

Maintaining the Continuity of Education during Covid-19 Pandemic (A case study at PonPes Matholiul Anwar Rek-kerrek)

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Abstract

It has been two years since *coronavirus* disease attacked the world. All sectors suffer from the impact of this pandemic including education sector. Therefore learning process must be conducted from home (online class). The only surviving education with normal implementation is in Islamic Bording School. This research is intended to reveal why and how Islamic Bording School maintain the implementation of education during COVID-19 pandemic with normal learning process. This research applied qualitative research with case study. The data were gotten from interview and observation. The result reveals that this Islamic Bording School maintain the implementation of education during COVID-19 pandemic with normal learning process because education is the key to undergo this life in accordance with the norm of religion, social, and by normal learning process moral values is easily transferred. Besides, it also revealed that in conducting normal learning process, all teachers and students had to wear mask and keep social distancing, but those two things are not strictly obeyed because they believe that the most important things to do are praying and strengthen their belief that everything happens in this world is under God's will. Besides, they sunbathed and recited *yasin*, *tahlil*, and *istighotsah* every morning in the field. After that, they made a line to get hot milk in the morning. So, this Islamic Bording School conducted normal learning process because it can be a medium to transfer knowledge and moral values by paying attention the health protocols and praying to God.

Keywords: continuity of education, Islamic Boarding School

Introduction

Recently the world is not in a good condition. Indonesia is currently being hit by the covid-19 outbreak, which is spreading fast. The spreading of *coronavirus* disease throughout the country is designated as a pandemic. The rapid proliferation of the *coronavirus* is what caused the pandemic as one of the key solutions to the Covid-19 distribution chain. The presence of pandemic encourages all elements, such as government, related agencies and aid organizations around the world to change efforts to implement lockdowns to be mitigating so that these policies have an impact on the economic, politic, and educational sides on a global scale. The impact of the *coronavirus* pandemic that increases widespread has made teaching learning process employ online media. This made educators have to redesign the learning media in case of the students learning process run well. Besides, parents role are very much needed for students to help in taking lessons online at home.

This is not an easy matter because not all educational institutions are fully prepared. With this condition, this creates problems in the world of education such as the learning process is not uniform both the standards and the quality of the learning outcomes. This phenomenon is certainly felt heavy by educators and students. Especially for educators, they must prepare creative and innovative material in using learning media to adapt to the times. Not to mention looking at the facts in today's society, some parents of students do not have mobile devices (android) or computers to support online learning, especially for students themselves. Such conditions make them confused about facing the existing reality. One side is faced with the lack of supporting facilities. On the other hand, there is a demand for a fulfillment of educational services for students. As mandated in the 1945 Constitution Article 31 paragraph (1) states that every citizen has the right to education. The problem that occurs is not only the availability of learning facilities but the absence of a quota (pulse) which requires a fairly high cost, to facilitate online learning needs, especially parents of students from

the middle to lower economic circles do not have the budget to provide internet networks. It does not stop there, even though the internet network is in their hands, students face difficulties accessing the internet network because their place of residence is in rural, remote and disadvantaged areas. Even if someone uses a cellular network, sometimes the network is unstable because the geographical location is still far from the range of cellular signals. This is also a problem that occurs in many students who take online learning, so the implementation is less effective.¹

Meanwhile, the circular letter based on a Ministry of Religion states the learning process is carried out independently. This policy is a challenge for Islamic education institutions so that the Islamic Boarding School also got the impact of the Covid-19 presence. They tried several things such as by making new rules just to avoid the spread of coronavirus. The important thing to decrease the spreading of coronavirus by wearing a mask everywhere. This function to keep your mouth and nose from the droplets that come out from people around us. Besides, keeping distance should also be done so that if we do not use the mask, at least by keeping distance could decrease the spreading of coronavirus.

