

## EDUCATIONAL SPREAD OF BUNTET BOARDING SCHOOL IN A RURAL AREA

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### Abstract

The Buntet Islamic Boarding School was first founded in 1750 by Kyai Muqayim bin Abdul Hadi, known as Mbah Muqayim. He was the chief of the Kanoman Palace. Since its establishment, this pesantren has had relations with the palaces in Cirebon. The history and tradition of this boarding school are tied to the growth of Islam in West Java. The purpose of this study is to investigate how education is disseminated at Buntet pesantren in rural areas. The study used a mixed-methods technique, which combines qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Employing the snowball method to get information from informants while doing field observations. Data processing involves categorizing data in accordance with groups of recurring themes. Additionally, map data was gathered and processed using ArcGIS software to observe changes in space from 2002 to 2022. The findings demonstrates that the transmission of education can build the social character of the village community as well as the propagation of spatial changes.

**Keywords:** Spreading; Buntet Islamic Boarding School-Educational Activities; Space-Rural Areas.

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## INTRODUCTION

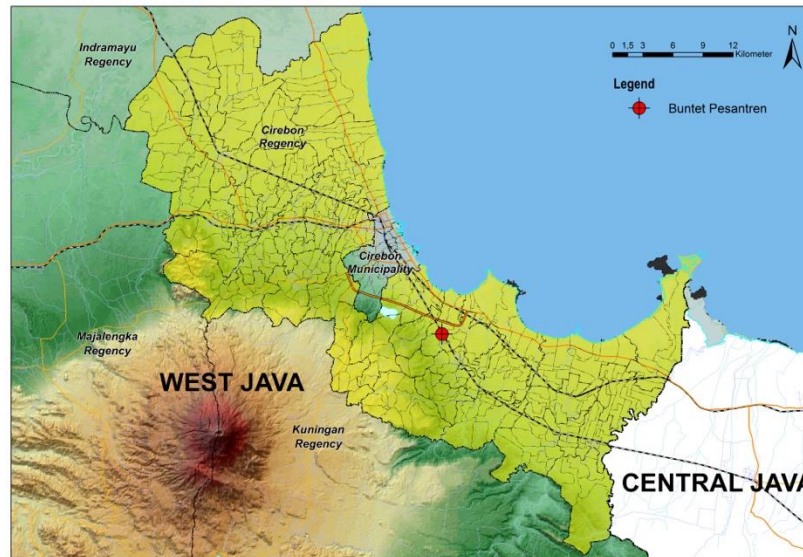
Sunan Gunungjati as the king and propagator of Islam in Java, still has historical traces that are not textually documented. Historical traces in terms of local Traditional Islamic Knowledge in the Cirebon Region. The esoteric traditions that are still maintained by the Cirebon palaces as traces of the descendants of Sunan Gunungjati are only rituals that have not revealed the essence behind them. Despite the fact that Sunan Gunungjati is a representation of the majesty of Islam and carries the stigma of religion with him. Knowledge of Sunan Gunungjati's Islamic religiosity is knowledge that must be documented for the continuation of Islamic education and its religious values.

In 1750, Mbah Muqayim, also known as Kyai Muqayim bin Abdul Hadi, established the Buntet Islamic Boarding School. He is a Kanoman Palace chief. The founder of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School, Kyai Muqayim bin Abdul Hadi, set an example for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge that stemmed from Sunan Gunungjati's devotion. When Prince Girilaya passed away in 1662, traces go back to the year the pesantren was established. In that year the Cirebon Sultanate weakened after the death of Prince Girilaya, so Kyai Muqayim who became the Mufti of the Palace felt uncomfortable and withdrew to establish the Buntet Islamic Boarding School. The competitive advantages of a location that can be promoted as a tourist destination include place and local history (Saeedi & Hanzae, 2018).

