Islamic Boarding School Education Management during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT. Pesantren is a model of the first Islamic educational institution that supports the continuity of national education. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic, it began to shift the order of the learning process that usually takes place; one example is face-to-face learning turning into online learning. This shift in the learning model has begun to pose challenges for teachers or Ustadz in evaluating the students’ learning development. Likewise, it is rather difficult to control the students in activities such as compulsory worship and other sunnah. Like one of the Islamic educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools have not provided an adaptive model to this problem. The management of Islamic boarding schools in responding to the pandemic has spawned several policies that are considered controversial, such as continuing to hold face-to-face learning activities. This study aims to describe the management of Islamic boarding school learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Pondok Pesantren Daar el-Qolam 3 Gintung, Jayanti, Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia, was used as a research location using a qualitative approach with a reflective descriptive method. The results showed that the implementation of education management at the Daar el-Qolam 3 Islamic boarding school includes two main things, namely physical and non-physical management. This implementation fulfills the basic aspects of Islamic boarding school education while still paying attention to government policies.

Keywords: Islamic Boarding School, Education Management, Covid-19 Pandemic

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of 2019, the world was shocked by the emergence of cases with pneumonia-like symptoms of unknown cause in Wuhan, China (Lee, 2020). Coronavirus infection, also known as Corona Virus Disease-2019 or COVID-19, was later identified as the cause. This virus attacks the respiratory tract so that the symptoms are similar to pneumonia. When it was first reported on November 17, 2019, there were 5 confirmed positive cases of this virus. According to Azizah (2019), on December 20, 2019, the number of confirmed virus cases reached 60 people. It shows that one of the characteristics of this virus is the high speed of spread.

COVID-19 has become a global pandemic with 64,346,292 confirmed positive cases from 218 countries worldwide (at 21:04 WIB) (Worldometers, 2020). Furthermore, COVID-19 has also become an epidemic in Indonesia since early March 2020. Indonesia has been in the 22nd position, with a total of 549,508 positive cases spread across 34 provinces and 415 districts/cities.
(Indonesian COVID-19 Handling Task Force, 2020). If we view the virus as a disease, it needs to be treated. However, the drug is only an attempt to cure the symptoms caused by the activity of the virus in the body. Naturally, the body will produce antibodies in response to a ‘foreign object’ in the body. This process takes a long time, and each individual has different abilities in responding to foreign body attacks, including COVID-19. Vaccines are used to help the body speed up the production of antibodies so that if it gets attacked by this virus, the body will immediately respond and kill the virus in the body (Speiser & Bachmann, 2020). Unfortunately, vaccine production requires a series of studies over a long period. Bill Gates once said scientists need at least 18 months until the vaccine is ready for mass use. On the other hand, the spread of COVID-19 is very fast and can pass through various media and last quite a long time in some objects. If we stand still waiting for the vaccine to be ready for use, the spread of this virus will be more widespread.

Meanwhile, as already mentioned, not all individuals have the same ability to respond to this virus attack. When the body can no longer deal with it, then what happens is death. Today, there have been 1,490,216 deaths caused by COVID-19 infection or around 2.3% of the total positive cases. Therefore, we need to stop the spread of this virus. Rasulullah SAW once gave an example of how he took a stance when there was an epidemic.

“From Siti Aisyah R.A, she said, I asked Rasulullah SAW about Tha’un, then Rasulullah SAW told me, first, Tha’un is a punishment that Allah sends to whomever He wills, but Allah makes it a blessing for the believers. So, no one was afflicted with Tha’un, then he restrained himself at home patiently and hoped for His pleasure while realizing that Tha’un would not befall him unless it had been a provision of Allah for him, he would surely receive a reward like the reward of a martyr” (HR. Bukhari, Nasa’i and Ahmad).

