

## **Humanist Values in Kiai Leadership in Islamic Boarding Schools**

**Moh. Afiful Hair**

Universitas Islam Madura

E-mail: affkhir@gmail.com

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Corresponding Author: Moh. Afiful Hair

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### **Abstract**

*Pesantren has long been an Islamic educational institution in Indonesia. Of course, all of this cannot be separated from the Kiai's leadership role in it. Starting from the leadership of the charismatic Kiai, autocratic, democratic, especially humanistic leadership, all of them have an influence on the progress of the pesantren. As with Humanist leadership, with its application in a boarding school. This research uses qualitative research or more precisely mini research, which means to correlate the phenomena found with existing theories. The humanist leadership of a kiai focuses on the nature of humanity or humanity, considering students as real human beings, not as objects, let alone being made as "soldiers" in the Kiai's personal interests.*

**Keywords:** *Kiai Leadership, Humanist Leadership, Islamic Boarding School*

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the Islamic educational institutions that is a characteristic of Indonesia is Islamic boarding schools. One of the phenomena that occurs is the pesantren education system as a solution for the realization of educational products with noble hearts and good morals. This is understandable because pesantren has characteristics that allow the achievement of the goals to be achieved in education.<sup>1</sup>

In general, Islamic boarding schools are educational institutions that apply a traditional-based educational pattern (*turra al-qodimah*).<sup>2</sup> Not only that, sometimes the institution lacks human resources that contribute to the renewal and leadership pattern of Kiai which is oriented towards the main goal of education, which is to spread Islam.

Although Kiai is often connoted as a traditional group, its existence cannot be replaced by other non-formal figures.<sup>3</sup> It is undeniable that Kiai's role as a central figure in Islamic boarding schools. In fact, Kiai's vision and mission and knowledge are one of the benchmarks for community assessment. Kiai's charisma that receives support and position in the midst of community life lies in the steadiness of his attitude and quality. In addition to his excellence in the field of knowledge and personality, Kiai is also a source of funding in financing, (*budgeting*), and the management of the Islamic boarding school he leads.<sup>4</sup>

In essence, pesantren and Kiai leadership in practice both show the side of progress and setback, pesantren as an institution characterized by Indonesian.<sup>5</sup> The progress of Islamic boarding schools depends on the strength or weakness of the leadership of a Kiai. Thus this article discusses the leadership of a Kiai in the pesantren and the Humanist leadership style possessed by the Kiai in the pesantren.

## METHOD

Research methods are basically a scientific way to obtain data with specific purposes and uses. Based on this, there are four keywords that need to be considered,

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<sup>1</sup> Samsul Arifin, "Dynamics of Islamic Boarding School Education" in *FIKROTUNA journal*, Vol. 10, No. 2, (December 2019) 1274.

<sup>2</sup> Adi Ansari, "Islamic Boarding School Leadership" in *KOPERTAIS journal*, Vol. 13, No. 23 (April, 2015) 17.

<sup>3</sup> Amir Fadhilah, "Structure and Leadership Pattern of Kiai in Islamic Boarding Schools in Java" in *Hunafa journal*, vol. 8, No. 1, (June, 2011) 104.

<sup>4</sup> Atiqullah, *Collective Leadership Behavior of Islamic Boarding Schools*, (Surabaya: Pena Salsabila, 2013) 43.

<sup>5</sup> Guntur Cahaya Kesuma, "Islamic Boarding School and Kyai Leadership" in *TERAMPIL journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (June, 2014) 99.

namely scientific methods, data, goals and uses. The scientific method means that research activities are based on rational, empirical, and systematic scientific characteristics.<sup>6</sup> Based on this presentation, it can be concluded that the research method is a scientific method used to obtain data in accordance with the research study with certain purposes and uses.

