

## **Kiai's Leadership Efforts in Instilling the Independent Spirit of Students at Hidayatul Mubtadi'in Sobo Guno Islamic Boarding School Mangunsuman Siman Ponorogo**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine more intensively (1) Kiai's leadership in Islamic boarding schools, (2) Kiai's efforts in instilling the spirit of independence of students, (3) The spirit of independence of students. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to describe the informant's words in writing. The type of method used is a case study, which discusses the leadership of the Kiai at the Hidayatul Mubtadi'in Islamic boarding school (PPHM) Sobo Guno in instilling a spirit of independence in his students. In presenting this research data using observation, interview and documentation techniques. The study results show that: First, Kiai's leadership at PPHM Sobo Guno uses a democratic and charismatic style. Second, various efforts are implemented by Kiai to instil a spirit of independence in his students through the formation of a management structure that involves the students; reciting the Koran and the yellow book; diniyyah madrasas; yasin, tahlil, sholawat, muhadloroh, and diba' activities; cooking pickets; daily picket; and roan (service work). Third, all students at PPHM Sobo Gono have been trained to be independent so that they are easy to organize and direct because almost all students are adults.

**Keywords:** PPHM Sobo Guno, Kiai Leadership, Student Independence

### **INTRODUCTION**

Islamic boarding school is a unique education that grows and develops in Indonesia, usually around rural communities. The existence of Islamic boarding schools has proven its independence from its first appearance until now. Since the beginning of their existence, Islamic boarding schools have had a straightforward form. The implementation of the activities was still in the mosque with only a few students, and then Islamic boarding schools were built for their residents. The three prominent roles of Islamic boarding schools are Islamic educational institutions, da'wah institutions and community empowerment institutions.

The public knows Islamic boarding schools as one the educational and religious institutions that seek to teach, spread, preserve Islamic teachings, and educate students to be ready, alert and independent. An Islamic boarding school is where students study with a Kiai to explore the primary knowledge of religious knowledge, which is coveted to become the capital for students facing life in this world and the hereafter. The main

components in a pesantren include Kiai, Students, a hostel (cottage), the study of classical Islamic books, and mosques (Rosyid, 2020).

A Kiai is the most fundamental component that has a role in establishing, growing, developing and managing an Islamic boarding school. As leaders and caregivers of Islamic boarding schools, the character and success of Islamic boarding schools are closely related to the level of depth of knowledge, charisma, authority, and skills of Kiai in managing Islamic boarding schools. Kiai plays an essential role in determining the future of Islamic boarding schools because he is the centre of their role models. Kiai's leadership style, with all its uniqueness, makes the Islamic boarding school still interesting to study its development. The existence of Islamic boarding schools is considered the most suitable to welcome the current era of globalization (Hasbullah, 1999).

Education about independence is an important thing that must be trained for students, this is because Islamic education aims to form students who can make religion a necessary element to respond to real-world challenges and solve various humanitarian problems, such as ignorance, poverty, underdevelopment, oppression and other problems. In addition, Islamic boarding schools are also expected to be able to become pioneers for the community to participate in empowerment efforts (Dhofier, 1982).

Judging from previous studies, there are many reasons why parents decide to send their children to Islamic boarding schools. There are various expectations of parents when making these decisions, namely: 1) for children to explore religious knowledge entirely and thoroughly; 2) to build the child's self-reliance spirit; 3) to increase children's self-confidence; 4) to form physically and mentally resilient; 5) to add to the community's social network; 6) to keep children away from the negative impact of promiscuity; and 7) so that children can implement and practice the knowledge they have learned in everyday life.

