



The Role of Kyai and Asatidz in Developing Islamic Teachings Among Students at the I'anatut Tholibin Mojokerto Islamic College

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Abstract

This qualitative phenomenological study analyzes the strategic roles of Kyai and Asatidz in creating Islamic values at the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School in Mojokerto. The study aims to analyze the process of forming Islamic values through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document studies. The results show that these boarding schools remain relevant in the modern era due to their integrative educational approach. A strong emphasis on moral education through direct role modeling is combined with a scientific foundation based on the Qur'an, Hadith, and the classical Shafi'i fiqh texts. Traditional learning methods such as sorogan and bandongan, a comprehensive evaluation system that considers both cognitive and affective aspects, and an educational disciplinary approach support the educational process. Kyai and Asatidz perform various tasks, including teaching, providing spiritual guidance, and exemplifying a life of practice. Although it has advantages in maintaining academic authenticity and character building, this pesantren faces challenges in broadening knowledge across different schools of thought, preparing for the digital era, and confronting the threat of social isolation. This study shows that the traditional pesantren education model is still relevant for strategic changes to address current challenges while maintaining a true Islamic identity.

Keywords:

Islamic Boarding School; Islamic Values; Kyai (Islamic Scholar); Ustadz (Teacher); Students

A. INTRODUCTION

As a traditional Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, especially the I' Anatut Tholibin Islamic boarding school in Mojokerto, it remains relevant in facing the challenges of globalization and digital transformation. This study investigates the strategic role of Kyai and Asatidz in creating Islamic teaching values among the students of Pondok Pesantren I' Anatut Tholibin in Mojokerto. In in-depth interviews, this pesantren affirmed that the fundamental principle of education is that the foundation for all students, especially across Indonesia, is primarily the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith (Saini, 2024). Thus, by using the Qur'an and Hadith as the foundation of its education, Pesantren I' Anatut Tholibin proves to be relevant in facing globalization. This study focuses on the strategic role of Kyai and Asatidz in shaping Islamic values. This indicates that the pesantren is committed to adhering firmly to the original sources of Islamic teachings.

In this study, the role of the Kyai is proven to be multi-dimensional. The Kyai not only leads in the field of religious knowledge but also preserves and spreads authentic Islamic traditions. Relying on scholars with sources from hadith and the Qur'an is crucial in the applied educational system. In his study on the role of the Kyai in traditional pesantren, "The Kyai not only serves as

a disseminator of knowledge but also as a living curriculum that embodies Islamic values in daily life." The distinguished yellow books (kitab kuning mu'tabarah) document the process of scholarly ijtihad derived from the Qur'an and hadith, serving as the main guideline (Fitria, 2025). Essentially, the role of the Kyai is multi-dimensional, encompassing a leader in knowledge, a guardian of tradition, and a living curriculum that manifests Islamic values. This educational system heavily relies on the authority of scholars and the yellow books based on the Qur'an and Hadith, thereby maintaining the authenticity and purity of the teachings.

The I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School relies on a knowledge transmission system that is maintained very strictly. The Kyai functions as the center and source of knowledge within this structure, like the roots of a tree that connect us to the Quran and Hadith. If previously the knowledge was not handed over or "deposited" by the Asatidz to the Kyai for examination and approval, it is not automatically taught to the students. A quality assessment process, known as Talaqqi, is used to ensure that the students' understanding of religion does not decline. Classical methods such as bandongan and sorogan eventually become ways to disseminate original knowledge. Through intensive interaction and supervision between educators and students, they also serve as a method of teaching character. As a result, Islamic teachings are passed down from generation to generation.

The Asatidz, who usually come from the same pesantren, play an important role in maintaining the line of knowledge. The method of delivering material from the Asatidz to the Kyai before it is taught to the students is an effective quality control method. Therefore, the system of transmitting knowledge (talaqqi) in pesantren ensures the authenticity and accuracy of Islamic knowledge transmission. Learning methods such as bandongan and sorogan not only convey information to others but also build their character through intensive interaction.

As educational subjects, the students (santri) show a positive reaction to the system used. The direct experiences of the santri indicate that individuals like Ustadz Jamaluddin in reading the Qur'an become a real inspiration. The results show that "role modeling" or exemplification becomes a key factor in the internalization of Islamic values within the santri, supporting research on the effectiveness of character education in pesantren. An evaluation system that includes cognitive and affective aspects, as well as an educative disciplinary approach, creates an environment conducive to the formation of santri character (Chandra, 2019). In conclusion, the santri show a positive response to the pesantren education system; the cognitive and affective evaluation system creates an environment that supports the overall growth of santri character.