The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach, which is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of speech or writing and behavior that can be observed from the subject itself.<sup>7</sup> Qualitative research is a type of research whose findings are not obtained through statistical procedures or other forms of calculation.<sup>8</sup> According to Sukmadinata, qualitative research is research that is used to describe and analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and people individually and in groups.<sup>9</sup> In qualitative research, the methods that are usually used are interviews, observations, and document utilization.<sup>10</sup>

The type of research used in this study is a Case Study. This type of case study approach is a type of approach used to investigate and understand an event or problem that has occurred by collecting various kinds of information which is then processed to get a solution so that the problem revealed can be solved. Susilo Rahardjo & Gudnanto also explained that a case study is a method to understand individuals that is carried out in an integrative and comprehensive manner in order to gain a deep understanding of the individual and the problems he faces with the aim that the problems can be solved and good self-development.<sup>11</sup>

This research was conducted with the aim of getting an in-depth overview of Humanist Values in Kiai Leadership in Islamic Boarding Schools. The object of this study is the Leadership of Kiai in Islamic Boarding Schools and the fame of a Kiai and the depth of his knowledge about Islam attracts students from distant places to come, almost all Islamic boarding schools are located in villages and there is reciprocal customs between Kyai and Santri, where the students consider Kyai as their own parents.

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<sup>6</sup>Sugiono. *"Quantitative and R&D Qualitative Research Methods"*. (Bandung: Alfabeta 2008), 30.

<sup>7</sup>Agusta, Ivanovich. *"Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis Techniques."* Center for Socio-Economic Research. Agricultural Research and Development, Bogor 27 (2003), 21.

<sup>8</sup>Imam Gunawan. *"Qualitative Research Methods, Theory and Practice"*, (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara 2013), 80.

<sup>9</sup>Nana Syaodih Sukmadinata. *"Educational Research Methods"*. (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya: 2009), 53.

<sup>10</sup>Lexy J. Moleong, *"Qualitative Research Methodology"*, (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012), 5.

<sup>11</sup> Raco, J.R. *Qualitative Research Methods: Types, Characteristics and Advantages*. (Jakarta: Grasindo 2010), 201.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Islamic Boarding Schools Historically

The history of the birth of a pesantren will not be separated from the beginning of the entry of Islam in Indonesia. Zamakhsyari in his book explained that there are three theories that are the beginning of the birth of an institution called pesantren.<sup>12</sup>

*First*, Hamzah Fansuri's Tombstone. The Indonesian-French archaeological team has been conducting research and excavations for a long time in Barus Semattra Utara. This is because, in the 9th and 14th centuries Barus was believed to be a metropolitan city. Then graves with people with the title of Sheikh were found. Not only that, Guillot and Kailus found an inscription on the tombstone of Hamzah Fansuri. This, an interesting thing, namely, Hamzah Fansuri, an archipelago cultural figure who became a figure in Barus, North Sumatra, his grave was found in the Bab al-Ma'la cemetery in Makkah. Thus, it can be ascertained that Barus, which is known as Bandar Metropolis, can also be possible to become the center of Islamic education in the archipelago.

*Second*, Islam is the majority religion of the Indonesian nation. At the beginning of the 15th century Eroopa was not the most developed region in the world, nor was it the most dynamic region. The great power that was developing in the world at that time was Islam. Indonesia was no exception at that time which had Islamic kingdoms. This is a support in the progress of Islamic education in Indonesia. For example, the students of Hamzah Fansuri such as Nuruddi ar-Raniri, Syamsuddin as-Sumatrani and Abdurrauf as-Singkili. These are Islamic education figures who have written many books.

*Third*, Wali Songo, As an educational institution unit and at the same time a da'wah institution, the pesantren was first pioneered by Shaykh Maulana Malik Ibrahim in 1399 AD which focused on the spread of Islam in Java.<sup>13</sup> From this, a walisongo was born who began to follow in the footsteps of Shaykh Maulana Malik Ibrahim to start establishing Islamic boarding schools and then Islamic boarding schools were born until now. Furthermore, it was developed by Raden Rahmat or better known as Sunan Ampel who established a pesantren in Kembangkuning with three people, namely Wiryo Suroyo, Abu Huraiah and Kiai Bangkuning.

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<sup>12</sup> Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Pesantren Tradition*, (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2011) 27.

<sup>13</sup> Abd. Halim Soebahar, *Modernization of Islamic Boarding Schools*, (Yogyakarta:LkiS, 2013) 33.

Thus, based on the theory above, it can be known that the history of the beginning of the birth of Islamic boarding schools cannot be separated from the beginning of the entry of Islam in Indonesia. Scholars from outside the archipelago established a place to settle in teaching the sciences of Islam so that this became the beginning of the birth of the term pesantren.