All parents expect the best education for their children. In this case, Kiai's leadership greatly influences his students' character development. The various expectations as mentioned above, were wholly handed over by the guardians of the santri to the Kiai, who would guide their children in the Islamic boarding school to become superior individuals and have good character. One of the Islamic boarding schools is the Hidayatul Muhtadi'in Sobo Guno Islamic Boarding School which is located on Pramuka street number 50, Mangunsuman Village, Siman District, Ponorogo Regency. With boarding, it is hoped that the students will have a spirit of independence in themselves, both physically and mentally, accompanied by a solid religious foundation.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all students undergo formal education online at Islamic boarding schools. At the time many students did not have meaningful activities, so the Kiai gave various efforts so that the students still had useful activities in their spare time. In this study, I will discuss the Kiai leadership's efforts to foster student independence at the Hidayatul Muhtadi'in Sobo Guno Islamic Boarding School Mangunsuman Siman Ponorogo. From these problems, 3 aspects will be discussed, namely 1) How is the leadership of the Kiai at the Hidayatul Muhtadi'in Sobo Guno Islamic Boarding School Mangunsuman Siman Ponorogo, 2) How is the spirit of independence of students at the Hidayatul Muhtadi'in Sobo Guno Islamic Boarding School Mangunsuman

Siman Ponorogo, 3) How is Kiai's efforts in instilling the spirit of independence of students at the Hidayatul Muftadi'in Sobo Guno Islamic Boarding School Mangunsuman Siman Ponorogo.

## **METHOD**

Qualitative research uses data collection techniques in a scientific setting to obtain descriptive data from written words or opinions from sources and observable behavior (Anggito, 2018). This qualitative research design is general and developed based on conditions in the field. Therefore, the research design must be flexible and open (Rukin, 2019).

The researchers chooses this qualitative research approach to collect data on the efforts of the kiai's leadership in instilling the spirit of independence of students at the Hidayatul Muftadi'in Sobo Guno Islamic Boarding School (PPHM Sobo Guno). This research uses a case study type, namely research carried out intensively, in detail, and explored in depth related to processes, events, and activities of one or more people in a particular organization, institution or phenomenon.

Data is essential information about the opinions of individuals used as research subjects, the results of observations and documents in the form of facts related to the research focus. In qualitative research, the data is in the form of descriptive. Data can be in the form of events or various social phenomena, which are then analyzed into various categories (Jonathan, 2006). This study's primary data sources are words, actions and documents related to research. The data sources came from Kiai, administrators and students at PPHM Sobo Guno.

Data collection techniques are the most crucial part of research because the primary purpose of research is to obtain data so that there is no confusion during the process of compiling research results. In this study, researchers used the following techniques: 1) Observation, namely collecting data directly from the research field. The researcher used participant observation, namely exploring and reviewing activities held at PPHM Sobo Guno, such as searching, observing, and collecting data about the Kiai's efforts in instilling the spirit of independence of students at the Islamic Boarding School. 2) Interview is a method of collecting data by asking something from someone selected as a respondent. The researcher conducted unstructured interviews with several respondents involved in the research: Kiai, administrators, and students at PPHM Sobo Guno. 3) Documentation collects data from the research field, consisting of documents and recordings. Researchers took documentation in the form of history, vision and mission, organizational structure, photos of Kiai's activities with students, and other related data.

Data analysis is a process in research that is carried out after all the data the researcher needs to solve the problem under study has been obtained. Accuracy in concluding depends on the accuracy and sharpness of researchers in using analytical tools (Fahchrozi, 2020). The data analysis model used in this study is the Miles and Huberman model, they agree that the activity for qualitative data analysis is carried out interactively and runs successively until it is complete, until it produces saturated data. Four activities

are carried out to analyze the data, including data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing/verification (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data collection is a fundamental activity in any research. In this study, data collection was carried out by observation, interviews and documentation at PPHM Sobo Guno. The next step is data reduction. Data reduction is summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the main things, and finding themes and patterns. In this study, the data that was reduced was various data resulting from observations and interviews from research conducted at PPHM Sobo Guno. The next step is to present the data. Presentation of data in qualitative research can be realized in the form of brief descriptions, charts, flowcharts, relationships between categories, etc. The fourth step is concluding and verifying. In qualitative research, conclusions may be able to answer the formulation of the problem at the beginning but also not because the formulation of the problem is still temporary and will continue to develop after the research plunges into the field.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Kiai Leadership Style at Hidayatul Mubtadi'in Islamic Boarding School Sobo Guno Mangunsuman Siman Ponorogo**

