

Strengthening Character of Mahasantri Through Ta'limul Lail Activities at Ma'had Al – Jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang

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Abstract. Character, known in Islam as morals, is an embedded trait in the human soul that spontaneously influences a person's attitudes, actions and behavior, whether towards good or bad. In the modern context, Muslims face global challenges, both internal in the form of backwardness in the education, political and economic sectors, and external in the form of negative accusations such as terrorism and anti-progress. Muslim youth, including mahasantri, have a strategic role as guardians of good religious values in society. However, strengthening the character of mahasantri is a necessity to face the challenges of shifting values in the era of globalization, especially in counteracting radicalism and intolerance. Character education, through a community-based approach, is an effective method to internalize good values in the mahasantri. One important effort in this context is through the Ta'limul Lail activity at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah, which is designed to deepen religious understanding, form positive habits, and improve noble morals. This activity not only has an impact on strengthening individual character, but also on the role of mahasantri as role models in society. Thus, Ta'limul Lail can be a strategic solution in shaping the character of mahasantri who are superior, religious, and contribute positively to the surrounding environment.

Keywords: Character Education, Global Challenges, Morals, Mahasantri, Ta'limul Lail

1 Introduction

Character in general can be said to be character, character and character. The term character in Islam can be called morals, where the definition of morals itself is a trait that is embedded in the human soul and with this trait a person spontaneously easily emits their attitudes, actions, and actions. So that it has become a habit that has been attached to the human soul in choosing good or bad actions[1]. Theoretically, character education in Islam is rooted in the concept of tarbiyah ruhiyah (spiritual education) which emphasizes the development of noble morals as the foundation of human personality. Ta'limul Lail puts this concept into practice by integrating elements of worship, learning and togetherness. For example, performing the night

prayer in congregation not only educates discipline but also strengthens the values of collectivity and submission to Allah

Muslims are now facing global and universal challenges, both through internal Islam itself and external challenges. Currently, Islam is known as an ummah that experiences backwardness in various sectors including in the education, political and economic sectors.[2] At the same time, the challenges to Islam in the external sector always come through accusations against it such as accusations of theism, anti-progress, hostile to women and so on[3]. Akhlak (character) karimah is a noble character. It can also be interpreted as an act in which there are positive values which must be instilled in every human being so that there is peace in running life. Especially if we remember the development of today's increasingly modern times, it will also affect human morals[4].

In the current era of globalization, Muslim youth have been faced with a complex situation in trying to maintain Islamic character. Social, cultural and technological changes have a major impact on the mindset, lifestyle and values of the younger generation. The presence of digital media, unlimited access to information, and the influence of foreign cultures often erode the moral and spiritual values that are the foundation of individual character. This challenge is even more severe for mahasantri, students who live in an Islamic-based educational environment (ma'had)[5]. Globalization has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including the mindset and value system of the younger generation. For Muslim youth, especially university students, these challenges include increasing cultural pressures of hedonism, individualism, and weak commitment to spiritual values. According to a report by the Pew Research Center (2021), 65% of youth in developing countries have decreased involvement in religious activities, especially in urban environments.[6] This condition reflects the need for a strategic approach in Islam-based character education to maintain a balance between Islamic identity and adaptation to modern dynamics.

Religious life in Indonesia has come under the spotlight from various parties, both domestic parties such as Non-Governmental Organizations and the Religious Harmony Forum; and abroad such as the views of Middle Eastern scholars and the United Nations and so on. This right is indicated by the emergence of social conflicts with religious backgrounds in society. Among the social conflicts that plague the Indonesian nation are extremism, hate speech, radicalism, and the breakdown of inter-religious tolerance. The proliferation of this social phenomenon must be resolved immediately, because it threatens the harmony of life in Indonesia. Religious issues are very sensitive and can damage social relations in society[7].

Various studies on the religious attitudes and behavior of Indonesian Muslim youth, both male and female students, show an increasing trend of religious intolerance and radicalism, even exposure to violent extremism and terrorism.[8] Students have an important role in guarding good religious characteristics for this nation, especially in the future. The age of globalization makes information spread faster and causes scientific distortion which is one of the reasons for the emergence of radicalism. Students have more religious value in the eyes of the community so that they can spread good religious life in their neighborhood[9].

Ta'limul Lail activities are relevant in answering the need for Islamic character building in the modern era. By integrating spiritual, intellectual, and emotional dimensions, this program can be an effective instrument to overcome the challenges

faced by the mahasantri. Moreover, Ta'limul Lail also supports the goal of Islamic education to produce young people who not only excel academically but also have high moral integrity and are able to become agents of change in society. One of the effective approaches applied in shaping the character of mahasantri is through Ta'limul Lail activities. Ta'limul Lail is one of the typical programs that combines strengthening spiritual values, such as night prayers, Islamic studies, and recitation of the Qur'an, which is carried out at special times such as night. This activity not only builds discipline and diligence, but also instills moral values, sincerity, and submission to Allah[10].

