

Santri Day as a Momentum for Strengthening Character Education Values in the School Environment: Case Study MTs Ma'arif NU Sragi.

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Abstract: Becoming a nation with strong character is an essential goal, particularly for the Indonesian people who have endured the dark legacy of colonialism. This study aims to examine the role of Santri Day as a medium for character education and its influence in reinforcing moral and social values among Santri and the broader community. Employing a library research method combined with content analysis, the study gathers data from books, journals, newspapers, seminar proceedings, and other relevant sources. The findings highlight that Santri Day serves as a strategic moment to instill and strengthen character values in students. This is realized through various Santri Day activities, such as opening ceremonies, competitions, and collective prayer sessions, all of which contribute meaningfully to the cultivation of national character and religious identity.

Keywords: Education, Character, Santri day.

Abstrak: Menjadi bangsa yang berkarakter adalah suatu keniscayaan, terutama bagi bangsa Indonesia yang pernah mengalami sejarah kelam masa penjajahan. penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran Hari Santri sebagai sarana pendidikan karakter, serta dampaknya terhadap penguatan nilai-nilai moral dan sosial di kalangan Santri dan masyarakat luas. Penelitian ini merupakan riset kepustakaan (library research) dan analisis isi (content analysis). Metode kepustakaan adalah suatu metode penelitian yang dilakukan melalui pengumpulan data yang terdapat pada buku, majalah, surat kabar, hasil seminar, dan sumber lain yang relevan. Peran hari Santri sebagai kesempatan penting untuk memperkuat nilai-nilai Pendidikan karakter di kalangan siswa. Melalui kegiatan kegiatan khas Hari Santri, seperti pembukaan hari Santri, mengadakan perlombaan perlombaan untuk memeriahkan hari Santri serta doa bersama.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan, Karakter, Hari Santri.

1. Introduction

Santri Day, celebrated every 22 October, is an important moment in strengthening religious and national values in Indonesia. The establishment of this day is not only a tribute to *Santri*

and ulama, but also a reminder of the important role of character education that they play in society. *Santri*, as students in *pesantren*, are not only equipped with religious knowledge, but also moulded into individuals who are noble, disciplined, and responsible¹.

Being a nation with character is a necessity, especially for the Indonesian people who have experienced the dark history of colonisation. Because only a nation that has strong character can make itself a dignified nation and respected by other nations. Character education in *pesantren* emphasises the formation of morals and ethics that become the basis for interacting with the environment.² In this context, *Santri Day* is a momentum to examine more deeply the contribution of *pesantren* education to the character building of the younger generation. Through a holistic approach, *pesantren* not only educate *Santri* in terms of knowledge, but also shape them into individuals with integrity, social care, and love for the country.³

Thus, this study aims to explore the role of Hari *Santri* as a means of character education, as well as its impact on strengthening moral and social values among *Santri* and the wider community. Through an in-depth understanding of character education in the context of *pesantren*, it is hoped that recommendations can emerge for the development of better education in creating a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has a strong character.⁴ The urgency of this study lies in its contribution to reviving the cultural and moral legacy of *pesantren* in the era of modern education, where character formation is often subordinated to cognitive achievement.⁵

Furthermore, the dynamics of *Santri Day* celebrations—ranging from religious processions, community service, competitions, to collective prayers—serve not only as symbolic rituals but also as practical manifestations of values-based education. These activities create real opportunities to implement moral teachings, build social solidarity, and instill national identity among the younger generation.⁶

2. Method

This study employs a library research approach combined with content analysis. The library research method involves systematic data collection from various written sources such as books, academic journals, newspapers, seminar proceedings, and other relevant publications. Meanwhile, the content analysis method is used to interpret and analyze textual materials through a set of structured procedures aimed at drawing valid and objective conclusions.

¹ Jamal Ma'mur Asmani, *Buku Panduan Internalisasi Pendidikan Karakter di Sekolah* (Jogjakarta: Diva Press, 2011).

² Doni Koesoema, *Pendidikan Karakter: Mendidik Anak di Zaman Global* (Jakarta: Grasindo, 2007).

³ Zaim Elmubarok, *Membumikan Pendidikan Nilai: Mengumpulkan yang Tersekar, Menyambung yang Terputus, dan Menyatukan yang Terverai* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013).

⁴ Fathurijal Muhlisin and Khoerul Huda, "Peran Kepemimpinan KH Hasyim Asy'ari dalam Resolusi Jihad," *Jurnal PAI: Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 2 (2022): 113–125.

⁵ Muslich Masnur, *Pendidikan Karakter: Menjawab Tantangan Krisis Multidimensial* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2011).