Islamic Boarding Schools are the Islamic educational institution with many students called *santri* learning and stay in it. It is in line with Dian Uswatun Hasanah et.al, they state education in the Islamic Boarding School environment is religious education with a dormitory system and the students live with a continuous pattern of interaction.² This institutions led by the boarding school's leader called *Kyai* that helped by several teachers (*Ustadz/ustadzah*). Generally, Islamic Boarding School has some curriculum. Firstly traditional religious education, called *ngaji*. This is the most crucial part of the curriculum in Islamic Boarding School. Another curriculum is vocational skills training. It is the same as the extracurricular program that we may train our skill in it. The common one is training to be a *qari'/qari'ah*, *banjari*, and traditional self. Besides, the development of character is a must. Thus, we always meet the Islamic Boarding School students that have good characters and a good morals even though out of the institutions.

Islamic boarding school is a place to study Islamic science by students living in boarding with determined educational time. Function of Islamic boarding school is to provide non-formal education like "*Madrasah Diniyah*" and etc. As follows:

- As a traditional educational institution
- As a transformation of religious knowledge
- As a home to improve the morals and attitude of '*Santri*'

Islamic boarding school learning management is an activity of combining Islamic boarding school education resources so that its centered in an effort to achieve the stated objectives of Islamic boarding school.³

The development of Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia society is increasing over time along with the increasing interest of the community to include their children in Islamic Boarding School. This is reinforced by the "*Ayo Mondok*" Movement which is held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to all corners of the region to motivate parents to make boarding school as one of the Islamic

¹Ahmad Khorirur Rijal Fahmi, "Curriculum and Learning Innovation Covid-19 Pandemic Situation at Surya Buana Modern Islamic Boarding School Malang, Indonesia," *Atlantis Press* 508 (2020). 381.

² Dian Uswatun Hasanah, Ahmad Alfi, and Dwi Kurniasih, "Kebijakan Pendidikan di Pondok Pesantren Al Muayyad Surakarta Selama Pandemi Covid-19," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Al-Ilmi* 4, no. 1 (May 1, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.32529/al-ilm.v4i1.780>.

³ Ummi Fathiyatussa'adah, "Islamic Boarding School Learning Management in New Normal Era," *Atlantis Press* 526 (2021), <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>. 441.

educational institutions in forging the next generation has adab and manners and knowledge.⁴

During pandemic, Islamic Boarding School must keep on conducting teaching and learning process run as normal situation in order that knowledge and moral value transfer can be done. Kiayi and Ustadz think that normal teaching and learning process is the best choice. In implementing normal process they did health protocol although that is not the only choice. They tend more to believe that what will happen to them is the only God's authority. They refer to one of verse in AL Quran "No calamity befalls a person except by Allah's permission; And whoever believes in Allah, He will guide his heart. And Allah is Knowing of all things" (Q.S at Taghabun ayat 11)

The description above makes the researchers interestind in conducting the research on why and how Islamic Boarding School Matholiul Anwar maintaining the Continuity of Education during Covid-19.

Methods

This research applied qualitative research with case study which aims at obtaining the actual or real information in the field. The data were gotten from interview, observation and documentation at Islamic Boarding School Matholiul Anwar Rek-Kerrek. The type of data is qualitative data, which is presented in the form of words, not numbers. In analyzing the obtained data, the researchers reduced the unimportant data, displayed, and drawn conclusion. This result of research is intended to reveal why and how Islamic Bording School maintain the implementation of education during COVID-19 pandemicwith normal learning process.

Results

The presence of Covid-19 in Indonesia raises a number of problems. The effects of this virus are overwhelming, especially in the economic, social life, and the most important of all in education. Similarly with China, Indonesia also imposed simultaneous lockdown in all areas. This pandemic has left people working, studying, and outdoors activity become at home. The hashtag #dirumahsaja is a trending topic among netizens. The term *work from home* is familiar to people who work. And so is the term *online learning*, which has become a daily title for educators and students. This is certainly very strange to Indonesians knowing that we never did a pandemic before moreover for Islamic Boarding Schools.

Islamic Boarding Schools are the school that have the different curriculum, materials, policies, and they tend to stay in the boarding school, called "*pondok*". The application of the system is conducted in different ways than the general schools. Moreover when the pandemic era, the system of education sector is changed into online learning. However, the Islamic Boarding School could not do this. They tend to make a different system of learning to maintain the continuity of education during Covid-19 pandemic. The following are the results of data on why and how the Islamic Boarding School of Matholiul Anwar Rek-Kerrek maintained the continuity of education during Covid-19 pandemic.

