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AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY AT HIDAYATUL FAIZIEN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL, GARUT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the implementation of character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School in Garut which combines formal and non-formal curriculum in shaping students' character. This research uses a qualitative approach, observation methods, and in-depth interviews with pesantren administrators and teachers. The results showed that character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School was carried out through an exemplary approach, strengthening moral values, and disciplinary training. The ustadz acts as a behavior model that shows discipline and responsibility, which is then imitated by the santri in everyday life. In addition, special programs such as Ta'lim wa Tarbiyah and cooperation activities strengthen moral and social values in santri. The effect of this character education is seen in the social attitudes of santri, who are more tolerant, empathetic, and have high social responsibility. In conclusion, an integrated approach that includes moral knowledge, feelings, and actions at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School has holistically shaped students' character. This study suggests that the character education model in this pesantren can be applied in other educational institutions to build the character of the younger generation with integrity.

A. INTRODUCTION

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The discourse of formalistic Islamic education with the main variant of teaching and learning activities cannot be separated from the issue of curriculum as an innovative entity that undergoes continuous change following the current development of the times, where this is a necessity in the scope of social reality as a natural law that needs to be addressed flexibly. So far, the discourse of Islamic education is thick with normative-theological nuances, with more or less ignoring the socio-historical dimension. To borrow Thomas Kuhn (2012) conceptually, Islamic education may have been transformed into an established 'normal science' free from criticism. To borrow Paulo Freire's (1968) it must be integrated between theory and practice.

Education, or *tarbiyah*, has the basic meaning of 'raising'. Education, therefore, begins with nurturing and enhancing the human potentials of each person that are rooted in God's design for humans and which are prepared to be able to carry out humanitarian tasks (Nurcholis Madjid 1998). Therefore, education in the meaning of *tarbiyah* rests on the fundamental view. Firstly, humans already have the seeds of goodness and truth; secondly, humans tend to instinctively desire to bring up or express these seeds into reality in trees that produce fragrance and useful fruit; thirdly, because at the beginning of their development, humans are influenced by physical sensations (*urges*) and the habits of society, the seeds of goodness are forgotten (Tafsir 2003). Therefore, the task of education is to 'improve' or 'make human potential higher'. Alternatively, what was originally just a seed is nurtured and cared for to become fragrant and fruitful with many benefits.

Education is specialised only for humans, according to Al-Attas (1992). This statement indicates that Islamic education philosophically must have a clear and firm conception of man. According to Langgulung (2003), the purpose of Islamic education is the purpose of human life itself, as implied in Q.S. al-Dzariyat (51): 56.

Pesantren is an Indonesian Islamic educational institution that aims to explore Islamic religious knowledge and practice it as a guide to daily life (*tafaqquh fi al-din*) by emphasising the importance of morals in social life (Daulay 2001). Pesantren is a unique educational model owned by Indonesia. One of the advantages of pesantren lies in its ability to create a universal and fair attitude to life for all students. Thus, the santri become more independent and do not depend on specific individuals or community institutions. In addition, pesantren cannot be separated from the community (Anwar and Rosyad 2021).

Dhofier (1994) categorised pesantren into two variants based on his study on the inclusiveness of pesantren in social change. The first variant is *salafiah* pesantren, which maintains the tradition of teaching classical Islamic books (*turrats*) as the main focus of education. The classroom system (*madrasah*) supports the sorogan teaching system practised in these traditional Islamic educational institutions without providing general education. Meanwhile, the second variant is *khalafiyah* pesantren, which has adopted the classical system (*madrasah*) and integrated with formal education in public schools.

The typological classification of pesantren is divided into three; traditional (*salaf* or *salafiyah*), modern, and comprehensive-integrated (Ishaq 2018). In fact, in its development, the typology of pesantren developed based on the ideological construction of kiai and their followers, such as research (Bruinessen 1999; Bubalo and Fealy 2007; N. Hasan 2022; Hefner and Zaman 2010), which concluded that there are new variants of Salafi and scriptualist pesantren in Indonesia.

Changes in the pattern and system of education in pesantren are a response to the modernisation of Islamic education and socio-economic changes in society. Azyumardi Azra (1999) suggested four forms of pesantren responses to the modernisation of Islamic education: First, the renewal of the substance or content of pesantren education by including general and vocational subjects. Second, methodological reforms, such as using the classical system and grading in teaching. Third, institutional reforms, such as changes in pesantren leadership and diversification of educational institutions. Fourth, the renewal of educational functions that also include socio-economic functions.