The word leadership is taken from the word "lead", which includes two essential purposes namely, the leader acts as the subject and the leader acts as the object (Purba, 2021). According to Edwin A. Locke, leadership is persuading or influencing individuals to realise a step towards a common goal (Soebahar, 2013). Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman argue that a leader must have the primary skills, inspiring, having high integrity, studying and solving problems; being professional; etc (Hutahaeen, 2021). So it can be concluded that leadership is a process of influencing the behaviour of others to direct potential, inspire and create a vision for group members to work together in all situations to achieve organizational goals.

The form of leadership in Islamic boarding schools that each Kiai applies is not always the same. This can be demonstrated by several leadership models that Kiai has applied from generation to generation. However, there is a certain charisma that Kiai shows while leading a boarding school. The leadership models include the democratic, authoritarian, free, paternalistic and charismatic models (Iani, 2019).

Each Kiai tends to have his leadership style in leading his students. This can be reflected in how the Kiai manages the Islamic boarding school and its contents. This style can attach to Kiai's soul and character in his leadership. Likewise with Kiai Syafi'i Ahmad as the leader and caregiver of PPHM Sobo Guno, he applies a democratic and charismatic leadership style in managing and developing the Islamic boarding school.

This democratic leadership model guides and regulates the course of deliberation and provides freedom for everyone to express their ideas. A leader expresses his opinions and suggestions through the media and does not have the right to impose his decisions. This is based on the results of research showing that Kiai Syafi'i Ahmad gives flexibility to his students, meaning that he gives authority to the board of the Islamic boarding school to help run and develop the organization of the Islamic boarding school while still in line with the teachings of the Kiai. And if there is a problem, Kiai also includes the management

to get a solution so that the problem can be solved. In addition to deliberation, Kiai always accepts suggestions and opinions put forward by the management, who are constructive to achieving the vision and mission of the Islamic boarding school properly.

PPHM Sobo Guno vision is "To become a superior boarding school by realizing a balance of Islamic scientific abilities and social skills". To achieve this vision, PPHM Sobo Guno carries out the following missions: creating students who master and understand the traditions of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah; create students who have good morals, have a starting character and have an Islamic spirit; and create students who have strong social skills and high social awareness.

Kiai Syafi'i Ahmad also has a charismatic leadership style. In the opinion of Sondang P. Sigian that charismatic leadership is a leadership style with characteristics with a beautiful appeal so that it can get followers whose numbers are sometimes enormous. It can also be said that a charismatic leader is someone who is admired by many followers, even though his followers cannot always explain clearly why that person is admired (Hafizi, 2021).

This can be demonstrated by the continued existence of PPHM Sobo Guno from 1995 until now. The number of alums at the Islamic boarding school has reached more than hundreds of people, and each year the number of students is also continually increasing. The Kiai often also has guests from various regions, both from Ponorogo and outside Ponorogo, who aim to ask for prayer and hope for the Kiai's blessing.

### **Kiai's Efforts in Instilling the Independent Spirit of Santri at Hidayatul Mubtadi'in Islamic Boarding School Sobo Guno Mangunsuman Siman Ponorogo**

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, the effort can be interpreted as an effort to achieve a goal, solve a problem, or find a way out (Indrawan, n.d.). According to Poerwadarminta, the effort is an attempt to convey intent, reason and overview (Salim, 2005). So it can be concluded that the effort is an effort that must be carried out by someone to achieve the desired goal.

To instil a spirit of independence in students, the efforts made by Kiai have a vital role in students' future character. Laurence Steinberg suggests that there are three aspects of independence, namely emotional independence, behavioural independence, and independence (Dawud, 2018). In Islamic boarding schools, students not only learn about religion and general knowledge but also learn about how to live in society. Thus, alums of Islamic boarding schools tend to be more independent than other alums (Sugeng, 2021). The following are the various efforts implemented by Kiai Syafi'i Ahmad to instil a spirit of independence in his students:

- 1) The Kiai forms a management structure for male and female students separately. These two managements make it easier for male and female students to manage daily activities. However, when there is a big event, all the administrators participate in joint deliberation. The management comprises a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and several divisions. This management aims to enable future students to carry out their responsibilities professionally when given the mandate by the community.

