

Pondok Pesantren and Plurality of Humanity

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Abstract. In the era with no communication boundaries, such as *Pesantren Salafiyah*, are faces the new challenges. It students are exposed only to study Islamic knowledge through classical books. It the unlimited access of communication has encountered humans to varians socio-cultural societies. In this regard, it emerges as an educational institution that has a mission to bring social harmony over the diverse conflicts occurred in diverse societies. This study is aimed to give an understanding of how it institutions can prepare the graduates to face the challenges in the heterogeneous modern societies. The results of research that 1) The social harmony in heterogeneous socio-cultural society is perceived as the biggest challenge to the *Pesantren Salafiyah*, 2) It also needs student learn general knowledge such as social sciences to strengthen the students' understanding on the human diversities, 3) The teacher should be applied to the wise of methods of teaching-learning process.

Keywords: Pesantren, plurality, student and teacher.

1. Introduction

Plurality is the nature of human life, therefore it must be understood as something taken for granted. *Pesantren* is part of the educational institutions that see the plurality as something that has to be understood wisely. This educational institution has been established since the spread of early Islam in the Walisongo era, in which Nusantara was still under Dutch colonization [1]. Physically, this education is already experiencing its dynamics began as a place to study religion held at Mosque porch, which initially learned to read the Koran as an Islamic holy book, then study religion such as *tauhid*, *fiqh*, and other religious teachings [2]. Mosque initially as a place of learning that is very limited. Throughout the periods, many student (*santri*) from outside regions came to learn religion and require the places to live. Thenceforward, they built a place in Mosque neighborhood which later called as *Pesantren*.

Pesantren is an original form of Muslim educational institution in the archipelago. In the era of Walisongo, *Pesantren* was founded by Raden Ahmad in the 16th century in Gresik, East Java. *Pesantren* was driven from the word *santri* which consists of two syllables *sant* (good people) and *tra* to create good people [3]. Meanwhile, Berg states that the word *santri* comes from the word *shastri* or *shastra* which means someone who has a capability to understand religious books and its teachings. The first *Pesantren* on the Java Island, and currently has been developed in the most part of Indonesian archipelago. Zamakhsyari Dofier believes that *pesantren* has 4 characteristics, are: they have a Mosque, *Kiyai* (Islamic Scholars), *santri* and *Kitab Kuning* (yellow books) as a source of reference for studying religions [4].

Pesantren exists in a nation with a remarkable plurality in both of religion and others. Indeed, the Muslim community is also part of plural society. *Pesantren* is currently in the era of science and technology development, where the values of plurality are clearly visible. Nevertheless, the plurality in the religious notion frequently created obstacles for social cohesiveness in which conflicts are often occurred and pluralism is seen as unnatural phenomenon. Hence, this part of *Pesantren's* challenges to convince the societies that pluralism has to be regarded as a natural thing.

Pesantren has existed since the Dutch colonial era, by which its development has passed through an adequate process in term of quantity and quality. Currently, *Pesantren Salafiyah* has become part of the national education system. Therefore, the institution plays significantly in the country's development. However, Islamic education including *Pesantren Salafiyah*, has not contributed significantly to the nation especially in the aspect of morality [5] [21].

2. Literature Review

Pesantrens are Islamic education institutions in Indonesia, which are almost entirely established by the community and their numbers are increasing today. This education has been around since the beginning of the spread of Islam in the community, which received support from the Sultan at that time. *Pesantrens* are the original education for Muslims in the archipelago. This institution was first established by Raden Ahmad in the 16th century in Gresik East Java [6]. *Pesantren* from the word *santri* consists of two syllables *sant* (good people) and *tra* to print good people [3]. Zamakhsyari Dofier with the view that *pesantren* has 4 characteristics, namely: there are mosques, there are kyai, santri and *kitab kuning* as a source of reference for religious teachings [4].

In the early days, the *santri* learned to read the Qur'an from an *ustadz* in his house or in the mosque, the learning material was increased for studying the religion such as fiqh, ushul fiqh and others [6]. There are also teachings of the knowledge of *mantiq*, *balaghah*, *faraidh* and others [7]. Aside from being a place to study religious knowledge as well as a place to shape character *santri* such as discipline, honesty, independence and so on. The learning process starts after Morning Prayer until night around 9 PM and generally the students are prohibited from watching TV or listening to the radio, so it doesn't interfere with the learning. They are trained independently like washing their own dirty clothes [1].