The ability of pesantren to continue to exist and be recognised as part of the national education system is inseparable from the development of the education management system carried out so far. According to Prasojo and Sudiyono (2011), the success of an education system, including pesantren, is determined by the level of public interest in the educational institution. An education system is considered successful in facing the challenges of the times if it can answer the needs of students and develop their abilities according to individual tendencies, follow the development of science and technology, and meet the needs of national development (Masruri, Ali, and Rosadi 2021; Ulfah and Anwar 2024).

Education must be returned to its original purpose, namely shaping the morals of students. Therefore, it is important to have a source of knowledge based on the Qur'an and hadith. The Qur'an and hadith aim to develop and foster Islamic values (morals) based on the behaviour of the Prophet. In his research, Sukardi (2016) sees that from an Islamic perspective, character education is juxtaposed with moral education.

Islamic boarding schools are important in religious education and national character building. In Indonesia, pesantren is a place for teaching religious knowledge and a centre for character development that can instil Islamic values, independence, and social responsibility. Khalafiyah pesantren, which refers to a type of pesantren that combines the pesantren tradition with the formal education system, is a relevant educational model for facing the challenges of modernity, especially in shaping the strong and noble character of santri (M. Hasan 2018).

One prominent Khalafiyah pesantren in West Java is Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School in Garut. As an educational institution that focuses on character development, Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School has a mission to produce students with firm religious knowledge and life skills per Islamic values. In the context of character education, Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School offers a structured and systematic educational method to instil Islamic values, such as discipline, exemplary, and responsibility, through various daily activities in the pesantren environment (Purwanto et al. 2020).

Character education is a planned process to instil moral, ethical, and social values to form individuals with good behaviour and strong personalities. Character education is often considered a holistic educational approach that focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on affective and psychomotor aspects, thus producing individuals who can coexist with society in harmony and have high social responsibility (Lickona 2013).

In his theory, Lickona (2013) explains that character education should involve three important components: moral knowledge, feeling, and action. Moral knowledge includes understanding the moral principles underlying good and bad values. The moral feeling is the emotional aspect that makes a person feel compelled to act by these values.

In contrast, moral action is the realisation of ethical behaviour in everyday life. These three components must be instilled in an integrated manner in order to form a complete character.

The theory of character education was also developed by Thomas Lickona, who underlined the important role of the environment in the character-building process. Lickona (2013) emphasises that a supportive social environment, such as family, school and community, is a factor that determines the success of character education. Educational institutions, especially schools, are responsible for creating a conducive climate for student character development. As a religious-based educational institution, Pesantren has the advantage of creating an environment that allows character cultivation to be carried out intensively through continuous supervision and social interaction.

Several research results relate to character education in khalafiyah pesantren. According to research by Azizah, Muchtar, and Putra (2023), khalafiyah pesantren play an important role in character building because they teach the values of discipline, responsibility, and exemplary values through intensive supervision and guidance in daily life. This education model is expected to produce a generation that has a deep understanding of religion and the skills to contribute to society.

Character education in pesantren is carried out with a holistic approach involving spiritual, intellectual, social, and emotional aspects. This approach is by the views of Nurcholish Madjid (1997) who emphasises that education in pesantren not only equips students with religious knowledge but also forms a mature personality and integrity. According to research conducted by Mau (2024), the holistic approach applied in pesantren positively impacts the attitudes and behaviour of santri because they are formed to understand and live religious values as a guide to life.

Studies on the impact of character education in pesantren show that students who study in pesantren tend to have better social behaviour than students from other educational institutions (Abdurrahman 2016). Intensive character education, coupled with a conducive environment in pesantren, allows students to internalise the values of togetherness, empathy, and simplicity. At Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School, students are involved in various social activities that aim to increase their sense of responsibility towards others and strengthen social ties in the community.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand how character education is implemented in Khalafiyah Islamic boarding schools, especially in Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School. Amid the times and the influx of global influences that can shift local cultural values, the existence of pesantren as a bastion of morality becomes increasingly significant. This research is important to examine the extent to which Islamic boarding schools, through their educational methods, can maintain these values and integrate them with relevant modern life skills (Mukti, Irpani, and Tabroni 2022). By understanding the practice of character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School, this research is expected to prepare character education models that can be applied in other Islamic boarding schools to answer the challenges of the globalisation era. In addition, this research is also expected to provide new insights into the effectiveness of character education in khalafiyah pesantren in shaping religious, independent, and social individuals.

B. METHOD

This research is qualitative, attempting to present the data obtained in a descriptive form and examining the problem at the time the research was conducted. The qualitative method is based on the philosophy of positivism and is used to research scientific objects where the researcher is the key instrument (Sugiyono 2016).