Therefore, strengthening the character of students through character education is a necessity in an effort to face the various challenges of character shifts faced today. Character education aims to develop a person's ability to make good and bad decisions, maintain what is good, and realize that goodness in everyday life wholeheartedly. Because character education is a habit, strengthening one's character requires communities of character or "communities that can shape character"[11]. There is also in the word of Allah swt in Q.S Al-Ahzab:21.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Meaning:” *Indeed, there is in the Messenger of Allah a good example for you (i.e.) for those who expect (the mercy of) Allah and (the coming of) the Last Day and who remember Allah much.*” (Q.S Al-Ahzab:21)[12]

However, the relevance and effectiveness of this program still faces various challenges. For example, the lack of awareness of mahasantri about the importance of Ta'limul Lail activities often becomes an obstacle in its implementation. In addition, the influence of modern lifestyles that tend to be individualistic and consumptive can weaken mahasantri's commitment to activities that support character building. To strengthen the connection between theory and practice, the introduction can be supplemented with empirical evidence, such as studies showing that Ta'limul Lail participants have better spiritual and moral qualities than those who do not participate in this activity. This research is important because it provides practical guidance for Islamic educational institutions to integrate theoretical approaches into faith-based programs that are relevant to modern challenges[13].

Therefore, this research aims to explore how Ta'limul Lail activities can strengthen the character of mahasantri in Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. Students must be able to become role models for the people around them, but in reality not all students are able to become these role models. So that many mahasantri have not dared to face the surrounding community, therefore with this Ta'limul Lail activity it can be a strengthening of the characteristics of mahasantri so that it has an impact on the surrounding environment[14].

2 Method

This research uses qualitative methods, Sugiyono explains that qualitative research aims to examine natural conditions and emphasizes understanding the deep meaning of a symptom[15]. The approach used in this research is descriptive, namely an approach

that analyzes, describes and summarizes various conditions, situations from various data collected in the form of interviews or observations regarding the problem under study that occurred in the field and documentation as additional data[16]. Researchers set the research location at Ma'had Al-Jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

The data source is the subject from which the data can be obtained and has clear information on how to take the data and how the data is processed. Data collection in this study uses several sources which are divided into two, namely:[17] Primary data is data that comes from the original or first source obtained from observations and interviews with someone (informants)[18]. Secondary data is data that can support primary data. Secondary data is obtained through literature studies sourced from books (such as religious moderation books, tolerance, and history books from schools that add or complement the problems being studied), journals, articles, and previous research[19].

The data collection technique used in general is using: According to Syafrida Hafni Sahir, observation is a data collection technique with researchers going directly to the field[20]. According to Cholid Narbuko and Abu Achmadi, an interview is a question and answer process in research that takes place orally in which two or more people meet face to face to listen directly to information or information about the problems that occur. According to Sulaiman Saat and Sitti Mania, documentation is a data collection technique for data that is ready, has passed or secondary data. Documentation is used by researchers as a complement to the use of interview and observation methods. This method is used to obtain the data needed in the research[21].

According to Sugiyono, there is data collection with several procedures, namely as follows[22]: In qualitative research, data reduction means summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the important things, and looking for themes and patterns[23]. Data presentation is the second stage carried out after completing the data reduction stage. This data presentation is an activity when all the data has been organized, so that there will be conclusions drawn and actions taken[24]. Drawing conclusions here is carried out by researchers from the beginning of researchers collecting data such as looking for understanding that does not have a pattern, noting the regularity of explanations, and causal flow, which in the final stage concludes the overall data obtained by researchers.

The conclusion of the above statement is that the research used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to understand ta'limul lail activities at ma'had al-jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. Primary data was collected through observation and interviews, while secondary data came from literature studies. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. After that, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing were carried out to understand the patterns and themes that emerged from the research results.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Planning Ta'limul Lail Activities in Character Building of Mahasantri at Ma'had Al-Jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang

Ta'lim activity is one part of the activities in ma'had al jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang which is engaged in the academic field. In managing an activity, before the activity is realized, there is a planning or preparation so that later the activity will achieve the expected goals. Pelaksanaan Kegiatan Ta'limul Lail di Ma'had Al-Jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang yang di untkapkan Mudir Ma'had oleh Drs. Jumhur Hadi, M.A.

“Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is one of the most important institutions at UIN Radaen Fatah Palembang. The majority of PTKIN in Indonesia have ma'had al-jami'ah, be it in STAIN, IAIN, or UIN in Indonesia, because this institution is one of the most important elements in higher education, especially PTKIN. Ma'had Al-Jami'ah or better known as the student pesantren, the students are students or better known as mahasantri at the college level. Why is it said that the importance of ma'had institutions in higher education, especially UIN Radaen Fatah Palembang, is because the concept applied by ma'had is the concept of pesantren, which emphasizes moral values such as how to respect and appreciate parents, lecturers, teachers, fellow friends. In addition, the importance of ma'had al-jami'ah is to foster the character of the students themselves through habits that refer to Islamic values themselves, for example, such as learning Ta'limul Lail at Ma'had Al-Jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.”[25]

Character strengthening can be interpreted as a way of thinking and behaving for each individual to live and socialize, both within the scope of family, school, community and country. Individuals with good character are individuals who can make decisions and are ready to take responsibility for the consequences of their decisions. Islam as a religion that is full of spiritual values has a clear and systematic trace of character education[26].