The Buntet Islamic Boarding School is situated in the Astana Japura District, Cirebon Regency, in the Mertapada Kulon and Munjul Villages. Kyai Muqayim chose the spot because it was where Sunan Gunungjati and the neighborhood Kuwu first started constructing a hermitage. Even though this Islamic boarding school is situated in a rural location with an agricultural purpose, as educational activities advance, this rural area develops into a built-up environment for educational purposes. The purpose of this study is to investigate how education at the Buntet Islamic Boarding School has expanded to rural areas. Activities in Islamic boarding schools have continued for 273 years. With the dynamics of Islamic boarding schools' educational principles in the neighborhood, his actions caused alterations in rural space. Previous research has only focused on Islamic boarding school education as a process of Islamization in Indonesia (Muslim, 2021), the boarding school network in West Java in 1800-1945 (Fauzan & Fata, 2019), traditions and history of boarding schools (Toha, 2017). This study highlights the resurgence of Islamic boarding school educational initiatives in Cirebon Regency's rural communities. Changes brought about by educational activities at Buntet Islamic Boarding School in remote areas. A cultural approach is an innovative planning strategy used by boarding schools in their changing rural spaces.

## METHODOLOGY

The Buntet Islamic Boarding School is located in Mertapada Kulon Village and Munjul Village, Astana Japura District, Cirebon Regency, and these communities serve as the background for this research project. The location is situated 12 km southeast of Cirebon City. The Cirebon-Ciledug Route is used to access the main road network leading to the research site. West Java Province's Cirebon Regency serves as its administrative center. More details can be seen in Figure 1 regarding the research location.



**Figure 1.** Research Location

Data collection was carried out by means of field surveys and field observations. This activity was carried out for five days from 7 March 2022-11 March 2022. A field survey was conducted to collect data and information on educational activities at the Buntet Islamic Boarding School. At this boarding school, teachers and students were interviewed utilizing voice recordings. Propulsive technique is the method used to collect responders. The sample is not constrained by quantity, but rather by the demand for data regarding the boarding school. Additionally, information on field maps was gathered utilizing procedures for field observation that involved using check list data devices, cameras, and map tracking. A team of 3 surveyors and researchers collected the data.

The data collected is in the form of information and field maps. Information data is processed using the following stages: 1). Data/information is grouped into survey dates; 2). Data/information is classified into activity and place groups; 3). Group data/information on activities and places is confirmed to the respondents who are selected by means of a snow ball; and 4). Analysis by way of interpretation of the results of grouping data/information as a result of confirmation.

Meanwhile, the maps obtained from the results of field checks were combined with the results of map processing from the shape of the earth obtained from the results of Google Earth for 2002 -2022. The years 2002 – 2022 were chosen because of the changes made over a period of 20 years. The length of time is in accordance with the provisions of the planning of a space. Change analysis using Arch GIS Software. The results of the mapping will be carried out in the interpretation stage. Therefore, the "interpretation" which is the main intention of interpretive mapping, might be a combination of both objective and subjective approach. The simplicity or complexity of the process depends on the crowd of elements. The more elements counted in the process of mapping, the more complex it becomes (Hossain & Barata, 2019).

The research framework can be seen in the Figure 2 below.

