural heritage in the modern era.

### **Critically Facing Change Without Losing Cultural Roots**

In the midst of the ever-evolving tide of modernity, there are concerns that rapid innovation and social change could erode cultural values that have been the identity of the people for centuries<sup>45</sup>. The people hope that every step of renewal does not sacrifice the cultural roots that have carved their religious and cultural character. A critical approach to change emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between the application of innovation and the preservation of tradition as the foundation of religious identity. <sup>46</sup>

In the context of NU, criticism of change does not mean rejection of modernity, but rather an encouragement to carry out reforms in a selective and targeted manner. NU is expected to be able to absorb relevant modern elements, such as the use of information technology and contemporary educational methods, without leaving the essence of traditional values that have shaped the personality of the people. Thus, the innovations applied should be based on the basic principles of Islam and local wisdom, so that the changes that occur remain in harmony with existing traditions <sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Juma' Juma', "Fatwa Jihad Dan Resolusi Jihad: Historisitas Jihad Dan Nasionalisme Di Indonesia," *Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality* 7, no. 2 (2022): 119–34, <https://doi.org/10.30984/ajip.v7i2.2187>.

<sup>45</sup> Madnasir, "Religious Tolerance As A Da'wah Movement Pluralist Society In Indonesia," *Nizham Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 1 (2019): 1–14, <https://ejournal.metrouniv.ac.id/nizham/issue/archive>.

<sup>46</sup> Ahmad Muradi Muradi, *Di Tengah Gelombang Disrupsi Meneguhkan Islam Nusantara, Mempertahankan NKRI*, ed. Fridiyanto, 1st ed. (Bengkulu: Yayasan Sahabat Alam Rafflesia, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Ahmad Khoiril Mustamir, "Islam Nusantara: Strategi Perjuangan 'Keumatan' Nahdlatul Ulama."

This critical approach also requires a thorough evaluation of every renewal initiative undertaken. NU needs to build an internal mechanism that is able to assess the impact of innovation on traditional values. The evaluation process involves not only measuring the effectiveness of modernization but also considering the extent to which cultural values can be preserved. The involvement of various parties, ranging from educators, and religious leaders, to the community of the people, is the key to ensuring that change is not carried out unilaterally and at the expense of cultural heritage (Rahman, 2014).

Furthermore, intergenerational dialogue is one of the important strategies in facing the challenges of change. The young generation who are highly exposed to modern values needs to gain a deep understanding of cultural roots through guidance from educators and traditional NU figures. This dialogue process not only strengthens awareness of the importance of preserving traditions but also opens up space for constructive innovation. Thus, NU's role as a mediator between the past and the future can be realized through critical and reflective joint efforts.<sup>48</sup>

Strategically, the hope of the people directs NU to implement reforms that are incorporative—integrating traditional values into every aspect of innovation and new policies. This approach ensures that the modernization that occurs does not eliminate the cultural identity that has become the moral and spiritual foundation of the people. Thus, the changes made are transformational, maintaining the continuity of tradition while welcoming the progress of the times without value conflicts.<sup>49</sup>

Through a critical evaluation of each step of change, NU is expected to be able to develop a reform strategy that is not only responsive to modern challenges but also sensitive to the noble values that have been inherited. This critical approach to change is a reflection of the hope of the people to see a religious institution that is adaptive but still adheres to cultural roots as a support for the identity and sustainability of the people in the face of the global dynamics of the second century.

### **Dynamics of Hope in the Context of Social Change**

The social changes that occur in the era of globalization have a significant impact on people's perceptions and expectations. This dynamic gives rise to new expectations that demand that religious institutions, especially NU, be able to adapt quickly without putting aside their traditional roots. The public, who are now increasingly exposed to the flow of information and global values, expects NU to become a bridge that connects old values with today's innovations.<sup>50</sup>

Technological developments and lifestyle changes also affect the dynamics of people's expectations. In the midst of rapid modernization, the people want

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<sup>48</sup> Muhammad In'am Esha, *NU Di Tengah Globalisasi "Kritik, Solusi, Dan Aksi,"* Uin-Maliki Press, 2015, repository.uin-malang.ac.id.