There are at least three things we can learn from this hadith in our efforts to suppress the spread of the virus, namely: when an epidemic occurs, and we should refrain from staying at home, an effort is more important than trust and respect the lives of others so that they are rewarded like martyrs. The story of this plague can have a different ending in each country (Lee, 2020). The ending of this story hinges on the policies taken by the government to suppress its spread. Concerning the three points above, various policies have been issued by the Indonesian government to suppress the spread of COVID-19, including the following:

1. Physical distancing or keeping a safe distance. It is known that this virus spreads through the medium of droplets expelled by sufferers. These droplets will be able to stick to the body (especially the hands, mouth, and nose) because they float until they evaporate in the air. Before evaporating in the air, these droplets can stick to objects or other people by touch, touching the same object, or being carried in the air. The wider the distance between each other, the less chance the droplets will stick.

2. Social distancing or social restrictions. Based on the characteristics described above, we also need to refrain from non-essential outdoor activities apart from keeping our distance.

3. Implementing PSBB (large-scale social restrictions) in several areas is a broader form of social distancing and is supported by regional regulations with strict discipline enforcement and accompanied by sanctions or penalties following these regulations.

The policies above, in fact, have changed most of the dimensions of life, livelihood, and livelihood of people around the world. Coupled with a very massive campaign involving various parties. Therefore, almost all community activities are affected by this policy. In addition, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has changed various aspects of human life, including education in Indonesia (Herliandry et al., 2020). The implementation of the physical distancing, social distancing, and PSBB policies gave birth to a new policy in the world of education with the name learning from home. This policy is stated in the Circular of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Educational Policies in the Emergency Period of the Spread of COVID-19, the implementation of which is described in the Circular of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 15 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for
the Implementation of Learning from Home. This guide is addressed to all Governors and Regents throughout Indonesia. Finally, all regional leaders in Indonesia decided to close schools to reduce people's contact massively for the sake of spreading this virus.

There are at least two impacts on the sustainability of education caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (Syah, 2020). One of them is the short-term impact felt by many families in Indonesia, both in the city and in the village. Most families in Indonesia are not used to doing homeschooling. For Indonesian families, doing school at home is a big change, especially for parents who usually work outside the home. On the other hand, learning from home also means studying at a considerable distance. Unlike in the classroom, interactions between teachers and students are limited by distance and time. The implementation of distance learning takes place online using video conferencing or e-learning facilities. This policy also requires testing of distance education, which has seldom been carried out simultaneously for all elements of education (Sun et al., 2020), namely students, teachers, and parents. Likewise, with the psychological problems of students who are used to learning face to face with their teachers and friends. This phenomenon also occurs in Islamic boarding schools.

Pesantren is a model of the first Islamic educational institution that supports the continuity of national education (Barizi, 2011). Initially, the pesantren functioned as a center for Islamic education and broadcasting (Hidayat et al., 2018). In addition, pesantren also play a role in various other fields. Starting from efforts to educate the nation, the results of various observations show that Islamic boarding schools have an important role in the history of education in the country and have contributed a lot in educating the people. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it began to shift the order of the learning process, which usually takes place: one example is face-to-face learning turning into online learning (UNICEF, 2020). This shift in the learning model has begun to create challenges for the teacher or Ustaz in evaluating the students' learning development (Syah, 2020). Generally, indicators of student discipline are measured by the time they come to school. Still, now this is an obstacle for the Ustaz, especially if the students who implement the online system are mostly from lower economic circles and are in areas that do not support the internet network. Likewise, it is rather difficult to control the students in activities such as compulsory worship and other sunnah (Kahfi & Kasanova, 2020). Like one of the Islamic educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools have not provided an adaptive model to this problem.

Based on this problem, many Islamic boarding schools finally continue to organize learning activities (religious/cottage and public) in the form of dormitories (cottages) as usual and face-to-face learning. Kompas.com, on September 24, 2020, reported that there were 20 Islamic boarding schools affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. The highest number occurred in Islamic boarding schools in the Banyuwangi area, with 622 cases. A month later, on October 23, 2020, according to a kompas.com report, there were 20 Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province exposed to COVID-19. Although it is not clear how many positive confirmed cases there are, these two reports indicate that organizing learning in Islamic boarding schools has contributed to the increase in the spread of this epidemic. Decision-making or policy in an organization is a series in management (Hayati et al., 2021). In short, management is an organization's effort to regulate a process or system that starts from planning and then continues with work distribution, implementation, and control. Thus, decision-making that ultimately leads to bad things, even though it is predicted that this will happen, can reflect management or management that is not good.

Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School is one of the modern Islamic boarding schools in Jayanti District, Tangerang Regency, Banten Province. Daar El Qolam itself is very famous for all Indonesian people, even at the Southeast Asian level. Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic boarding school has more than 1000 students spread over two levels of education, namely junior high and high school. Thus, in terms of curriculum, Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic boarding school has two types of
curriculums, namely the boarding school curriculum and the Ministry of Education and Culture curriculum. Especially for the high school level, since 2015, the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School has had a foundation class program in collaboration with Management and Science University in Malaysia. Since 2018, the foundation class has collaborated with Al-Azhar University in Egypt and opened the Foundation for Dirosah Islamiyah program. So that students who take part in the foundation program have one other curriculum, namely the foundation curriculum set by partner universities; since 2019, the foundation program can be followed by students/high school students starting from 10th-grade class.

This paper attempts to photograph the management practice of providing education at the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic boarding school during the COVID-19 pandemic by describing matters relating to the most optimal management of Islamic boarding schools to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Management is very important to ensure that the pesantren institution runs optimally for its development and the progress of the pesantren itself. Pesantren with a low or even poor management system will reduce the efficiency of a pesantren (Salim & Makhshun, 2018). It is hoped that Islamic boarding schools will get a practical overview of the implementation of education management amid a pandemic, especially COVID-19, hoping that all tasks, roles, and main functions of Islamic boarding schools as educational institutions will continue to run optimally in minimal conditions. This study aims to describe the management of Islamic boarding school learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHOD

The discussion uses a qualitative data approach and analysis. The data collected is in the form of information regarding learning activities at Islamic Boarding Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Based on these data, descriptive analysis was carried out with reflective techniques. The research data source is the manager of the Daar El-Qolam 3 Jayanti Islamic boarding school, Tangerang, Banten, including head Majelis Tausiyah, Director, Head Office, Administrative, and Teachers. Meanwhile, data collection techniques used interviews, observation, and documentation of learning activities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Policy on Education Implementation at Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School, Jayanti, Tangerang, Banten during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world and Indonesia, especially in the field of education, the caregivers of the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School immediately took preventive steps by taking the following policies: (1) Accelerate the completion of learning activities in formal schools (face to face, exams, and verification of exam results or student coursework); (2) Advancing the return schedule of students. So that all students carry out fasting and holidays together with their families at home; (3) Coordinate with foundation partner universities to verify online coursework; and (4) Implement a limited lockdown in the Daar El-Qolam Islamic Boarding School 3.

Welcoming the new academic year 2020/2021, the caregivers of the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School prepared the following learning activity scenarios: (1) Setting up the e-learning server so that it is ready to use. Here one person is appointed as the person in charge of e-learning implementation from installation, training to maintenance; (2) Provide training on the use and optimization of e-learning for all Ustaz/Ustazah, both regular and foundation programs. It follows the curriculum demands of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Foundation; and (3) Implementing an online learning system using e-learning that has been prepared and
video conferencing using Google Meet. In this activity, the person in charge of the program is in charge of arranging the conference schedule and distributing video conference links from the Ustaz/Ustazah to the guardians of the students. For regular classes, the person in charge of the program is the homeroom teacher, while for the foundation program, the person in charge is the management of the academic field.

