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HOLISTIC CHARACTER EDUCATION AT KHALAFIYAH ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL: AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH IN MATHLAUL HUDA CIPARAY ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the implementation of character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda Ciparay, which combines formal and non-formal curriculum in shaping the character of students. This research uses a qualitative approach with observation methods and in-depth interviews with pesantren administrators and teachers. The results showed that character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda was carried out through the exemplary approach, strengthening moral values, and disciplinary training. The ustadz acts as a model of behaviour that shows discipline and responsibility, which is then imitated by the santri in their daily lives. In addition, special programmes such as Ta'lim wa Tarbiyah and mutual cooperation activities strengthen moral and social values in santri. The influence of this character education can be 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 Mathlaul Huda Islamic Boarding School has succeeded in shaping the character of students holistically. This research suggests that the character education model in this pesantren can be applied in other educational institutions as an effort to build the character of the younger generation with integrity.

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A. INTRODUCTION

The discourse on 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 era. 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 very thick with normative-theological nuances, with more or less ignoring the socio-historical dimension. Borrowing the term Thomas Kuhn (1970), Islamic education conceptually may have been transformed into an established "*normal science*", and free from criticism. Borrowing Paulo Freire's term (1968) must be integrated between theory and practice.

Education, or *tarbiyah*, has the basic meaning of "improving". Education, then, begins with the nurturing and enhancing of each person's human potential which is rooted in God's own *design* for human beings, and which prepares them to be able to carry out humanitarian tasks (Madjid, 1998). Education in the meaning of *tarbiyah*, therefore, stands on the basic view that. *Firstly*, humans already have the contents or seeds of goodness and truth; *secondly*, humans tend to instinctively desire to bring out or express these seeds into reality, in trees that produce fragrance and useful fruits; *thirdly*, because at the beginning of their development humans are influenced by sensations (impulses) of the body 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". Or what was originally just a seed is nurtured and cared for so that it becomes fragrant and fruitful with many benefits.

Education is something special only for humans Al-Attas (1992). This statement indicates that Islamic education philosophically should have a clear and firm conception of man. The purpose of Islamic education according to Hasan Langgalung (1986) is the purpose of human life itself, as implied in Q.S. al-Dazriyat (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 equitable attitude to life for all students. Thus, the students become more independent and do not depend on certain individuals or community institutions (Wahid, 1999). In addition, pesantren cannot be separated from society (Anwar & Rosyad, 2021).

Dhofier (1994) categorises pesantren into two variants based on his study of the inclusiveness of pesantren in social change. The first variant is called Salafiah pesantren, which maintains the tradition of teaching classical Islamic books (*turats*) as the main focus of education. The class system (madrasah) is used to support the sorogan teaching system practised in these traditional Islamic learning institutions, without providing general education. Meanwhile, the second variant is the 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 constructionism of kiai and their followers, such as research (Bruinessen, 1999; Bubalo

& Fealy, 2007; Hasan, 2022; Hefner & Zaman, 2010) , which concluded that there were 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) suggests four forms of pesantren response to the modernisation of Islamic education, namely: *First*, the renewal of the substance or content of pesantren education by including general and vocational subjects. *Second*, methodological reforms, such as the use of classical systems and grading in teaching. *Third*, institutional renewal, such as changes in pesantren leadership and diversification of educational institutions. *fourth*, renewal of educational functions to 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 that has been carried out so far. According to Prasodjo et al., (1975) the success of an education system, including boarding schools, is determined by the level of public interest in these educational institutions. An education system is considered successful in facing the challenges of the times if it is able to respond to 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 et al., 2021; Suherman & Cipta, 2024) .

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

Islamic boarding schools play a crucial role in religious education and national character building. In Indonesia, pesantren is not only a place for teaching religious knowledge, but also a centre for character development that is able to 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 education model in facing the challenges of modernity, especially in shaping the strong and noble character of santri (Hasan, 2019).

One of the prominent Khalafiyah pesantren in West Java is Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda in Ciparay. As an educational institution that focuses on character development, Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda has a mission to produce students who not only have strong religious knowledge, but also have life skills that are in accordance with Islamic values. In the context of character education, Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda 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 (Hakim & Priyono, 2020).

Character education is a planned process of instilling moral, ethical and social values aimed at shaping individuals who behave well and have a strong personality. 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 are able to 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, moral feelings, and moral action. Moral knowledge involves understanding the moral principles that underlie good and bad values. Moral feelings are the emotional aspects that make a person feel compelled to act according to these values, while 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, have a great responsibility to create a conducive climate for student character development. Pesantren, as religious-based educational institutions, have the advantage of creating an environment that allows character cultivation to be carried out intensively through continuous supervision and social interaction.