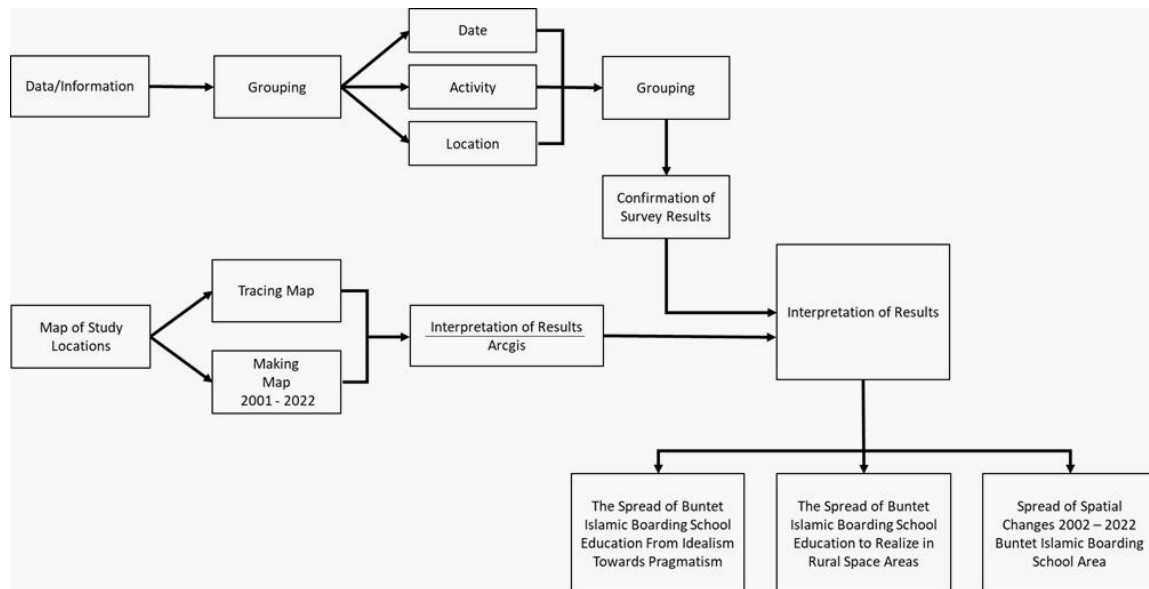


Figure 2. Research Framework

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Spread of Buntet Islamic Boarding School Education from Idealism Towards Pragmatism

Pesantren is a process of studying for santri which means a place for santri or the process of becoming a santri (Soebahar, 2013). The term mesantren is synonymous with the term nyantri which means that children go to or study at a pesantren to become santri. Santri means Islamic boarding school students and at the same time contains the hope that children will become religious students / children who are religious (Muhaimin, 2002). The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2019 concerning Islamic Boarding Schools stipulates several terms pesantren. Currently, the Buntet Islamic Boarding School is a place for students to become students as well as a place for formal education at the elementary school level to the vocational level.

The Buntet Islamic Boarding School was founded by Kyiai Muqayim because he has an attitude of idealism towards Islamic religious beliefs. Kyia Muqayim opposed Dutch interference in the Palace. Kyai Muqayim witnessed that some of the royal court had been trapped under Dutch rule. An attitude of integrity was proven by surrendering his role as Mufti of the Kanoman Palace. Kyia Muqayim's attitude showed the need for consistency and added persistence in building the ummah, which was finally manifested in the establishment of a pesantren in Sunan Gunung Jati's place of origin and the building of the initial hermitage for the spread of Islam, namely Buntet Hamlet.

Apart from studying Islam, the Buntet Islamic Boarding School was educated for self-defense and defending the country against Dutch colonialism. The Dutch rules which were considered to be contrary to Islamic principles made the spirit to fight against these rules. Islamic boarding schools are a means of character education, especially nation and sovereignty. Education that prioritizes the character of warriors with principles according to Islam.

Islamic boarding school education in Cirebon is still the pride and joy of parents when their children are accepted as santri. The child will be released with the gratitude of the parents. Children are escorted by many people, especially neighbors and villagers and parents. They will accompany them on foot to the nearest station or terminal. The behavior of residents and parents is a form of respect for children who successfully enter Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding school education still has a religious prestige value for the people in Cirebon (see figure 3 below). The view that Islamic boarding school education will be religious students/religious children is still rooted in Cirebon.



**Figure 3.** Photo of parents of students visiting Islamic boarding schools, direct contact with teachers. Parents of students are very happy that their daughter is studying at the Buntet Islamic Boarding School

Currently, the government through Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2019 concerning Islamic Boarding Schools has provided regulations for Islamic boarding schools. This regulation is complemented by its derivative regulations for pesantren technical arrangements. Thus, Islamic boarding schools are required to follow these rules, including the Buntet Islamic Boarding School. Arrangements that make pesantren education uniform and focus on the role of formal education. As a result, students' study time is drained to fulfill formal education. It is almost difficult to carry out the activities of the santri according to the peculiarities of Islamic boarding schools, however, the Islamic Boarding School of Buntet still tries to adapt flexibly to these conditions. The flexibility of education at the Buntet Islamic Boarding School is that students are given the opportunity to study general science through both formal and traditional schools typical of Islamic boarding schools. Santri besides studying old traditions with their yellow books also study other sciences in formal schools.

Education Management is under the Buntet Pesantren Educational Institution Foundation (YLPI) with a total number of students reaching thousands of people. Currently the Chairman of YLPI is H. Salman Alfarisi. The management structure is divided into fields. Furthermore, it can be seen in Figure 4 regarding the Management Structure of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School.