<sup>49</sup> Salik, *Nabdlatul Ulama Dan Gagasan Moderasi Islam.*

<sup>50</sup> Esha, *NU Di Tengah Globalisasi "Kritik, Solusi, Dan Aksi."*

NU not only to maintain tradition but also to implement a responsive approach to social change. This includes the development of more modern communication methods, the use of digital media, and innovations in religious education that are still based on noble values.<sup>51</sup>

On the other hand, social dynamics also present its own challenges for NU. The pressure of globalization, the entry of liberal values, and the shift in the paradigm of life require NU to carry out internal reforms to be relevant to the times. The Ummah hopes that NU can overcome the tension between the need for change and the desire to maintain a cultural identity that has been formed for hundreds of years. This expectation reflects the desire to see NU as an institution that is adaptive, innovative, and remains grounded in tradition.<sup>52</sup>

The dynamics of this hope can also be seen in the community's demand for a constructive dialogue between the older and younger generations. The young generation who grew up with extensive access to information expects NU to integrate traditional values with a progressive modern perspective. The ummah sees great potential in cross-generational collaboration, where past experiences and wisdom are combined with the innovative and critical spirit typical of the new generation.<sup>53</sup>

Overall, the dynamics of hope in the context of social change reflect a transformation journey in which NU is expected to be an agent capable of harmonizing tradition and modernity. The community wants every policy and initiative taken by NU not only to answer the demands of the times but also to preserve the cultural heritage that has become the identity of the people. This hope emphasizes the importance of NU's role as an adaptive, innovative, and integrity in maintaining the continuity of religious values in the midst of changing social dynamics (Abdullah, 2018).

Although the main focus of this discussion is the preservation of traditions, there is also hope that NU will be able to create synergy between preservation and cultural transformation. The innovations carried out must be based on traditional values but also responsive to the demands of the times. This allows for the formation of an inclusive religious model, which still respects cultural heritage while accommodating the times.

Overall, the people's expectations for the preservation of traditions reflect the desire to maintain the identity, values, and local wisdom that is the foundation of religious and social life in Indonesia. NU as a religious institution is expected to be able to play a dual role as a guardian of tradition and an adaptive innovator, so as to be able to overcome modern challenges without losing the cultural roots

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<sup>51</sup> Ahmad Mutawalli Nasution, "Tantangan Lembaga Dakwah Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama Di Era Teknologi Informasi: Formulasi Materi Di Youtube," *Hikmah* 17, no. 2 (2023): 201–18, [jurnal.uinsyahada.ac.id](http://jurnal.uinsyahada.ac.id).

<sup>52</sup> Mu'in Husni and Rahman, "Islam, Kearifan Lokal, Komunikasi Dakwah; Menakar Konsep Islam Nusantara."

<sup>53</sup> A. Jauhar Fuad, "Akar Sejarah Moderasi Islam Pada Nahdlatul Ulama," *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 31, no. 1 (2020): 153–68, <https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v31i1.991>.

that have formed the traditional Islamic identity. With an integrated strategy, both through education, media, and pro-reform internal policies, NU has a great opportunity to realize the expectations of this ummah and ensure the sustainability of noble values in the midst of globalization.

### **Cultural Transformation Towards Modernity**

Cultural transformation towards modernity refers to the process of adapting traditional cultural values to remain relevant in the face of changing times characterized by technological advancements, globalization, and rapid social dynamics. This process does not mean removing or replacing traditions, but integrating them with modern elements to create a dynamic and adaptive form of culture. NU, as a religious institution with strong traditional roots, plays a strategic role in bridging the gap between classical values and the demands of the present day.<sup>54</sup>

In this transformation effort, NU implements innovative education and communication strategies. Educational institutions managed by NU, such as Islamic boarding schools and madrasas, not only maintain traditional teaching methods but also integrate modern approaches that utilize information technology and digital media. This aims to provide provisions to the younger generation who can think critically and creatively, as well as appreciate the religious values that have been inherited.<sup>55</sup>

NU's innovative strategy is also reflected through the reform of religious programs that adapt contextual da'wah methods. By utilizing digital platforms, NU is able to reach a wider audience and present religious content that is relevant to contemporary issues. This approach allows for more interactive and participatory messaging, so that traditional values are not only passively maintained, but revived in a modern context<sup>56</sup>

In addition, cultural transformation towards modernity also involves intergenerational and cross-cultural dialogue. NU encourages the formation of discussion and collaboration spaces between religious leaders, academics, and the community to review and harmonize traditional values with the needs of the times. This dialogue not only functions as a forum for evaluation, but also as a joint learning process in formulating an adaptive, innovative, and inclusive religious approach (Fatimah, 2012).

Overall, the cultural transformation towards modernity in the context of NU is an effort to maintain the sustainability of religious and cultural identity in the midst of globalization. By integrating modern traditions and innovations, NU is expected to build a religious paradigm that not only maintains the noble values of the past but is also able to answer challenges and opportunities in the digital

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<sup>54</sup> dkk Deden Ibnu Aqil, *Kearifan Lokal Di Tengah Modernitas*, ed. Aria Yulita Edi Wiyono (Perpusnas Press, 2021), <https://press.perpusnas.go.id>.

<sup>55</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam & Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, 1982.