The data sources include documents, recordings, archives, interview results, direct observation, participant observation, and physical devices such as videos and images. The data used consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data includes information about character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School in Garut. Secondary data includes supporting data that helps understand and analyse the phenomenon under study (Creswell 2014; Flick 2009).

The data collection for this research was selective; only data relevant to the research were collected. The data collection methods include documentation, observation, and interviews. Through these methods, the researcher tried to explore the information needed to understand character education in Hidayatul Faizien Garut Islamic boarding school.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Character Education at Hidayatul Faizien Garut Islamic Boarding School

Hidayatul Faizien Garut Islamic Boarding School implements character education by combining formal and non-formal curriculum designed to shape students' character. Based on observation data and interviews with pesantren administrators, character education at Hidayatul Faizien is delivered through daily activities oriented towards moral development, discipline, and responsibility. One of the leading practices carried out is the integration of Islamic values in the daily routine of santri, such as the obligation to pray in congregation, Al-Qur'an reading activities, and religious discussions every week.

The observation results show that pesantren apply character-building methods through three main approaches: exemplary behaviour, moral reinforcement, and discipline training. The ustadz and kyai in the pesantren act as behavioural models for the santri regarding discipline, diligence, and noble morals. Students who see direct examples from teachers tend to imitate these attitudes and behaviours, as explained in Bandura's (1986) social learning theory. In addition, strengthening moral values is done through intensive advice and guidance by patient caregivers who teach the importance of integrity and social responsibility.

In addition to the worship routine, Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School also applies a parenting method oriented towards exemplary. Ustadz Maulana, one of the teachers, revealed that santri are greatly influenced by the attitudes and behaviour of the ustadz, who are their role models. He added that all teachers and caregivers of the pesantren try to display behaviour that is by Islamic teachings, such as simplicity and honesty. According to social learning theory (Bandura 1986) observation of respected models is very effective in instilling character values, and the interview results show that this method is quite successful in Hidayatul Faizien Pesantren.

Character education at Hidayatul Faizien is also supported by a unique programme called Ta'lim wa Tarbiyah, a weekly session designed to strengthen Santri's understanding of the importance of noble morals and Islamic values. This programme

invites students to discuss various social issues and how Islam recommends the right attitude in dealing with them. Another approach this pesantren applies is moral strengthening through supervision and educational sanctions. Ustadz Fikri, one of the pesantren administrators, explained that if students violate the rules, such as being late for congregational prayer activities, they will be given sanctions in the form of social work or special warnings. This method is applied to show santri that the consequences of their actions are important but still in the frame of learning and guidance.

Social interaction in the pesantren is also encouraged to create an environment that supports character building. Each santri is organised in small groups called halaqah, where they live together and are responsible for the cleanliness and order of their residence. Ustadz Ridwan explained that the halaqah system teaches santri to look after themselves and helps them form a sense of caring for others.

Character education at Hidayatul Faizien Garut Islamic Boarding School can be analysed using the theory of character education developed by Thomas Lickona (2013) underlines that effective character education must involve three main components: moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. At Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School, the three components are integrated into various activities carried out by students regularly. First, the moral knowledge component is instilled through formal and non-formal learning, including understanding good and bad values according to Islamic teachings. Through intensive religious teaching, students obtain a clear foundation of moral knowledge regarding the principles recommended in Islamic life.

Secondly, moral feelings are developed through activities encouraging students to internalise the values taught. At Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School, students are taught to feel the values of discipline, simplicity, and honesty in everyday life, both through worship activities and social interactions with fellow students and teachers. According to Lickona (2013), this moral feeling is significant because it forms an inner motivation that makes a person feel compelled to act by moral values. This can be seen from the atmosphere in pesantren that supports the emotional involvement of students in religious and social activities so that these moral feelings are formed naturally through the experiences experienced by students every day.

Third, moral action is manifested in students' actual behaviour through various activities in the pesantren environment. At Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School, this moral action is seen in the implementation of disciplined worship and the involvement of students in social activities, such as cooperation and concern for others. Consistent moral actions reflect the understanding and moral feelings that have been embedded previously, showing that the implementation of character education in this pesantren is integrated by Lickona's theory. The three components are taught theoretically and practised in daily life, thus forming the character of students who are intact and have integrity.

Character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School is designed systematically and integrated, covering spiritual, social, and moral aspects. The pesantren caregiver mentioned that this approach is practical in shaping the character of santri, especially in the aspects of discipline and responsibility. This result shows that the method applied at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School is by the theory of character education, which requires integrating moral knowledge, feelings, and actions to form individuals with strong and responsible character.