Not only that, before the 1960s, Islamic boarding school education centers in Indonesia were better known as pondok. The term pondok comes from the Arabic word, *funduq* which means hotel or dormitory. Meanwhile, the term pesantren is derived from the word santri with the prefix *pe* in front and the suffix *an* means where the students live.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast to the opinion of Nur Cholis Majid in his book *Bilik-Kamar Pesantren* said that the history of pesantren is not only synonymous with the meaning of Islam, but also contains the meaning of Indonesian authenticity. This is because, during the time of Hindu-Buddhist rule, there was already an institution that resembled an Islamic boarding school. So that Islam only needs to continue and Islamize existing educational institutions.<sup>15</sup>

Then pesantren, which has long been a characteristic of educational institutions in Indonesia, has important components in it. Quoting the opinion of A. Mukti Ali in his book *Abd. Halim Soebahar* explained that there are two special characteristics that pesantren have, namely physical and non-physical. For physical characteristics, the components owned by the pesantren are, Kiai, Santri, Mosque and Pondok as a place for students to live. As for the non-physical characteristics, there is a teaching of classical Islamic books by Kiai to his students.

More specifically, Dhofier explained that there are five important components of Islamic boarding schools. *First*, the Cottage. Huts or dormitories for students are a characteristic of pesantren traditions, the residence of the students is a distinctive feature that distinguishes between the traditional education system in mosques that develop in most Islamic areas in other countries.

In Java, the size of the hut depends on the number of students. Large Islamic boarding schools that have more than 3,000 students already have multi-storey buildings

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<sup>15</sup> Nurcholish Madjid, *Islamic Boarding School Rooms A Portrait of a Trip* (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat) 3.

made from walls. All of this is usually financed from students and community donations. The responsibilities of students in the establishment and maintenance of the boarding school are organized in different ways.

There are several reasons why pesantren must have a boarding house as a place for students to live, namely: the fame of a Kiai and the depth of his knowledge of Islam attract students from distant places to come, almost all pesantren are located in villages and there is a reciprocal custom between Kyai and Santri, where the students consider Kyainya as their own parents.

The importance of Islamic boarding schools as dormitories for students depends on the number of students who come from distant areas. The state of the boarding school rooms is usually very simple, they are on the floor without a mattress. The students are not allowed to live outside the pesantren complex, unless indeed the students who are in distress live in the environment around the pesantren. This is so that Kyai can supervise and control the students absolutely.

The boarding house where the students live is an important component in the pesantren, but also the main support for the pesantren to continue to develop. Although the conditions of the hut are very simple and crowded, young people who come from the countryside and leave their village for the first time to continue their studies in a new area do not need to experience difficulties in living or adjusting themselves to the new social environment.

*Second, mosques* . Mosques are one of the components that cannot be separated from Islamic boarding schools and are considered the most appropriate place to educate students, especially in the practice of five-time prayers, sermons and congregations as well as the teaching of classical books.

The position of the mosque as an educational center in the pesantren tradition is a manifestation of the traditional education system. In this case, the pesantren refers to the education system that was once practiced by the Prophet Saw who made the mosque an educational center. Even today, in areas where Muslims have not been greatly influenced by Western life, we find scholars who are full of devotion teaching students in mosques, as well as giving advice and advice to students.

Islamic boarding schools continue to maintain this tradition, the Kyai always teach their students in the mosque and consider the mosque as the most appropriate place to

instill the discipline of the students in carrying out the obligation of prayer five times, acquiring religious knowledge and other religious obligations. A Kiai who wants to develop a pesantren will usually first build a mosque near the ummahnyana. This step is usually taken on the orders of the teacher who assesses that he will be able to lead a pesantren.

*Third*, the teaching of classical Islamic books. In the past, the teaching of classical books was the only formal teaching given in the pesantren environment. The main goal is to produce students to become scholars. The students who have aspirations to become a scholar, develop their skills starting from mastering Arabic first which is guided by Kyai with the *sorogan system*.

The classical books taught in Islamic boarding schools can be classified into 8 groups of types of knowledge, namely: *nahwu shorof*, fiqh, usul fiqh, hadith, tafsir, tauhid, tasawuf, akhlak and other chapters such as *tarikh* and *balaghah*. These books include very short texts to texts consisting of thick volumes both regarding hadith, tafsir, fiqh, fiqh proposals, and Sufism. All of them can be classified into three level groups, namely: basic books, intermediate books and high books.