- 2) Kiai requires his students to recite the yellow book twice a day, namely after dawn reciting the book of Bukhari and after asr reciting the book of Ihya 'Ulumuddin. The Kiai directly taught the yellow book to his students in the male santri hall. He explained the meaning of each hadith in detail so that each of his students understood the meaning of the hadith. Because several students come from outside Java, it is not uncommon for him to explain meaning of hadith using Indonesian and on the sidelines of reciting, he also provides an interlude so that his students are not sleepy while reading the Koran. The students also recite the Koran with the sorogan method, carried out after sunset. In addition, several students teach the Koran to small children around the boarding school. Not infrequently these students also teach the skills they got in college, for example: teaching English, Arabic, etc. This study aims to increase students' insight into Islamic teachings and change their mindset of students for the better.
- 3) The Kiai establishes a madrasa diniyyah for his students. Diniyyah is held at night from 19.00 to 20.00 every Sunday to Thursday. The diniyyah is divided into three classes. The division of the class is adjusted based on the level of ability possessed by the students, who are assessed through a series of supporting tests. The material taught has different levels. The higher the grade level, the more complicated the material. With the existence of the diniyyah madrasa, it is hoped that students will be able to master the basic sciences in religion, for example, nahwu science, shorof science, science, prayer procedures, etiquette in learning, and others.
- 4) The Kiai trains the students to read yasin and tahlil every Friday night. Imam yasin and tahlil are usually appointed randomly by the head of the Islamic boarding school. With this yasin and tahlil, Kiai hopes that his students will be ready when appointed to lead yasin and tahlil in his community. After the yasin and tahlil activities are completed, it is continued with other activities, namely diba'an or muhadloroh. By holding these activities, it aims to increase students' confidence in faulty parallelism students in developing their talents. These talents include banjarian, as a presenter, qiro'ah, khitobah, leading prayers, and others.
- 5) Kiai trains the students to cook on their own by making a cooking picket schedule for female students. The implementation of this cooking picket is monitored by Mrs Nyai directly in the kitchen. This cooking picket consists of 11 groups, with each group member totalling about 5-6 people. In the cooking picket, there are several tasks such as preparing spices; frying crackers and side dishes; cooking vegetables; and cooking rice. The cooking process uses a wood-fired stove and uses a gas stove. Tengku is usually used for cooking rice and vegetables, while gas stoves for frying crackers and side dishes. The cooking process usually takes 2 hours. If there is a big event, then all students must participate in cooking both male and female students. Kiai and Mrs Nyai are to form a cooking picket so that the students have cooking skills and can help their mothers cook at home.
- 6) The Kiai trains the students for daily pickets. This daily picket is divided into several groups. Daily picket is usually done every day, precisely after reciting the book of Bukhari. The following is the daily picket distribution: sweeping under mango trees,

sweeping the mosque yard, arranging slippers and sweeping the garage, mopping the dining area, and sweeping the backyard. With this daily picket, it aims to train students always to live clean because in Islam, "cleanliness is part of faith" (Qaradhawi, 1995).

- 7) The Kiai trains the santri for roan (service work). All students perform this roan on Sundays and are divided into several groups. The following is the division of roan's duties: cleaning the mosque, sweeping the front and back yard, cleaning the bathroom, mopping the front porch of the room, cleaning the clothesline, watering the stairs, and cleaning the dishwasher. In addition, there was also a grand ceremony, namely during the construction process of the Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School at PPHM Sobo Gono. Both male and female students must follow the roan, such as lifting sand and bricks, casting buildings, ironing, etc. With this roan, it is intended that every santri has a sense of concern for others and is light-hearted in helping others.