Jack Corley and Thomas Phillip in Samani and Haryono state that character can be defined as the attitudes and behavior of each individual that can facilitate moral action. The purpose of character education is to improve the quality of implementation and results of education by students both in an integrated, balanced and comprehensive manner towards the achievement of noble character and morals[27]. With this, students are expected to be able to use and improve their knowledge, and can personalize moral and character values, independently so that in the end they can manifest these values in their daily behavior[28].

Strengthening the character of mahasantri through Ta'limul Lail activities at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah can be seen from several aspects, such as discipline, politeness, and spirituality. This activity does not only focus on academic learning, but also forms character and moral values that are important for mahasantri. Discussing the objectives of ta'limul lail activities at ma'had al-jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. Among them are to improve the quality and quality of learning for mahasantri in order to have a

personality that has the strength of faith, spiritual depth, nobility of character (character) and breadth of knowledge. As Allah swt said in Q.S Al-Mujadilah: 11

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ
انشُرُوا فَانشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

Meaning: “You who believe, when it is said to you, “Make room in the assembly,” make room, and Allah will make room for you. And when it is said: “Stand up”, then stand up, surely Allah will elevate those who believe among you and those who are given knowledge a few degrees. And Allah knows best what you do.” (Q.S Al-Mujadilah:11)

Ta'lim was formed to equip mahasantri to create a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings through study and discussion and also in accordance with the VISION and MISSION at Ma'had Al-Jamiah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, the coaches who said that the purpose of coaching is character strengthening, which is carried out through various coaching processes. In addition, the main goal of the coaches is identical to the life goal of every Muslim, which is to become a servant of Allah who believes and surrenders to Him. Although strengthening and fostering character is the same as the purpose of coaching and the purpose of every Muslim's life, because character is the reality of personality in general not the result of personal development alone, but morals are the actions or behavior of a person[29].

As the results of interviews with Ta'limul Lail teachers at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah, namely Ustadz Gatot kaca, M.Pd.I stated that:

“Talking about Ta'limul Lail learning at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is also carried out in order to form character in mahasantri. This activity is carried out every night except Sunday night, usually after maghrib prayer, and aims to improve the knowledge of students, especially in terms of Fikih Studies, Ta'lim Muta'allim, Akidatul awam, Community Worship, Nahwu and Hadith.”[30]

Basically, the responsibility for character development lies with all parties that surround it, starting from families, schools, institutions, communities, and governments. The ma'had environment can be said to be a process of civilizing children influenced by conditions that are faced and experienced by mahasantri every time. Likewise, creating an Islamic atmosphere in the ma'had is an effort to build a culture or culture that allows to build the character of the mahasantri[31].

As the results of interviews with ma'had al-jami'ah students, namely Ahaduzzaman, who stated that:

“The existence of ta'limul lail activities in this ma'had al-jamiah has more or less had a positive impact on us as mahasantri. For example, in reminding prayers between friends, reading the Qur'an, discussing fiqh learning. This has formed good morals as mahasantri.”[32]

From the interview above, it can be concluded that the mahasantri appreciates differences, because according to him, differences will be able to complement each other. The character of the mahasantri confirms that Ta'limul Lail is not just a formal

education program, but also a vehicle for coaching. Just a formal education program, but also a vehicle for fostering Islamic character. Islamic character. This activity teaches good habits, strengthens social solidarity, as well as deepening religious understanding, all of which become an important provision for the mahasantri in their future lives. The purpose and scope of the study should be clearly explained in the introduction to give focus to the research. This study aims to understand how Ta'limul Lail activities affect the development of mahasantri character, by highlighting spiritual, moral, and social aspects. The scope includes the implementation of activities at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang and its impact on the formation of values such as discipline, sincerity, and solidarity and how Ta'limul Lail affects character can clarify the focus, for example by showing how night worship and Islamic studies directly strengthen spiritual connections, internalize moral values, and form positive habits relevant to modern challenges.

4 Conclusion

The Ta'limul Lail activity at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Raden Fatah Palembang has proven to be an effective strategy in strengthening the character of students. Through night worship, Islamic studies, and the habituation of noble moral values, this activity has succeeded in forming characters who are disciplined, spiritual, and have high social solidarity. The implementation of Ta'limul Lail also strengthens the integration between Islamic character education theory and daily practice, making it a relevant character development model in facing modern challenges and the dynamics of globalization. This activity not only provides an opportunity for mahasantri to deepen their spirituality through night worship, but also helps them internalize Islamic values such as discipline, patience, and ukhuwah Islamiyah. With a holistic approach, Ta'limul Lail is an effective means to form individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also morally and spiritually strong, so that they are ready to face the challenges of the times.

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