**Figure 4.** Management Structure of Buntet Islamic Boarding School

The level of education at the Buntet Islamic Boarding School starts from the level of kindergarten, madrasah diniyah, madrasah tnanawiyah, madrasah aliyah. Apart from that, the Mechanical Vocational High School (SMK), Nursing Academy, and Tarbiyah High School (STIT) Buntet are also being developed. The field of education being developed is aligned with the needs of the job market for its graduates. In addition, the level of education has expanded to the tertiary level/higher education (STIT).

Education at the Buntet Islamic Boarding School as a place for shari'a in the exoteric dimension of Islam to be passed on to the next generation. Islamic boarding schools in Java are mystical paths of tarekat with Islamic labels as well as Buntet Islamic Boarding Schools. Tarekat is a dimension to build esoteric Islam. The tarekat emerged as a Sufi path (tasawuf) through purification of the heart. Likewise, the Buntet Islamic Boarding School runs a tarekat to know Divine truth and reach the level of knowledge. This education is characteristic of pesantren education. Education that builds the character of its students

Currently, the education of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School is no longer focused on Islamic boarding school education alone, but has developed both the level and type of education. The spread of education has changed along with the dynamics of the times. The changes that occur show a movement from idealism to pragmatism. Idealism according to Plato emphasizes the superiority of the mind (mind), spirit (soul) or spirit over things that are material/material (Mubin, 2019). This idealism is reflected by Kyai Muqayim's attitude towards the Netherlands. The superiority of mind, soul/spirit was shown by Kyai Muqayim to oppose the Dutch and establish the Buntet Islamic Boarding School. Currently, the Buntet Islamic Boarding School is faced with the reality of education regulations and the job market of its alumni, the provision of new fields in this pesantren is to anticipate this reality. The emergence of SMK Mekanian, Nursing Academy and STIT is an effort to develop educational levels to be utilized by the current job market. This indication is an attitude of pragmatism. Pragmatism according to Charles Sanders Pierce is the substance of truth because of its functions and benefits for life (Junaidi, 2016). The efforts of the management to establish various types of scientific fields are a pragmatic attitude to maintain the existence of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School.

Islamic boarding schools are a means of continuity for knowledge and even spiritual values and Islamic religiosity from Sunan Gunungjati. These values still persist today, even though the procedures are adapted to changing times. Character values such as religiosity, discipline, intelligence, mutual help, honesty and responsibility (Hasmayni, 2019). The traditions of the pesantren have been maintained until now, and are remnants of the ancient civilization of the Cirebon people (Toha, 2017). The values of ancient civilizations that are still maintained are relevant solutions to deal with the general spiritual crisis of modern society, the lack of guidelines and meaning of life among modern youth (Pirnazarov, 2021). The findings show that Islamic boarding schools still becomes a special place for the formation of the spirituality of certain people and will continue to be needed, especially in facing modern civilization as it is today, especially in Cirebon which still adheres to ancient traditions inherited from Sunan Gunungjati.

### **The Spread of Buntet Islamic Boarding School Education to be Formed in the Rural Area Space**

The Buntet Islamic Boarding School was first established in the Kedungmalang Block in 1750. However, the establishment of this pesantren was demolished by the Dutch, so Kyai Muqayim traveled to avoid the Dutch. The location of his journey is to Lemahabang Village, Tuk in Karangsungung and Beji in Pemalang, Central Java. In 1758 Mbah Muqayim returned to the Gajah Ngambung Block which is currently the cemetery for the Santri in Buntet. The Buntet Islamic Boarding School and other Islamic boarding schools are named after the regional name of the founder's residence.

The location of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School was established more than 270 years ago, so the growth of residential space for pesantren families follows that time. The spread of space starts from one village, namely Buntet Village. Furthermore, the settlement developed according to the development of the pesantren's leadership family. The living space is inhabited by the