### **The Independent Spirit of Santri at Hidayatul Mubtadi'in Islamic Boarding School Sobo Gono Mangunsuman Siman Ponorogo**

Based on the opinion of Bachruddin Mustafa, independence is a person's ability to make decisions and accept any consequences (Ahmad, 2017). Independence can also be interpreted as one aspect of the personality contained in each individual to choose by considering the consequences that will be obtained.

The following are some of the characteristics of a person who can be said to be independent, namely having the following abilities: having the ability to think critically, creatively and innovatively towards something that will be done both in terms of profits and benefits; have the ability to overcome obstacles faced in achieving success; have the ability to always take the initiative in completing all responsibilities; have the ability always to act as is and correctly following their rights and obligations; have the initiative to help others or do actions that benefit many people and their environment; dare to express opinions even though they are different, and be able to accept more correct opinions (Suprayitno, 2020).

At PPHM Sobo Guno, most students are already at the student level, but some are still in school. Because almost all students are adults, so students are easy to organize and manage. The students do all their personal needs independently, for example: cleaning their room, washing their clothes and dishes, folding and ironing their clothes. There are not infrequently students who are already self-employed for example, being a school teacher, working in a laundry, working at a sales stand, and some have even opened their own business.

There is also a canteen managed by the students themselves and also supervised by Mrs Nyai. The students in charge of maintaining the canteen have been appointed permanently. The canteen sells various foods and soft drinks, such as: beng-beng, snacks, wafers, sweets, yakult, rio tea, and others. Some students leave their homemade snacks to be sold in the canteen. The canteen is open 24 hours. If there is no staff to look after it, the students can leave the purchase money on the table, thus also training students to be honest.

The students also have their initiative by holding a weekly fee of one thousand rupiahs for each person. This fee will be used for the student's needs for example, to welcome the arrival of prominent guests al-Habib Musthofa Ba'abud, to give gifts to the students/alums of PPHM Sobo Guno who are getting married, and for other purposes. This fee also aims to train students always to remember to give alms.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research conducted by researchers at PPHM Sobo Guno using data collection techniques with interviews, observation and documentation, it is stated that Kiai's leadership efforts in instilling the spirit of independence of students in the Islamic boarding school have been successfully realized. According to the researcher's observations, instilling a spirit of independence in students takes the central role of a Kiai as the leader of a boarding school.

In Islamic boarding schools, the leadership of a Kiai has a vital role in the development of the character of his students because the Kiai is the central figure who is used as a role model by his students. At PPHM Sobo Guno Kiai Syafi'i Ahmad applies a democratic and charismatic leadership style. In Islamic boarding schools, students not only study religion and general knowledge but are also taught how to live in society, so alumni of Islamic boarding schools are considered more independent compared to alumni of other educational institutions.

The students at PPHM Sobo Guno have been trained to be independent. They can make decisions and accept any consequences that will come their way. Most students have entered adulthood, so it is easy to organize and manage. The students work on all their personal needs independently. The students also manage the canteen independently but are still monitored by Mrs. the student himself.

Kiai Syafi'i Ahmad has implemented many efforts to instill a spirit of independence in his students at PPHM Sobo Guno, including Kiai forming a management structure for his students; The Kiai obliges his students to recite the Qur'an and the yellow book; The Kiai establishes a diniyyah madrasa for his students; The Kiai trains the students always to read yasin and tahlil every Friday night, followed by other activities, namely diba'an or muhadloroh; Kiai trains the students to cook on their own by making a cooking picket schedule for female students; The Kiai trains the santri for daily picket; and the Kiai trains the santri for roan (service work).

Every parent expects the best education for their children, and one of the right decisions is to send their children to Islamic boarding schools. After completing education at the Islamic boarding school, parents hope their children will be more independent in all aspects of life and have good character. In Islamic boarding schools, students not only study religion and general knowledge, but students are also taught how to live in society. Thus, alumni of Islamic boarding schools are considered more independent when alumni of other educational institutions.



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