The Islamic Boarding School do not always pay attention to the letter of Minister. This is because they know how to overcome the impact of pandemic Covid-19 itself. *Kyai* as the leader that helped by ustadz and ustadzah tried to build the new concept of curriculum and policies that it makes the Islamic Boarding School easier in maintaining the education during pandemic era. We know that pandemic of Covid-19 is so much needed a powerful of energy to maintain our health and also our education. The

⁴Miftah Syarif, "Boarding School (Pesantren) Education During Covid-19 Pandemic at Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru Indonesia," *Khalifa: Jurnal of Islamic Education* 4, no. 2 (September 2020). 162.

Islamic school could not make the same policies like the online learning because the system in teaching learning have big difference.

Why the Islamic Boarding School of Matholiul Anwar Rek-Kerrek maintained the face to face teaching and learning process.

Here is the result of interview with the teachers on why they maintained the face to face teaching and learning process.

“According to us, face to face teaching and learning process must be conducted in this Islamic Boarding School because we think that by face to face teaching and learning process we can interact directly with the students so that to deliver the lesson is more easily absorbed and if the students do not understand, they can directly propose their questions. Besides, face to face teaching and learning process is the only best step to transfer values to the students. In this process the students can directly make the teacher or their friend as the model to imitate the good manners.

Further, they also stated “Knowledge is the only source to become their guidance to live a good and correct live in this world and bring them to success now and here after.”

And Ustad Karim said, “The boarding school could not apply the online learning based on the letter of Minister. The only way that we can do is staying in the same learning system as usual, by adding the application of wearing a mask and sunbathing every morning.”

How the Islamic Boarding School of Matholiul Anwar Rek-Kerrek maintained the face to face teaching and learning process.

Based on the result of observation on how they maintained the face to face teaching and learning process in the Islamic Boarding School of Matholiul Anwar Rek-Kerrek, it was found that the students wore the mask when they had the activity at the class. But after a long time, they put down the mask. Some of students still wore the mask on. This case stated that mask is not an obligation in it so that the students easily put down the mask. After that, the writer asked to the leader at the boarding itself. He stated that the obligation of wearing mask only during PPKM (Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat) so that the students easily put down the mask. Maybe some of students who still put the mask on because they are still afraid of the spreading Covid-19.

The application to avoid the spreading of Covid-19 is also by keeping the social distancing. Basically, all of the Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia are very hard to practice the social distancing. The Islamic boarding schools are more collective that every day the students always do everything in a groups or pairs such as eating together on a plate, drinking with the same glass, and sometimes having a bath in a room. But these all could not make them contaminated by any viruses, moreover the coronavirus because they believe Allah always protects them by considering their efforts and prayers.

At that time, the researchers had chance to interview one of the administrator at the boarding school. The application of mask is only held when the PPKM period. While the application of social distancing is impossible through the Islamic Boarding Schools. However, the writer found a unique here, where the students ought to drink a hot milk in the morning. So, in every morning before the students go to the formal school, they should make a line to get a hot milk every morning. And it functions to keep the immune stable.

This Islamic Boarding School kept the immune stable in many ways. As the researchers defined above, that the students drink a hot milk every morning. After that,

they make a new line in the field just to expose to the sun while reciting *yasin*, *tahlil*, and *istighotsah*. This method is the new method that no one did this before. The researchers little bit shocked knowing this method. It is a unique method that I ever seen. So that the students got 2 functions here, in keeping immune stable while praying together. And then the informant stated that the application of this method is decreased the students who always got sick everyday. Besides, the students will not felt sleepy during the formal class. They looked very healthy and ready to accept the material well.

The new policies are conducted during the pandemic Covid-19 up to now. The parents as visitor are forbidden to stay in the room and around it. Unless they might stay in front the canteen, or maybe at the gazebo, and around the Islamic Boarding School itself. The *Kyai* put “*qismul aman*” as the security to keep the stubborn parents that still staying in the room.