<sup>56</sup> Hasan Aziz, "Modernisasi Media Massa Nahdlatul Ulama: Studi Kasus NU Online Tahun 2003-2018."

era. This process creates a synergy between the preservation of cultural heritage and adaptation to social change, which will ultimately strengthen NU's role as an agent of cultural transformation in the second century.

### Challenges and Opportunities

In the era of globalization and modernity, NU is faced with various challenges that test its institution's ability to maintain traditional values in the midst of changing times. On the one hand, NU must deal with internal dynamics that include resistance to reform and concerns that modern innovations could erode the traditional essence that has long been the identity of the people.<sup>57</sup>

The first challenge arises from the pressure of accelerating social change, where global information flows and the penetration of foreign cultures can shift local values. The community, especially the younger generation, is increasingly exposed to various new lifestyles and paradigms that sometimes contradict the religious traditions that NU has maintained so far. This requires NU to not only maintain cultural heritage but also adapt religious approaches to remain relevant and able to respond to the needs of the times.<sup>58</sup>

In the organizational structure of NU itself, there are internal challenges in the form of conservative tendencies that can hinder the reform process.<sup>59</sup> Attempts to align traditional values with modern innovations have often been met with resistance from elements who fear that change will compromise the authenticity of the teachings. Therefore, prudent policies are needed to encourage internal dynamics that are open to innovation without sacrificing the cultural identity that has been built over decades.<sup>60</sup>

However, these challenges open up strategic opportunities for NU to transform and innovate. The use of information technology and digital media is one of the great opportunities that NU can use to spread religious messages rooted in tradition to a wider audience. By optimizing digital platforms, NU can reach the younger generation who are increasingly technologically literate, while maintaining the continuity of traditional values in the modern context.<sup>61</sup>

Another opportunity lies in the development of an integrative religious education model. NU can design a curriculum that not only prioritizes the memorization of classical teachings but also instills the critical and innovative thinking skills needed to face global challenges. Thus, the next generation will not

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<sup>57</sup> Hidayat, "Tantangan Dakwah NU Di Era Digital Dan Disrupsi Teknologi."

<sup>58</sup> Alexander R Arifianto, "Islam Nusantara & Its Critics: The Rise of NU's Young Clerics," n.d., [www.rsis.edu.sg](http://www.rsis.edu.sg).

<sup>59</sup> Slamet, "Nadhlatul Ulama Dan Pluralisme: Studi Pada Strategi Dakwah Pluralisme NU Di Era Reformasi."

<sup>60</sup> Trias Fatih Mubaidilla et al., "Pendekatan Sosiologis dalam Studi Islam Irfa'i Alfian Mubaidilla" 16, no. 1 (2022): 68–81.

<sup>61</sup> Muh Ilham Usman, "Nadhlatul Ulama Dan Kedaulatan Nation-State Indonesia," *Al Adyaan*, 2018, 167–92, <http://journal.uin-alaudidin.ac.id/index.php/adyan/issue/view/998>.

only have a love for tradition but also the readiness to adapt to the dynamics of the times.<sup>62</sup>

In addition, cross-generational dialogue and collaboration with various elements of society are important aspects that open up opportunities for NU. Discussion forums, seminars, and community activities can be a forum for exchanging views between the older and younger generations. This approach allows for the creation of synergy between local wisdom and modern perspectives, which in turn strengthens NU's role as a mediator between tradition and modernity.

Overall, by identifying existing challenges and taking advantage of strategic opportunities, NU has the potential to transform into an innovative institution while maintaining the sustainability of religious and cultural values. This effort will not only increase NU's relevance in the midst of global dynamics but also ensure that time-tested cultural heritage remains alive and thriving in accordance with the demands of the second century.

### Strategic Implications

The strategic implications of NU's role in cultural preservation and transformation require the preparation of holistic and adaptive policy strategies, in order to bridge the gap between traditional values and the demands of modernity. The strategy needs to consider the internal and external dynamics that affect the existence of NU, so that this institution remains relevant and effective in meeting the expectations of the people in the global era<sup>63</sup>

First, strategically, NU is required to carry out religious education reforms that integrate classical science with modern competencies. The development of a curriculum that combines traditional values with 21st-century technological knowledge and skills is the key to producing a generation that not only understands cultural roots but is also able to innovate in a global context.<sup>64</sup> This step not only strengthens religious identity but also opens opportunities for students to adapt quickly to social changes.<sup>65</sup>

Furthermore, the application of information technology and digital media is a strategic implication that NU must optimize. The use of digital platforms is not only a da'wah tool but also a medium of education and cultural preservation allowing NU to reach a wider audience, especially the younger generation who are highly exposed to technological developments. This also creates an

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<sup>62</sup> Husni, "Nu Di Tengah Pusaran Ideologi-Ideologi Transnasional."