There are several research results that relate character education in khalafiyah pesantren. Based on research Azizah et al. (2023) Khalafiyah pesantren play an important role in character building, because they teach the values of discipline, responsibility, and exemplary through intensive supervision and guidance in daily life. This education model is expected to produce a generation that not only has a deep understanding of religion, but also the skills to contribute to society.

Character education in pesantren is carried out with a holistic approach, which involves spiritual, intellectual, social, and emotional aspects. This approach is in accordance with the views of Nurcholish Madjid(1997) who emphasises that education in pesantren is not only to equip students with religious knowledge, but also to form a mature personality and integrity. According to research conducted by Mau (2024) the holistic approach applied in pesantren has a positive impact on 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 Islamic boarding schools show that students who study in pesantren tend to have better social behaviour compared to students from other educational institutions (Abdurrahman, 2016) . Intensive character education, coupled with a conducive environment in pesantren, allows santri to internalise the values of togetherness, empathy, and simplicity. At Pondok Pesantren Mathlul Huda, santri 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 Pondok Pesantren Mathlul Huda. In the midst of the times and the influx of global influences that can shift local cultural values, the existence of Islamic boarding schools 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, are able to maintain these values and integrate them with relevant modern life skills (Mukti et al., 2022) . By understanding the practice of character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlul Huda, this research is expected to contribute to the preparation of character education models that can be applied in other Islamic boarding schools, in order to

answer the challenges of the globalisation era. In addition, this research is also expected to be able to provide new insights into the effectiveness of character education in Khalafiyah pesantren in forming religious, independent, and social individuals.

B. METHOD

This research is a qualitative study that tries to pour the data obtained in a descriptive form aimed at examining the problem at the time the research was conducted. Qualitative methods are based on the philosophy of positivism, used to examine the conditions of scientific objects where the researcher is the key instrument (Sugiyono, 2016) .

The data sources used 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 Mathlaul Huda Ciparay Islamic Boarding School. Secondary data includes supporting data that helps understand and analyse the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2009) .

Data collection for this research was selective, only data that was relevant to the research was collected. The data collection methods used include documentation, observation, and interviews (Flick, 2009) . The researcher tried to explore the information needed to understand character education at Mathlaul Huda Ciparay Islamic boarding school, through these methods.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Character Education at Mathlaul Huda Ciparay Islamic Boarding School

Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda in Ciparay implements character education by combining formal and non-formal curricula designed to shape the character of santri. Based on observation data and interviews with pesantren administrators, character education at Mathlaul Huda is delivered through daily activities oriented towards moral development, discipline, and responsibility. One of the main 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 implement character building methods through three main approaches: *modelling*, *moral reinforcement*, and disciplinary training. The ustadz and kyai in pesantren act as behavioural models for santri in terms of discipline, diligence, and noble morals. Students who see direct examples from the 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 pesantren caregivers, who teach the importance of integrity and social responsibility.

In addition to the routine of worship, Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda also applies a parenting method that is 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 in accordance with 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 at Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda.

Character education at Mathlaul Huda is also supported by a special programme called *Ta'lim wa Tarbiyah*, which is a weekly session designed to strengthen students' understanding of the importance of noble morals and Islamic values. In this programme, students are invited to discuss various social problems and how Islam recommends the right attitude in dealing with them. Another approach adopted in this pesantren is *moral reinforcement* through supervision and educational sanctions. Ustadz Fikri, a pesantren administrator, explained that if there are students who break the rules, such as being late for congregational prayer activities, they are given sanctions in the form of social work or special reminders. This method is applied to show santri that the consequences of their actions are important, but still within the frame of learning and guidance.

Social interaction within the pesantren is also encouraged to create an environment that supports character building. Each santri is organised into small groups called halaqah, where they live together and are responsible for the cleanliness and orderliness of their space. Ustadz Ridwan explained that the halaqah system not only teaches santri to take care of themselves, but also helps them form a sense of caring for others.

Character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda Ciparay can be analysed using the theory of character education developed by Thomas Lickona. Lickona(2013) underlines that effective character education must involve three main components: moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. At Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda, these three components are integrated in various activities carried out by students regularly. *First*, the moral knowledge component is instilled through formal and non-formal learning which includes an understanding of 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.