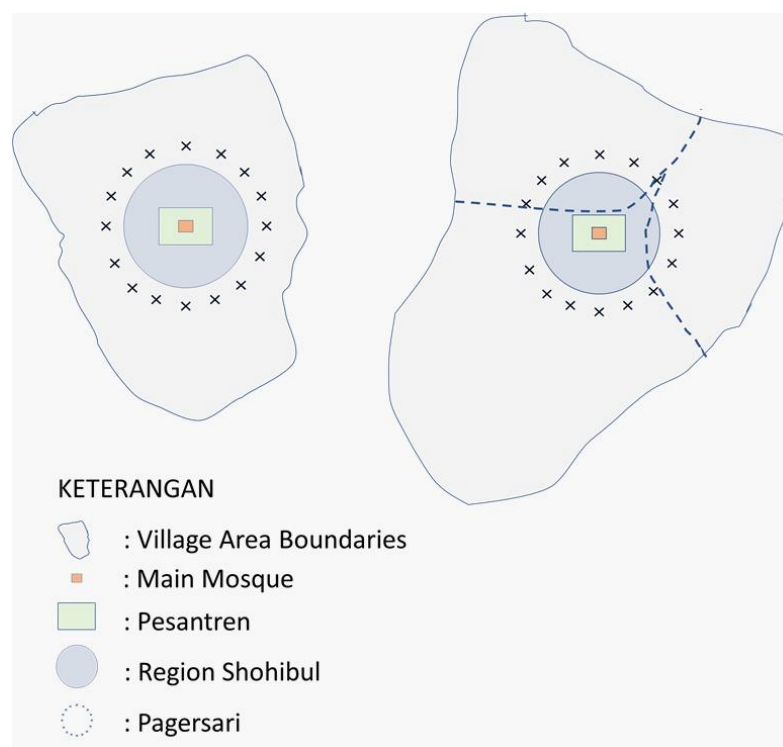
majority of the Kyai family. The Kyai's family is called the regional *sohibul*, namely the family of the *pesantren* leader and the ordinary family, namely the family that is not authorized to lead the *pesantren*. The leadership of the *pesantren* is determined by the eldest son of the Kyai, if there is none then it is chosen from the male leader's brother (brother/sister). The leader of the *pesantren* must be led by a man.

Outsiders or non-kyai are residents who do not have any relationship with the kyai's family. These non-kyai residents are called *sari pagers* which consist of two words, namely *pager* and *sari*. The *pager* gives the sense of a barrier that surrounds or protects. *Sari* means a core. This means that the space of the settlers of the outside residents becomes a protector that surrounds the core space, namely the space of the region's companions. These non-kyai residents are still called *sari pagers* today. They live side by side with the Kyai's family and faithfully serve the Kyai's family. The term *pager sari* is similar to the settlers in the palace.

The Kyai's family houses grew sporadically following the location of the Islamic boarding school. The female and male dormitories were built separately. The Islamic boarding school building does not have a fence, so that outsiders will have easy access to it. Meanwhile, the houses of non-kyai residents grow sporadically around the *pesantren*. Along with the growth of residential space for regional *sohibul* and non-Kyai, other facilities such as shops around the settlement also developed. The growth of the *pesantren* building has grown to 65 location points.

The Buntet Islamic Boarding School also plays a role in efforts to empower rural communities, because Islamic boarding schools are one of the village institutions that have religious norms and values so that they become an important part of supporting village development by empowering the community (Fatimatuzzahroh et al., 2015). The life of the village community around the Buntet *pesantren* is very obedient to the kyai. The Kyai of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School has an important role in building village community obedience.

The distribution of settlements is not only in Buntet Village but has spread to Munjul Village, Astanajapura District. Conceptually, the growth of this *pesantren* space can be seen in Figure 4 below. The spread of spatial growth that began with *pesantren* activities, the growth of space for clerics to live in and other follow-up activities. The spread starts from the penetration of educational activities to create an educational area. Conceptually, it can be seen in Figure 5 below.



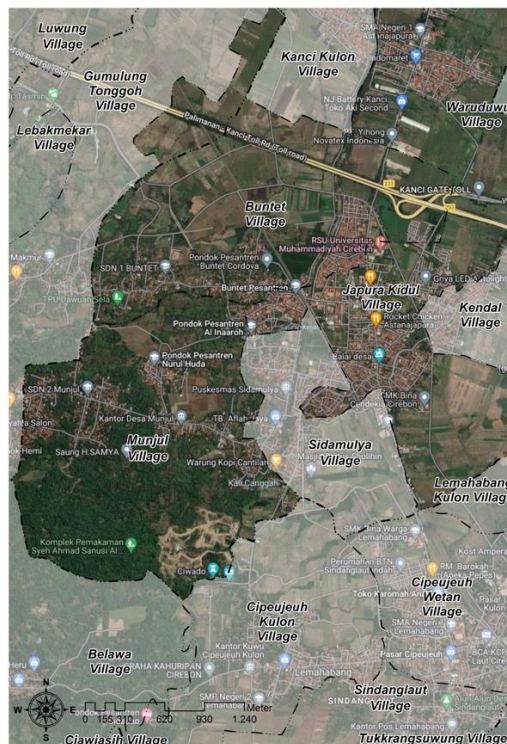
**Figure 5.** The Concept of Spread from One Village to a Rural Area