It should be emphasized that the traditional pesantren education system which is usually considered "static" by using *the sorogan* and *bandongan system*, in translating classical Islamic books into Javanese, in reality is not just talking *about the form* by forgetting the content) teachings contained in these books. The Kiai not only read the text but he also gave his personal views, both about the content and language of the text. In other words, the Kiai also commented on the text as their personal favorite. Therefore, these translators must master Aab grammar, literature and other branches of Islamic religious knowledge.

*Fourth*, students. Santri are students who study or study at Islamic boarding schools. The number of students is usually used as a benchmark for the extent of the development of a pesantren. According to Dhofier, students are divided into 2 types, namely *mukim* students and *kalalong students*. What is meant by *mukim* students are students who come from distant areas so that it is not possible to go back and forth, so the students live in huts or dormitories that have been provided by the pesantren. Meanwhile,

kalong students are students who live around the pesantren, so that the students only study at the pesantren and do not live or depart from their respective homes (*nyolog*).<sup>16</sup>

*Fifth*, Kiai. It is a duty or mandate that a person carries out in educating and fostering students. Not only that, Kiai is also the ideal figure for students in the process of self-development while studying at the Islamic boarding school. Kiai in a general sense is the founder and leader of the pesantren. He is known as an educated Muslim who devotes his life solely to the way of Allah by deepening and spreading the teachings of Islam through educational activities.<sup>17</sup>

### **Kiai's Leadership in Islamic Boarding Schools**

In an Islamic boarding school, which is the most essential element and has a role as the founder, development and management of the institution is Kiai. As a leader, his expertise, depth of knowledge, charisma, authority and skills are the determinants of the success or failure of an Islamic boarding school. Thus, everything depends on how the *seirang kiai* in leading an Islamic boarding school.

Thus, to achieve all of that, Kiai must have a leadership spirit so that the vision and mission of an Islamic boarding school can be achieved. Leadership is the ability to influence a group to achieve a goal.<sup>18</sup> where a Kiai must be able to influence the elements in the Islamic boarding school both to the students and the guardians of the students. This leadership spirit is what is so important for a Kiai to have in leading his pesantren. Leadership is understood as all the power and joint effort to mobilize all available resources in an organization.<sup>19</sup>

The term leadership has the origin of the word *leader*, which means to lead.<sup>20</sup> Most theories explain the definition of leadership with regard to the deliberate process of a person to emphasize his or her strong influence on others to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships within a group or see similarities.

Thus, the above leadership terms are associated with a Kiai who is actually a leader in the pesantren environment. Kiai, whose existence as a leader in the Bisi Islamic

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<sup>16</sup> Dhofier, *Islamic Boarding School Tradition*, 89.

<sup>17</sup> Abd. Halim Soebahar, *Modernization of Islamic Boarding Schools*, (Yogyakarta: LkiS, 2013) 38.

<sup>18</sup> Adi Permadi, "Analysis of Humanistic Leadership Theory on the Leadership of the Head of LKP Daun Mas Media Husda" *JIP STKIP*, Vol. 10, No. 2, (June, 2019), 76.

<sup>19</sup> Siswanto, "Quality Design of Islamic Boarding School Education" *KARSA*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (December, 2015) 267.

<sup>20</sup> Mardiyah, *Kiai's Leadership in Maintaining Organizational Culture*, (Yogyakarta: Aditya Media Publishing, 2012) 37.



boarding school is said to be unique, this is because of the duties and functions he carries. The uniqueness of Kiai as the leader of a pesantren is not only to prepare the curriculum, discipline, evaluate or carry out the teaching and learning process but he is also a coach and educator of the people and a leader in the community. Not only that, another uniqueness of the leadership of a Kiai is the charisma that he has when leading both in the pesantren and the community.

In leadership, there are various types or styles of leadership. Starting from autocratic, democratic, humanist and so on. Each style or type has weaknesses or advantages. Not only that, each type has a different placement in its application. This means that sometimes a person in leadership uses an autocratic type and sometimes uses a democratic type.

In one of the literature, it is stated that there are 4 styles of Kiai leadership, namely. *First*, religio-paternalistic *leadership* means that the relationship between students and Kiai is bound by religious values that reflect the leadership style of the Prophet. *Second*, *paternalistic-toiter leadership*, where a Kiai is once a father as well as a passive leader who frees students to be creative but sometimes authoritarian.