⁶ Ahmad Zayadi, *Detik-Detik Penetapan Hari Santri* (Baitul Hikmah Press, 2021).

This method enables researchers to examine the content of documents systematically and rigorously, ensuring the reliability of interpretations and findings derived from the data.⁷

3. Results and Discussion

Background and Purpose of Santri Day

National *Santri* Day is a meaningful commemorative moment for *Santri* across Indonesia. It is celebrated every 22 October as a form of appreciation for the important role played by scholars and *Santri* in the struggle for Indonesian independence. During the colonial era, Islamic boarding schools became the base of the movement and fostered the fighting spirit of the youth.⁸ Ulama as religious leaders acted as unifiers of the people, providing inspiration and motivation to fight the colonisers. *Santri*, as students who followed their teachings, participated in various resistance movements, both through education, preaching, and directly entering the battlefield.⁹

History records how the Jihad Resolution fatwa issued by KH Hasyim Asy'ari on 22 October 1945 triggered the spirit of resistance in Surabaya. This fatwa called on all Muslims to defend Indonesia's independence from the threat of the return of the Dutch colonisers who came with the allies.¹⁰ With passion and courage, thousands of *Santri* and fighters fought in a heroic battle that was later known as the Battle of Surabaya on 10 November 1945. This event showed how great the contribution of ulama and *Santri* was in maintaining the nation's sovereignty.¹¹

The purpose of commemorating National *Santri* Day is not only to commemorate the past, but also to be a means of reflection and inspiration for the younger generation. Today's *Santri* are expected to emulate the fighting spirit and dedication of their predecessors. With a deep knowledge of religion and a high spirit of nationalism, *Santri* are expected to contribute to the development of the nation and state. They are not only required to be academically intelligent but also have good morals and morals as the successor to the nation's struggle.

Definition of Value

In everyday life, value is something that is valuable, has quality, shows quality, and is useful for humans. Value is something abstract, not just a matter of right and wrong that requires empirical proof, but a matter of appreciation that is desired and not desired, liked and disliked.¹²

⁷ Mustika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2008)., Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011).

⁸ Ahmad Zayadi, *Detik-Detik Penetapan Hari Santri* (Baitul Hikmah Press, 2021)

⁹ Desmond Alim Pratama, "Persepsi Guru Sejarah Lulusan Universitas Negeri Malang (2015-2019) Terhadap Peringatan Hari Santri Nasional" (Universitas Negeri Malang, 2021).

¹⁰ Fathurrijal Muhlisin and Khoerul Huda, "Peran Kepemimpinan KH Hasyim Asy'ari Dalam Resolusi Jihad," *Jurnal PAI: Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 2 (2022): 113–125.

¹¹ Pratama, "Persepsi Guru Sejarah Lulusan Universitas Negeri Malang (2015-2019) Terhadap Peringatan Hari Santri Nasional."

¹² Isna Mansur, *Diskursus Pendidikan Islam* (Yogyakarta: Global Pustaka Utama, 2001), 98

According to Ngalim Purwanto in Qiqi Yuliati, the values that exist in a person are influenced by the existence of customs, ethics, beliefs, and religion. All of them influence the attitudes, opinions, and even outlook on life of individuals which will then be reflected in the way they act and behave in making judgements.¹³

Meanwhile, according to Zaim El-Mubarak, values are broadly divided into two groups; first, conscience values (values of being), which are values that exist within humans and then these values develop into behaviour and procedures for how we treat others. Included in conscientious values are honesty, courage, love of peace, potential, discipline, purity. Second, values of giving are values that need to be practised or given which will then be received as much as given. Included in the values of giving are loyal, trustworthy, friendly, fair, generous, unselfish, sensitive, compassionate.¹⁴

Based on some definitions of value above, it can be concluded that value is everything related to human behaviour about something good and bad that can be measured by religion, tradition, morals, ethics and culture that applies in that society.

Character Education

Etymologically, the word character (English: character) comes from the Greek word *charassein*, which means "to engrave".¹⁵ The word "to engrave" can be translated as "to carve, to paint".¹⁶ This meaning can be associated with the perception that character is a painting of the soul that is manifested in behaviour. Character in the Big Indonesian Dictionary is defined as "character, psychological traits, morals or character traits that distinguish a person from others, and character (Language Center of the Ministry of National Education, 2008). A person with character means a person with personality, behaviour, nature, character, or character. Such a meaning indicates that character is synonymous with personality or morals.