The Effect of Character Education on Santri's Social Attitude

Character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School affects moral development and improves the social attitudes of santri in everyday life. Based on interviews with ustadz, it was found that students who study at this pesantren show a more tolerant, disciplined, and caring attitude towards their social environment. Most of the santri stated that they learnt to live together, be responsible for others, and help each other daily.

The results showed that character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School significantly impacts students' social attitudes. In an interview with Ustadz Arief, he stated that students at Hidayatul Faizien show a more caring attitude towards others and have a high sense of solidarity. 'Our students are always taught to pay attention not only to themselves, but also to their friends. This makes them more sensitive to the needs of others,' he explains. This empathetic attitude can be seen in various social activities held at the pesantren, such as working together to clean the pesantren environment every week.

This cooperation activity not only aims to maintain cleanliness but also as a means of strengthening social relations between students. According to Ustadz Arief, this activity is a moment for santri to work together and learn to appreciate each individual's contribution. 'In gotong royong, they learn that everyone has an important role. No job is lower than another, all complement each other,' he added. This attitude reflects the positive influence of the character education approach on the development of Santri's social attitudes.

Furthermore, the pesantren caregiver also stated that students at Hidayatul Faizien can adapt to differences. Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School is inhabited by students who come from various regions with diverse cultural backgrounds. Santri is trained to appreciate these differences through various discussion activities and lectures that emphasise the importance of tolerance and respect for differences. In addition, the social attitude of the students is also improved through social service activities held by the pesantren every month. Santri, and caregivers, visit communities around the pesantren to carry out social activities, such as distributing necessities and health services. According to Ustadz Fikri, this activity aims to foster social awareness and empathy of santri towards the surrounding community. 'We want santri to have a sense of responsibility for the surrounding environment and learn to make a real contribution to society,' he said.

In the pesantren environment, santri are also given the opportunity to develop leadership skills through the santri coaching and organisation programme. Some santri are appointed as small group leaders responsible for coordinating daily activities, such as picket schedules and religious activities. This exercise helps santri develop an attitude of responsibility and good communication skills.

Character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School also significantly impacts students' social attitudes, which can be analysed with the concept of social environment. According to Lickona (2013), a supportive social environment is a key factor in the success of character education. In this pesantren, the environment is created to support positive character building through interactions with teachers and fellow students. The pesantren environment encourages santri to respect and help each other, thus creating a social climate conducive to forming good social attitudes, such as empathy, solidarity, and responsibility for others.

This communal pesantren environment creates a strong emotional bond among the santri, which is the basis for developing moral feelings, especially in social care. Thus, santri more easily internalises the values that support a harmonious social life. These moral feelings become a driving force for santri to behave by the values they have absorbed, such as helping friends in need and sharing in togetherness.

The last component of Lickona's theory, namely moral action, can be seen in the social attitudes of students in this pesantren. Character education implemented at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School is proven to produce individuals who not only understand and feel moral values, but are also able to show positive social attitudes in real life. This can be seen from the behaviour of santri, who are active in social activities inside and outside the pesantren. Santri, who have formed their character through this integrated education system, tend to show positive social attitudes, such as respecting differences and maintaining harmony.

Character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School reflects a comprehensive and integrated approach to instilling character values in students. By combining moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions, as well as creating a supportive social environment, this pesantren succeeds in forming santri who have good social attitudes and can apply character values in their daily relationships.

Character education at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School has a positive effect on students' social attitudes. Through intensive social interactions and activities that focus on developing empathy, tolerance, and social responsibility, Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School shapes santri into individuals with good character. These results indicate that the character education approach applied in this pesantren can be developed and applied in other educational institutions to form a young generation with noble character and care for others.

D. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of character education at Hidayatul Faizien Garut Islamic Boarding School is proven to be effective in shaping the character of santri through a combination of formal and non-formal curriculum that includes aspects of knowledge, feelings, and moral actions analysed based on Lickona's theory exemplary, strengthening moral values and discipline of students in daily routines show that the Hidayatul Faizien pesantren environment has created a learning climate conducive to internalising moral and social values. The implications of the results of this study indicate that other educational institutions can adapt an integrated character education approach in pesantren to form a generation with good character and social responsibility. However, this study has limitations, which do not include aspects of the influence of character education in pesantren on the behaviour of santri outside the pesantren environment, so it is recommended for further research involving longitudinal studies related to the long-term impact of this pesantren character education.

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