Their learning resources, *kitab kuning*, have several levels: initial level, intermediate level, and high level according to the length of time of the students studying at the *pesantren*. The learning model exists *sorogan* where every *santri* learns directly to the *kiai*, the *santri* immediately hears the reading from *kiai* and their explanation. Secondly, the *bandongan* model, namely the *santri* studying in the *kiai* in groups, they record the explanation of the *kiai* on the side of the *kitab kuning* or give meaning in under paragraph or sentence. Third, the *halaqah* model, the *santri* learns in groups, discuss problems and find solutions [8].

In the colonial era, the Dutch government established educational institutions to prepare the natives as administrators in the colonial government. Students studied at the class which the subjects were Math and other Sciences. These subjects were adopted later on in *Pesantren* education. This is it the first dynamics that occurred in *Pesantren* [9]. There are also Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Java developing the curriculum with class learning models and student's evaluation.

In Kalong Islamic boarding schools, *santris* only spent the time of study in boarding schools. Some salafiyah *pesantrens* emphasize skills such as sewing, carpentry, cooperatives,

and other useful skills for preparing students after they graduate from the pesantren. *Pesantren* also develops their potential to become community development centers [10]. Islamic boarding school with Law No. 20, 2003, and Government Regulation No. 55, 2007 has become part of the national education system, *Pesantren* also participates in the 9 years of Compulsory Education Program, as well as the Package Program level A, B and C. *Santri* also study non-religious knowledge so that the graduates are recognized as graduates like at other formal schools [11].

In relation to plurality, Nurcholish Madjid wrote a book entitled *Islam Doctrine and civilization* whose contents are discussed about human plurality. Nurcholish cited a verse of the Qur'an, "mankind, indeed we created you from a man and a woman and make you nations and tribes so that you know each other know; truly the noblest person among humans on the side Allah is the one who most feared among you. "Allah knowers and knowing"[12].

Based on the paragraph according to Nurcholish which was expected from each community accepting pluralism as it is. We should grow healthy attitudes in the plurality, which is as *harpiyah* explained in the verse of the Qur'an in advance. A healthy attitude is to use aspects the advantages to maximally encourage in an effort to realize various goodness (*Al-khairat*) in society. All of that is due only to God the Knower, in the most final sense, of good and bad, right, wrong. And God also will gather all humanity to be given the final decision in justice and generosity [13].

3. Method

This result of paper is use of qualitative research, research library, materials taken from scientific journals, and relevant books. Data are collected and then sorted by the history and development of *pesantren salafiyah*. Normative data about plurality from Holy Scriptures, the data related to learning material at *Pesantren*, and data related to religious teachers who teach in Islamic boarding schools are also collected. Then I was written and analyzed from a philosophical, sociological, and normative side. Research is expecting to become the preliminary study of plurality in the world of education in *Pesantren*.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Education in Pesantren and Plurality

Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools have a number of santri in the range of 1,882,901. 18,232 are an organization number and the number of *ustadz* are approximately 80,000 [14], a very significant amount as a resource Indonesian. Islamic boarding schools now exist in the midst of the challenges of life whose values sometimes different from the religious values that exist such as the attitude of living materialism and individualism. In fact, it has a plurality in the view of human life.

Islamic boarding schools are an important medium for developing intelligence to understand plurality. Plurality is *sunnatullah* something that is taken for granted in the life of the *Ummah*. A plurality of culture, race, and religion are something natural that exists in humanity [15]. Humans are created in a variety of nations, there are Western, Eastern, various skin colors such as white, black, reddish-red, and brownish. Different beliefs - there are Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism and many other beliefs. Islamic teachings tolerate where there is no compulsion in embracing the religion, *lakum dinukum waliadin*, for you your religion for me my religion [16]. In fact, plurality in a religion can become a source of conflict and even a source of war as it is

reflected in the history of mankind. Likewise, religion is often misunderstood as the norms that limit the right to expression are often ridiculed and laughed at well in the form of satire and other forms. For those who make fun of who has the belief in freedom also falls on the same hole as a belief that must be forced on other parties. Both have the same attitude which is to impose his belief. Religion should be seen as a value that is adhered to and believed to be individuals who can give guidance to someone, but that is, of course, is the prerogative of the Creator.

Recent phenomena show that religion is described as a tool of conflict between streams Shia and Sunny in the Middle East and even unity is broken inside a nation. Fellow nations are fighting each other, killing each other as if there is no way out rational of differences that exist except settlement with deadly weaponry. Each considers himself right in the way of his Lord. Muslim nations like Indonesia on a small scale feel that but also watch it through TV and feel deep sorrow. Those who are in conflict will absolutely experience the pain due to war, at that time, they felt there is a feeling of sadness, but the sadness soon disappears because his mind is defeated by emotion evil that is in him. No one wins the war; the winner also loses moreover the losers. The real winners are those who produce weapons. The weapon sold and only benefited a handful of people or few countries.