The Islamic boarding school's online learning policy is going very well because both the boarding school and the parents of the students have the ability and possibility to do online learning. Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic boarding school choosing to use self-managed e-learning is also a form of managerial responsibility in controlling. Through e-learning, the management can monitor the attendance of Santri/students and Ustaz/Ustazah, who teaches. This online learning policy only lasted a few weeks until finally, all students returned to the boarding. The procedure for returning students to the boarding school is made as strict as possible, starting from scheduling, parking space arrangements, and drop-off rules without being followed by parents. The students dropped by their parents went straight to the dormitory, while the parents and the introduction were directed to leave the cottage immediately. After all the students returned, the boarding school implemented a mass rapid test policy to carry out tracing. The result is known that there is one positive student. Because they did not show serious symptoms, the lodge decided to self-quarantine and was placed in a clinic owned by the lodge. The rapid test policy is also applied to all lecturers and administrative staff working in the cottage environment. In addition, at the entrance gate, body temperature checks are carried out for anyone who will enter the cottage; each vehicle must go through a chamber/disinfectant sprayer installed at the entrance gate. Finally, the odd semester learning activities for the 2020/2021 academic year are fully offline/face-to-face after reopening in August 2020. Likewise, religious development activities are the core of Santri activities.

In addition to learning policies, the Pondok also issued a policy to increase the endurance of students. Among them is reducing the duration of learning in class which was originally 45 minutes to 35 minutes per lesson hour, likewise with the number of hours of lessons which were originally 7 hours to 6 hours of lessons. The time that is not used for studying is completely used for resting. Until the return of students, namely November 12, 2020, there were no reports that said there were new cases at the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School. Therefore, re-implementing the online learning policy until January 2021. The boarding has also evaluated online learning activities using e-learning and created a new learning model that will be implemented later.

Reflective Overview of Education Implementation Policies at Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School, Jayanti, Tangerang, Banten during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Several positive policies for the implementation of education at the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School, Jayanti, Tangerang, Banten during the COVID-19 pandemic need to be maintained while still being improved especially from the managerial side. Nevertheless, the policy has been well planned and implemented. It is evident from the quality of the implementation of learning both general knowledge and religion that follows the government's health protocols. Its implementation also includes various physical and non-physical, both for prevention and treatment for the achievement of educational goals and the implementation of the duties, roles, and functions of education in Islamic boarding schools. Some of the things that need attention include the following:

1) In terms of organization, Islamic boarding schools need to form a special task force tasked with taking quick and decisive action regarding the prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is intended to distribute educational tasks and obligations well and not charge as additional tasks (Brammer & Clark, 2020). As a result, it is hoped that the implementation of health protocols in Islamic boarding schools can run according to the standards set.
2) In terms of control, with the existence of this task force, the implementation of educational policies in Islamic boarding schools during the COVID-19 pandemic can be evaluated periodically, and the quality of its implementation is improved so that learning objectives are achieved while still prioritizing safety and health.

3) In terms of financing, Islamic boarding schools need to allocate special funds obtained independently or through government assistance in order to suppress the spread of the virus in the pesantren environment through preventive measures in the form of procurement of tools and materials, education, and providing additional living costs for families or parties whom family members were exposed to this virus.

4) In terms of documentation, Islamic boarding schools, through their special team, document all forms of policy and implementation of educational policies during the COVID-19 pandemic in detail with the assumption that if in the future a similar epidemic occurs (we pray that we will be kept away from all kinds of disasters and disasters). danger), Islamic boarding schools already have a blueprint for handling disasters in the form of epidemics so that no panic or overreaction harms the community members of the boarding school and those living around the boarding school.

Discussion

According to Hamzah in Nasruloh, what is meant by Islamic Boarding School Management is combining Islamic Boarding Education resources so that they are centered on achieving the predetermined goals of Islamic Boarding Education (Nasruloh, 2019). In other words, education management is the mobilization of all Islamic boarding school education resources to achieve the educational goals that have been set (Fadillah, 2015). So the management of Islamic Boarding School is essentially a process of structuring and managing Islamic Boarding School institutions that involve human and non-human resources in mobilizing to achieve the goals of Islamic Boarding Education effectively and efficiently.

Concerning Islamic boarding school management, the management of the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic boarding school, Jayanti, Tangerang, Banten, is generally divided into management related to Physical and Non-physical.