<sup>63</sup> Faisal Ismail, "The Nahdlatul Ulama: Its Early History and Contribution to the Establishment of Indonesian State," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 5, no. 2 (2011): 247–82, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2011.5.2.247-282>.

<sup>64</sup> Maulana and Ependi, "Peranan Nahdlatul Ulama dalam Pengembangan Islam Nusantara Pada."

<sup>65</sup> Usman, "Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Kedaulatan Nation-State Indonesia."

intergenerational dialogue that is essential to maintain the continuity of cultural values in the modern era.<sup>66</sup>

Another strategic implication lies in the formation of strategic partnerships with various parties, both the government, educational institutions, and cultural communities. Cross-sector collaboration can strengthen cultural preservation programs and religious innovation so that NU not only stands alone but also becomes part of a wider network in maintaining local wisdom values. This collaboration is expected to improve the quality of the program and expand the social impact of the NU initiative.<sup>67</sup>

On the internal side, NU needs to conduct a continuous evaluation of the organizational structure and decision-making mechanism. Strengthening transparent and participatory governance is key to encouraging innovation without sacrificing traditional essence. By creating space for internal dialogue and embracing elements of modernity, NU can overcome the resistance to change that often arises due to structural rigidity.<sup>68</sup>

The strategic implications also include efforts to increase the capacity of human resources through training and competency development that are relevant to the needs of the times. NU must prioritize improving the quality of cadres and administrators who are able to integrate traditional values with modern understanding so that they can act as agents of change in the religious and cultural environment. This initiative is expected to create a synergy between historical values and contemporary innovations that are vital for the sustainability of NU<sup>69</sup>

Finally, the strategy of cultural preservation and transformation by NU must be supported by adequate policies and funding. Investing in research, program development, and digital infrastructure is an important aspect of ensuring that strategic initiatives can be implemented sustainably. With the support of optimal resources, NU has the opportunity to strengthen its strategic role as an institution that not only preserves traditions but also innovates in the face of the global challenges of the second century.

Through this series of strategic implications, NU is expected to play a central role in maintaining the sustainability of cultural and religious values in the midst of modernity. The transformation carried out not only answers the demands of the times but also maintains cultural heritage as an irreplaceable identity while building a strong foundation for a more inclusive and adaptive future.

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<sup>66</sup> M. Ali Haidar, *Nahdatul Ulama Dan Islam Di Indonesia Pendekatan Fikih Dalam Politik*, ed. Priyo Utomo, PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama (PT Gramedia, 1994), [http://www.ebp.aaykpn.ac.id/kitab/kitab2\\_ke\\_nu\\_an/NU dan Islam di Indonesia.pdf](http://www.ebp.aaykpn.ac.id/kitab/kitab2_ke_nu_an/NU%20dan%20Islam%20di%20Indonesia.pdf).

<sup>67</sup> Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Ulama Dan Pesantren Dalam Dinamika Politik Dan Kultur Nahdlatul Ulama," *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 13, no. 1 (2013): 95–111, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v0i0.2377>.

<sup>68</sup> Masyhudi Muchtar, *Aswaja An-Nahdliyah Ajaran Ahlul-sunnah Wal Al-Jama'ah Yang Berlaku Di Lingkungan Nahdlatul Ulama*, ed. A. Rubaidi (Surabaya: Khalista, 2007).

<sup>69</sup> Hidayat, "Tantangan Dakwah NU Di Era Digital Dan Disrupsi Teknologi."

This strategic implication is expected to be the foundation for NU to continue to innovate and develop, maintaining a balance between preserving tradition and applying modernity for the sustainability of religious culture in Indonesia.

## Conclusion

This article concludes that NU's role in cultural preservation and transformation is a crucial strategic element in maintaining the continuity of religious and cultural identity in the midst of modernity. The people expect that NU will not only act as a guardian of traditional values that have been formed for generations but also as an innovation agent that is able to integrate modern elements to respond to global dynamics. In the context of preserving traditions, religious values and local wisdom are the foundation of identity that must be maintained. NU, through educational institutions, da'wah programs, and media management, plays an important role in transmitting cultural heritage to the younger generation. On the other hand, the challenges arising from the flow of globalization and modernization require NU to adopt adaptive reform strategies, such as the use of information technology and the renewal of educational curricula, so that these traditional values are not left behind. Finally, NU's success in facing the challenges of modernity depends on a commitment to maintaining noble values while opening up space for innovation. Strategic policies that support internal reforms, human resource capacity building, and optimizing the use of digital media are important foundations to realize the expectations of the people, as well as ensure that religious cultural heritage not only remains relevant but is also able to adapt to global challenges.

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