Religion is a sacred and pure norm. No religion commands war, except if one religious belief becomes threatened by others. Religion is a manifestation of the diversity of humanity with colorful skin, different tastes, the culture is also different. Seeing these events requires a variety of enlightenment from the experts to understand how real human plurality is in life.

Educational institutions are strategic pillars in shaping one's thinking patterns. In an educational institution, someone can accept a variety of values, and in the community sometimes we see the phenomenon of people who do not understand the existence of plurality in various things through information tools there are sectarian phenomena, anarchism which views plurality something that should not happen in human life, this is the mission of education in pesantren to minimize it.

4.2 Learning Materials and Teachers' Figure

Learning material is crucial to forming *santri*'s behaviors that are pluralist and tolerance as well as determine the level of knowledge of the teachers. *Santri* is used to hearing verses whose message is for humanity, verses that have been described and mentioned above. *Santri* learns Islamic religion which contains tolerance toward other people's belief such mentioned in one of verse *lakum dinukum waliadin*. In the study *Tauhid*, they learn "schools" or *religious sects* in understanding the existence of God, such as *Muktazilah*, a stream that negates God's destiny in human life, and *Jabariyah* that sees humans as just like God's robots, there are more the middle school, called *As'ayriyah*, which believes that humans have potential, but God also has destiny in humans [17]. Furthermore, the students also learn the knowledge of *fiqh*, they learn *fiqh* which are conceived by *Imam Mazhab*. There are at least four opinions in interpreting the verses related to the way of worship in Koran. Therefore, the *fiqh* shows that there are differences in practicing religious teachings that are distinguished experienced by the *ummah* according to their circumstances [18]. Simultaneously, they study the knowledge of *usul fiqh* to seek solutions and alternatives to respond to the dynamics occurred in societies.

Santri is such a hope for societies' lives. They have understood the religious message whose contents are full of tolerance to the differences in the social lives. In the midst of this dynamic life, *Pesantren* must continue to present the teachers and the preachers who have an insight of plurality. They keep conveying the believed values and also describe the teachings

of Islam that are *rahmatan lil alamien*, as well as giving the enlightenment of productive values for humanity. Teaching staff at *Pesantren* not only convey these values of tolerance, indeed, tolerance is required for humans to perceive the differences as the colors of life so that they do not discriminate others even though they are different in religion and culture. The attached values in the *Pesantren* curriculum is now being developed by giving a new approach of disciplines in other sciences, such as sociology, psychology and so on. The method used by teachers needs to be simultaneously developed so that the lessons conveyed to the *santri* were able to be truly implemented in their everyday lives and behavior.

Through the knowledge they have, they can understand that the differences of Islamic teaching or religious sect is a given example for them to respond the pluralities in the societies and being middle *ummah* showering positives values to the societies. Then, through their insights, they invite the *ummah* to understand the existing differences. In understanding these differences, Prof. Mukti Ali, The Former Minister of Religions, in the 1970s said that the right attitude was „agree in disagreement” [19]. A nation can be built on the diversities, hence, diversities should not be an obstacle, rather, it is as part of the dynamic perspectives.

The tradition of dialogue is commonly used by *santri* in studying *Muzakarah*, in which they try to listen and respect to the other’s opinion. This method is ordered by the Koran to always conduct a dialogue to solve the problems [2].

One of the goals of education in a nation is to prepare human resources to build the nation. Development is often hampered by the emergence of social problems, for instance, a conflict between believers because of the plurality of people who certainly can hampering the development of a nation. For this reason, *Pesantren* must be present with a mission to overcome this problem.

5. Conclusion

Salafiyah Pesantrens are part of the nation's exponents to build the country. This education continues to exist today amid the challenges that confront it which also create both positive and negative impacts. This education grows in the pluralist nation such as Indonesia, in term of religions, ethnicities, and cultures. They have norms in their scriptures which provides a space of tolerance for the existing pluralism. They used to live on *Pesantren* in the middle of diverse ethnicities. It strengthens their consciousness that plurality is a natural thing. They learn the *Tauhid*, they study *fiqh* and *usul fiqh*, as a repertoire of attitudes towards existing tolerance. The teachers have been long studying such religious teaching, then, they can inherit the knowledge to the *santri* about the meaning of plurality. Thenceforward, they can form the tolerance societies who can contribute to the nation’s development.

Acknowledgments. The authors gratefully acknowledge that the present research is supported by director and vice director and head of UIKA postgraduate library.

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