Second, moral feelings, are developed through activities that encourage students to internalise the values taught. At Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda, 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 very important because it forms an inner motivation that makes a person feel compelled to act in accordance with moral values. This can be seen from the atmosphere in pesantren that supports the emotional involvement of santri in religious and social activities, so that these moral feelings are formed naturally through the experiences experienced by santri every day.

Third, moral action, manifested in the real behaviour of students through various activities in the pesantren environment. At Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda, this moral action can be seen in the implementation of disciplined worship and the involvement of students in social activities, such as mutual 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 carried out in an integrated manner according to Lickona's theory. These three components are not only taught theoretically, but also practised in daily life, thus forming a complete and integrity character of the santri.

Character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda is designed systematically and integrated to cover spiritual, social, and moral aspects. The pesantren caregivers mentioned that this approach is effective in shaping the character of the santri, especially in the aspects of discipline and responsibility. This result shows that the method applied at Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda is in accordance with the theory of character education which requires integrating moral knowledge, feelings, and actions to form individuals with strong character and responsibility.

The Impact of Character Education on Santri's Social Attitudes

Character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda not only affects moral development, but also improves the social attitudes of santri in daily life. Based on interviews with ustadz, it was found that santri 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 in their daily lives.

The results showed that character education at Mathlaul Huda Islamic Boarding School has a significant impact on the social attitudes of students. In an interview with Ustadz Arief, he stated that students at Mathlaul Huda show a more caring attitude towards others and have a high sense of solidarity. "Our students are always taught to not only pay attention 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 gotong royong activity is not only aimed at maintaining cleanliness, but also as a means of strengthening social relations between students. According to Ustadz Arief, the activity is a moment for students to work together and learn to appreciate the contribution of each individual. "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 students' social attitudes.

Furthermore, the pesantren caregiver also stated that the santri at Mathlaul Huda have a good ability to adapt to differences. Pondok Pesantren Mathlaul Huda is inhabited by students from various regions with diverse cultural backgrounds. Santri are trained to respect these differences through various discussion activities and lectures that emphasise the importance of tolerance and respect for diversity. In addition, students' social attitudes are also improved through community service activities held by the pesantren every month. Santri together with caregivers visit communities around the pesantren to carry out social activities, such as food distribution and health services. According to Ustadz Fikri, this activity aims to foster students' social awareness and empathy towards the surrounding community. "We want santri to have a sense of responsibility for their surroundings 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 coaching programs and santri organisations, where some santri are appointed as small group leaders responsible for coordinating daily activities,

such as picket schedules and religious activities. This exercise helps santri in developing an attitude of responsibility and good communication skills.

Character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlul Huda also has a significant impact on the social attitudes of students, 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 boarding school, the environment is created to support positive character building, both 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 the formation of good social attitudes, such as empathy, solidarity, and responsibility for others.

This communal pesantren environment creates a strong emotional bond between santri, which serves as the basis for developing moral feelings, especially in the aspect of social care. Thus, santri more easily internalise values that support harmonious social life. This moral feeling becomes the driving force for santri to behave in accordance with the values they have absorbed, such as helping colleagues in need and sharing in togetherness.

The last component of Lickona's theory, moral action, can be seen in the social attitudes of students in this pesantren. Character education implemented at Mathlul Huda Islamic Boarding School is proven to be able 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, both 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 Pondok Pesantren Mathlul Huda reflects a comprehensive and integrated approach in instilling character values to 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 are able to apply character values in their daily interactions.

Character education at Pondok Pesantren Mathlul Huda has a positive effect on the social attitudes of students. Through intensive social interactions and activities that focus on developing empathy, tolerance, and social responsibility, Mathlul Huda Islamic Boarding School succeeds in shaping santri into individuals with good character. These results indicate that the character education approach applied in this pesantren has the potential to be developed and applied in other educational institutions in an effort to form a young generation with noble character and care for others.

D. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of character education at Mathlul Huda Ciparay Islamic Boarding School has proven to be effective in shaping the character of students through a combination of formal and non-formal curriculum that includes aspects of knowledge, feelings, and moral actions as analysed based on Lickona's theory (2013). Exemplary teaching, strengthening of moral values, and discipline of santri in daily routines show that the Mathlul Huda pesantren environment has succeeded in creating a learning climate conducive to the internalisation of moral and social values. The implications of these results indicate that

an integrated character education approach in pesantren can be adapted by other educational institutions to form a generation with good character and social responsibility. However, this study has limitations, namely it does not cover the aspect 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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