Facts on the ground show that the center of the pesantren is the mosque building. The mosque is a place of worship, so the mosque is a central feature of the pesantren building in addition to the dormitories and clerics' houses adjacent to the dormitories. In the traditional environment of Islamic society, religious spaces, especially mosques, have a special status (Ghasemi et al., 2019).

The educational activities of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School spread from one village to another to form a space to become an educational area. The fact that this was formed was due to the culture that developed in this rural area due to history and intellectual development. This finding is corroborated by the fact that culture constitutes and is shaped by our geography, history and society, develops, and is the world's leading intellectual resource, can become the basis for new positions for planning (Young, 2008). The culture that developed here gives an indication of a new position in spatial planning, especially rural spatial planning in the Cirebon Region.

### Spread of Spatial Changes 2002-2020 Buntet Islamic Boarding School Area

The Buntet Islamic Boarding School provided encouragement for spatial changes in Buntet Village, Munjul Village and Mertapada Kulon Village. When using the Geospatial Information Agency (BIG) database, it is not Mertapada Kulon Village but Jayapura Kidul Village (See figure 6). There are differences in data between BIG, the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) and the districts. This study uses a map database issued by BIG. Thus, the Buntet Islamic Boarding School Area covers Buntet Village, Munjul Village and Jayapura Kidul Village.



**Figure 6.** The position of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School in the villages according to the Geospatial Information Agency map and the results of Field Checks

By using the Arch GIS software, you can see changes in the space in the Buntet Islamic Boarding School Area from 2002 -2020. The growth of the built space follows the buildings that have been formed before. These buildings are buildings dominated by pesantren activities. The dominant growth in space occurred in the 2002-2012 period. The location of the growth ties the pesantren buildings. Indications of this growth were triggered by Islamic Boarding School activities. Further details can be seen in Figure 7.

The growth of space to form an Educational Area of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School is the growth of space due to culture. As a result, the growth of this space has changed the rural



cultural landscape space into the Buntet Islamic Boarding School Educational Area. Changes in village landscape space, especially the function of agriculture into an educational area, can be identified from Figure 7. Changes in the village landscape are generally due to economic factors (Zhang et al., 2019).

Changes in the village landscape at the location of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School tend to be due to a culture that has been rooted for more than 273 years. Indications of patterned changes from buildings that appear in the vicinity of existing buildings sporadically follow the pattern of previous buildings. Culture is an innovative planning approach. The emergence of cultural analysis as a means of explaining planning ideas and as a basis for comparing planning frameworks and processes (Taylor, 2013). The cultural planning model provides researchers with a conceptual framework for analyzing spatial planning practices contextually (Wang, 2020).

We argue that a society should maintain different cultures with the aim to broaden its diversity of values, ideas, beliefs and traditions. Some research also raises the point that heritage conservation contributes to a higher degree of creativity and economic development (Yung et al., 2017). The Buntet Islamic Boarding School forms a strong correlation between culture, space and forms anthropological history in the countryside. The space that forms a special relationship between the settlers and the pesantren room. An awareness of historical and cultural values (Ruggiero et al., 2019).



**Figure 7.** Spatial Changes in 2002-2020 in the Buntet Islamic Boarding School Area

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion from the description above, it can be concluded that according to the purpose of this research is to explore the spread of education at the Buntet Islamic Boarding School in rural areas that the Buntet Islamic Boarding School has experienced a long journey of up to 273 years and has developed into an education that is able to maintain its existence. The educational journey from idealism to pragmatism is in accordance with the times but still maintains the ancient cultural values that characterize pesantren. The Buntet Islamic Boarding School has also spread from one Buntet Village to an educational area covering three villages. Another spread is a change in space triggered by the Islamic boarding school culture where sporadic growth follows the sohibul area and pagersari space. This finding has implications that spatial planning, especially in rural areas, can take the example of the Buntet Islamic Boarding School which can trigger rural growth.

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