In case of it, the Islamic Boarding School did not make a big change for the education system, both the formal and informal education. Unless they still operate the system as usual. Conducting the formal class, informal class, and the extracurricular class. This is because the Islamic Boarding School could not change this into online system. As we know that online system is special only for the formal class. Thus, the absence of an online system keeps the Islamic Boarding School in a good stage. So far, there is no problem at all dealing with the learning process. Because they still apply the same learning.

And the last way that the Islamic Boarding Schools might do by praying to our God. Certainly, the Islamic Boarding School did not depend on the health protocol such as wearing mask and keeping distance, but they depended on prayers. As the Prophet Muhammad said, “Prayer is weapon of a *mu'min* and a pillar of religion and a light of heaven and earth.” (HR Abu Ya'la). Prayer is also the brain or the essence of worship. The Prophet Muhammad said, “Prayer is the brain of worship.” (HR Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidzi). Moreover, prayer is also the foremost thing on God's side. The Prophet Muhammad said again, “There is nothing more glorious on God's side than prayer.” (HR Ahmad).

Discussion

The education system is in the main point to discuss in this pandemic Covid-19 through its big impact in our learning process. However, the Islamic Boarding Schools are handled in a different ways than the formal education. They could not handle like the online system, unless they should build the new policies and curriculum that support the Islamic Boarding Schools education itself. There are several ways that the Islamic Boarding Schools do to maintain the continuity of education in pandemic Covid-19.

Based on the observation in the previous day, the Islamic Boarding School shown when the students in the formal class wearing a mask, but they did not do the physical distancing. In my opinion, it is impossible for the Islamic Boarding School to do a physical distancing knowing that they are collective in doing everything. The students of Islamic Boarding Schools tend to eat together in one plate, drink with a glass, and sharing everything in one stuff. So that this can conclude the Islamic Boarding Schools could not apply the physical distancing as well as possible.

The interview was proved the thing that I saw. The using of mask is only used during PPKM period. The PPKM period happened for about 2 – 3 months. So that the students wore the mask only for 2-3 months. After that, the students might put down the mask. But, some of students still apply the using of mask, because they were still afraid of the spreading of coronavirus.

Besides, in keeping the immune stable, the students should drink a hot milk every morning. They made a line to get the hot milk equally. And after that, this Islamic Boarding School applied sunbathing while reciting *yasin*, *tahlil*, and *istighotsah*

together. All of the students, teachers, and members in that Islamic Boarding School without exception should attend to sunbathe. This policies gave a big impact through the students in their formal learning. Usually, the students of Islamic Boarding School felt sleepy when they had the formal class. However, the application of this method was really useful for the students in their formal learning. The 3 months made them feel fresh and ready to receive the material in the formal class. Not only was that, the students who got sick every week decrease day by day.

The parents as the visitors forbid to visit except on Friday. When the visitors came to the boarding schools, they also forbid to take place in the students' room and around it. The visitors might use the place in front of canteen, and gazebo that has been ready for them. This aim to decrease the spreading of Covid-19 because we do not know each of them are contaminated or not. So that this policies from the leader or *Kyai* that the students and visitors must applied it.

The curriculum are still same as before. The Islamic Boarding Schools tend to change the policies in the application of daily activity. So, the students still do the same learning system and the same curriculum without any troubles.

Conclusion

Covid-19 is the only reason why the education is not in a good condition. This pandemic made all of sectors are in troubles, especially in education. The application "online learning" through the formal education must be held in all of the schools all over Indonesia. However, the Islamic Boarding Schools could not join these policies. They tend to make their own rules and policies that are suitable for their curriculum of learning. There are several ways to do on why and how to maintain the continuity of education in Islamic Boarding School during Covid-19 pandemic.

Based on the interviews and observation at the Islamic Boarding School of Matholiul Anwar Rek-Kerrek, face to face teaching and learning process was done because it could help teachers and students can interact directly so that knowledge transfer and value transfer are more effective to do. Besides, the importance of knowledge in living a good and correct is the other reason. To guarantee the safety of the teacher and students and teaching and learning process run well. Practicing health protocol was done although it was not maximal because *Kyai* and the teachers had their own ways such as to keep the immune stable by sunbathing in the morning, reciting *yasin*, *tahlil*, and *istighotsah* every morning in the field. After that, they made a line to get hot milk in the morning to avoid the attack of COVID19 pandemic.

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