*Third*, legal-formal *leadership* means that Kiai or students play a role in each field and as a whole support the integrity of the institution in another sense, namely using institutional functions. *Fourth*, leadership is natural in this case, a Kiai does not open up space for thoughts related to the determination of pesantren policies, considering that it is his absolute authority.<sup>21</sup>

### **Kiai's Humanist Leadership**

From the various models or styles applied by a Kiai as a leader in an institution called a pesantren, the researcher found one of the styles or types applied by Kiai at the Ziyadatut Taqwa Islamic boarding school, namely the Humanist leadership type. In this case, a student or student at the pesantren is not made an object but a subject who also contributes to the progress of the pesantren.

Linguistically, the word *humanism* comes from the Latin *humus* which means land or earth. From the explanation above, *homo* which means human and *humanus*

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 66.

which means grounded or human, emerged.<sup>22</sup> This means that humanism is a school that centers humans above all else. This is in line with the main mission of the apostolic ministry which is sent as a blessing and a bringer of goodness to all mankind and the universe.

Quoting from Manullang in a journal written by Adi Permadi, the scope of *Human Relations* includes, the ability to communicate, the ability to motivate oneself and others, the ability to accept responsibility and lead others as well as the ability to empathize with others and understand their problems.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, if it is associated with the leadership of Kiai Humanis, it can be known that the characteristics or scope of Humanist leadership are, *first*, the ability to communicate, meaning that a Kiai must be able to communicate well with his students. Thus, the relationship between students and Kiai is getting closer and harmoniously.

*Second*, the ability to motivate oneself and others, in this case, a Kiai is able to arouse the motivation of the students by starting with self-motivation. As is the case, motivating students in congregational prayers, but before that, Esoang Kiai must arouse self-motivation in performing congregational prayers. In addition to motivating, they are also able to become figures who should be exemplified by students.

*Third*, the ability to accept responsibility and lead others. As well as educating, fostering and shaping the character of students or students, which in this case is the duties and responsibilities entrusted to Kiai. Not only that, a Kiai hatus is able to lead the students or the elements under him. Such as the ustads and administrators of Islamic boarding schools.

*Fourth*, the ability to empathize with others and understand their feelings. Yaiu is a Kiai who has a sense of empathy for others, especially for his students. Every problem that occurs to Kiai students must be sensitive and understand the problems that occur and provide solutions to these problems.

Thus, in humanist leadership, a Kiai emphasizes on humanity or humanity, considering students as truly human beings, not as objects, let alone made as "soldiers"

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<sup>22</sup> Anwar, "The Urgency of a Humanistic-Religious Approach in Fostering Students at Darul Huffadh Tuju-tuju Islamic Boarding School, Kajuara District, Bone Regency," in *al-Qayyimah journal*, vol. 2, No. 1 (June, 2019) 129.

<sup>23</sup> Adi Permadi, "Analysis of Humanistic Leadership Theory on the Leadership of the Head of LKP Daun Mas Media Husda" *JIP STKIP*, Vol. 10, No. 2, (June, 2019), 77.

in Kiai's personal interests. So that a student feels comfortable learning and free to develop his creativity in his competencies.

## **CONCLUSION**

The history of the birth of a pesantren will not be separated from the beginning of the entry of Islam in Indonesia. *First*, Hamzah Fansuri's Tombstone. *Second*, Islam is the majority religion of the Indonesian nation. *Third*, Wali Songo, as a unit of an educational institution and at the same time a da'wah institution. Scholars from outside the archipelago established a place to settle in teaching the sciences of Islam so that this became the beginning of the birth of the term pesantren.

Kiai, whose existence as a leader in the Bisi Islamic boarding school is said to be unique, this is because of the duties and functions he carries. The uniqueness of Kiai as the leader of a pesantren is not only to prepare the curriculum, discipline, evaluate or carry out the teaching and learning process but he is also a coach and educator of the people and a leader in the community. Not only that, another uniqueness of the leadership of a Kiai is the charisma that he has when leading both in the pesantren and the community.

Like Humanist leadership, in humanist leadership, a Kiai emphasizes humanity or humanity, considering students as truly human beings not as objects, let alone made as "soldiers" in Kiai's personal interests. So that a student feels comfortable learning and free to develop his creativity in his competencies.

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