Personality is a characteristic or trait of a person that comes from formations received from the environment, such as family in childhood, and also innate from birth.¹⁷ Along with this understanding, there is a group of people who argue that good or bad human character is innate from birth. If the innate soul is good, then the human being will have good character, and vice versa if the innate is bad, then the human being will have bad character. If this opinion is correct, then character education is pointless, because it will not be possible to change the character of people who are already taken for granted. Meanwhile, another group of people argue differently, that character can be shaped and strived for, so character education becomes very meaningful to make people have good character. Character is personality viewed from an ethical or moral point of departure. Character has the same meaning as moral. Moral is a condition of human thoughts, feelings, speech, and behaviour

¹³ Qiqi Yuliati Zakiyah dan A. Rusdiana, *Pendidikan Nilai; Kajian Teori dan Praktik Di Sekolah* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2014), 14.

¹⁴ Zaim Elmubarak, *Membumikan Pendidikan Nilai; Mengumpulkan Yang Terserak , Menyambung Yang Terputus dan Menyatukan Yang Tercerai* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013),.

¹⁵ Ryan, Kevin & Bohlin, Karen E. (1999). *Building Character in Schools: Practical Ways to Bring Moral Instruction to Life*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

¹⁶ John M. Echols dan Hasan Shadili, 1993, *Kamus Inggris Indonesia*, Jakarta, Gramedia.

¹⁷ A, Doni Koesoema. 2007. *Pendidikan Karakter: Mendidik Anak di Zaman*. Global. Jakarta: Grasindo

related to good and bad values.¹⁸ According to Simon Philips, character is a collection of values that lead to a system, which underlies the thinking, attitudes, and behaviour displayed.¹⁹

Based on the above understanding, it can be understood that character is synonymous with morals, ethics, and morals, so that character is a universal human behaviour value covering all human activities, both in the context of relating to God, to himself, to fellow humans, and to the environment, which is manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on religious norms, laws, manners, culture, and customs.

Application of Character Education Values in Santri Day Activities

Hari *Santri* is not only a commemoration, but also an effective means to integrate character education values among students and the community. Through various activities held, such as ceremonies, parades, and competitions, Hari *Santri* teaches students about the importance of morals, discipline, and responsibility as part of their identity as students.

These activities do not only focus on the academic aspect but also emphasise character strengthening that includes the values of honesty, hard work, and cooperation, such as in the adhan, calligraphy, and fashion show competitions. This encourages them to internalise these values in their daily lives.

Opening of *Santri* Day Event



figure 1.1

The first event is the opening ceremony to start the event in commemoration of the *Santri* day, in this event attended by all students and students of MTs Ma'arif NU Sragi and at this event Mr Drs. Nurtiyono M.Pd.I gave an explanation of the *Santri* day and gave direction about the activities to be carried out..

¹⁸ Asmani, Jamal Ma'mur. 2011. Buku Panduan Internalisasi Pendidikan Karakter di Sekolah. Jogjakarta: Diva Press.

¹⁹ Muslich Masnur. 2011. Pendidikan Karakter: Menjawab Tantangan Krisis Multidimensial. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara

Adzan Competition



Figure 2.1

The adhan competition was the first competition held in the commemoration of the *Santri* day at MTs Ma'arif NU Sragi, this competition was attended by all MTs and SMK Ma'arif NU Sragi students, this adhan competition we took the jury from one of the MTs teachers and for this competition event held in the nearest mushola..

Calligraphy Competition



Figure 3.1

Calligraphy competition is one of the competitions held in the commemoration of *Santri* day at MTs Ma'arif NU Sragi, as well as other competitions for this competition also followed by students and students from MTs and SMK Ma'arif NU Sragi, for this calligraphy competition held in the classroom with a long duration.

Fashion show



Figure 4.1

The *fashion show* competition became a competition that attracted MTs and SMK students and even the teachers also watched this competition, MTs and SMK students were very enthusiastic about participating in this *fashion show* competition, even to the point of preparing clothes and making the theme as good as possible, the *fashion show* competition held at MTs Ma'arif NU Sragi might be considered as a superior competition at the 2024 *Santri* day commemoration event yesterday..

4. Conclusion

The role of Hari *Santri* as an important opportunity to strengthen the value of character education among students. This research shows that *Santri* Day is not only a commemoration, but also a place to instil the values of Islamic values, nationalism, and noble morals in accordance with the principles of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) through typical *Santri* Day activities, such as the opening of the *Santri* day, holding competitions to enliven the *Santri* day and prayer together. Students at MTs Ma'arif NU Sragi are given a deep understanding of good character such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and care. In conclusion, Hari *Santri* is an effective means of integrating character education into the teaching and learning process, as well as creating an educational environment that supports the overall development of student character.

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