Physical management

As described above, the policies of Islamic boarding schools in terms of optimizing physical conditions are categorized into two, namely prevention and control:

a) Prevention. Prevention efforts are carried out by: (1) providing longer rest periods both while at home with their parents and when they return to the cottage, namely by reducing the duration and number of hours of lessons each day; (2) conducting rapid tests on all newly arrived students and teaching staff and administrative staff; (3) requires to attach the results of a swab test to anyone who has been tested positive; and (4) distributing masks, face shields, and hand sanitizers.

b) Countermeasures. Performing physical examination of patients at the cottage clinic. If the condition does not show severe symptoms, the patient is isolated in the clinic. Instead, they were handed over to a COVID-19 referral hospital for better treatment. During isolation, students are not allowed to participate in learning activities in class and are only allowed to participate in online learning activities. Before being declared free from COVID-19, the patient must do a swab test.

Non-physical Management

Non-physical management includes

a) General Education Curriculum. At first, the general education curriculum was held in online form utilizing the e-learning facilities owned by the cottage. Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic Boarding School has also subscribed to Google Meet Enterprise for video conference purposes.
Each Ustaz/Ustazah has created an account so that they can use the Google Meet facility. This online learning policy is not implemented for a full semester because Islamic boarding school educational activities cannot be carried out online. During offline learning activities, the boarding school implements strict prevention policies, especially those related to the learning process, such as: (1) Must use a mask or face shield when in class; (2) Wash hands with soap or hand sanitizer before and after entering class; (3) Minimizing interaction between teachers and students, teachers are required to keep their distance from students; (4) Minimize group and collaborative learning activities; (5) Teachers optimize the use of quiz applications and online learning; (6) Minimize the use of paper from outside; as much as possible, students record assignments or information in their notebooks; and (7) Streamline learning activities because there is a reduction in the duration and number of hours of lessons per day.

b) Islamic Boarding School Education Curriculum. The learning activities of the Santri through the new curriculum can be carried out when they return to the pesantren environment. Learning activities are carried out face-to-face, apply strict health protocols, and reduce the duration and hours of lessons to provide opportunities for students to rest.

c) Teaching System. The teaching system can be interpreted as a method used to convey goals (Sari, 2016). Islamic boarding schools rather uniformly apply the teaching system that we often know, namely: Sorogan, Bandungan, rote, and many others. However, during this pandemic, Islamic boarding schools used the online recitation method. Reciting online for students who are at home still requires cooperation from parents or guardians to support and assist online learning at home properly.

d) Financing System. Islamic boarding schools provide additional expenditure costs in the form of material or non-material (UNICEF, 2020). Providing online learning tools certainly costs much money, from purchasing servers, renting domains, internet subscriptions, infrastructure setup, training, and Google Meet subscriptions. Thus, investment in technology for Islamic boarding schools has become a priority for the time being. It is called an investment because, in time, learning activities will return to normal, so the Islamic boarding school already has the tools and infrastructure that can still be used.

CONCLUSION

Almost all forms of daily activities in Islamic boarding schools, such as memorization, discipline enforcement, student creativity, and formal learning in the classroom, are affected by government policies that require preventive measures in the form of physical distancing, social distancing, and some areas apply PSBB or Large-Scale Social Restrictions. These policies were finally responded to in various forms by Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, the education policy of Islamic boarding schools is one manifestation of how the management of Islamic boarding schools provides education in Islamic boarding schools. Management of Islamic boarding schools that can be taken related to the implementation of education can be broadly categorized into two things, namely: physical management and non-physical management. Physical management technically regulates the policies of Islamic boarding schools in terms of disaster prevention and management. Meanwhile, non-physical management technically regulates how the policies of Islamic boarding schools in terms of providing education include the formal curriculum, cottage curriculum, learning system, and financing system.

The implementation of management at the Daar El-Qolam 3 Islamic boarding school, Jayanti, Tangerang, Banten, has generally followed the appeals and policies that have been decided by the government while still being based on the policies of the pesantren caregivers. Furthermore, all forms of handling obstacles that occur are due to the absence of preparation and technical references in the event of a pandemic, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, Islamic boarding schools can optimize their policies by properly describing each management component, including planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling.
Therefore, these four functions need to be clearly described so that the policies taken and implemented can run according to the plan to achieve the goals and main functions of Islamic boarding schools while still paying attention to government appeals.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