In addition, the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School has developed an innovative approach to addressing contemporary issues. Proper adaptation is evident in policies that prohibit the use of mobile phones and internal filters that protect against the impact of social media. In studies of Islamic boarding schools in the modern era, "critical digital literacy has become an urgent necessity in Islamic educational environments to filter the negative effects of technology." The division of students into three levels and special programs for students based on specific issues demonstrates a comprehensive and integrated approach (Hasna et al., 2025). It can be concluded that the boarding school uses policies such as social media filtering and mobile phone restrictions as essential digital literacy methods. These policies, along with student grouping and special programs, demonstrate a holistic and integrated approach to addressing the challenges of the times.

This Islamic boarding school demonstrates its strength in facing globalization and digital transformation through proactive and careful actions. The rules that limit the influence of social media and the seemingly strict use of mobile phones are actually a relevant form of adaptation to strengthen the students' resilience and equip them with essential digital skills. The boarding school focuses on developing strong moral values and Islamic identity, as well as creating an environment that is not influenced by technology. They also meet the unique needs of the students through tiered arrangements and tailored guidance programs.

By using a three-component analysis among Kyai, Asatidz, and santri, this study enhances our understanding of how Islamic values are shaped in traditional pesantren. This study is not only relevant for the advancement of pesantren education in Indonesia, but it can also serve as a

reference for international Islamic educational institutions facing similar challenges in maintaining Islamic identity in the global era.

B. METHODS

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, which is a type of phenomenological study, meaning a qualitative research approach that focuses on the subjective experiences of individuals or groups related to a particular phenomenon. This approach was chosen to thoroughly understand the meaning, essence, and real experiences of Kyai, Asatidz, and santri in internalizing Islamic values. The researcher functions as an important tool to explore the phenomenon comprehensively from a field perspective (Nuryana et al., 2019). Therefore, this study was conducted using a qualitative approach, which is a type of phenomenological study. This approach was chosen to thoroughly understand the meaning and subjective experiences of Kyai, Asatidz, and santri. The researcher uses this approach as the main instrument to study the phenomenon from a field perspective.

Data were collected through triangulation from various sources, including in-depth interviews with Kyai, Asatidz, and students. Participatory observation of pesantren activities, as well as documentation studies of the curriculum and books used (Nurfajriani et al., 2024). Thus, this study ensures data validity through comprehensive collection methods from primary and secondary sources using a triangulation approach.

To analyze the collected data, the Miles and Huberman interactive model was used, which consists of three main stages. First, Data Reduction, where the researcher sorts, focuses, and simplifies raw data from the field. For example, collecting data on the role of Kyai, methods of teaching moral values, evaluation systems, and issues encountered. Second, the researcher displays the processed research data in the form of narrative descriptions. This makes it easier for the researcher to understand patterns and relationships among the data. One example is the relationship between the takzir method and changes in santri' behavior. Finally, Drawing Conclusions, which involves deriving meaning from the presented data. Initial conclusions will continue to be verified throughout the research to ensure their accuracy (Sulaiman & Ismail, 2023). This data analysis uses the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This model allows researchers to simplify data, identify patterns, and draw verifiable meanings from the collected data.

This study uses source triangulation to ensure the accuracy of its data. This means that information about a particular matter, such as the effectiveness of the Bahtsul Masail method, will be examined and compared from various sources, such as Kyai, senior Asatidz, and students actively participating in it. The study aims to provide a comprehensive, in-depth, and contextual overview of how Kyai and Asatidz shape Islamic values in students at Pondok Pesantren I'Anatut Tholibin, ranging from ideological foundations, practical methods, to approaches for facing contemporary challenges. This research ensures data accuracy by comparing data from various sources. The ultimate goal is to provide a thorough and contextual depiction of the formation of Islamic values, from ideological foundations to how they can be applied in daily life at the Islamic boarding school.

C. RESULT & DISCUSSION

As part of a qualitative research approach, in-depth interviews are an important tool for obtaining data directly from the source. The image below shows a recording of an interview with key informants at the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic boarding school in Mojokerto, namely the Kyai, Ustadz, and Santri. Through this direct interaction, researchers can learn about the views, experiences, and in-depth understanding of the role of Kyai and Asatidz in instilling Islamic values. Kyai emphasized the main foundation of the pesantren: "First, the foundation for all santri, especially throughout Indonesia, is the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. For traditional pesantren that are not modern, it is said that every santri must adhere to the ulama. The source of guidance from the ulama comes from the Hadith and the Qur'an." He also emphasized the importance of morals: "Second, regarding morals, this occupies the number one position,

especially in the current era. Even in the Hadith, morals are placed above knowledge. However, on the other hand, manners must also be accompanied by knowledge." Regarding methods, Kyai explained: "Third, specifically in Islamic boarding schools, the methods applied are not only taught verbally. Teaching does not stop there, but also applies the knowledge taught by the masyayikh. This method is strongly emphasized, especially in the application of morals."

The teachers explained the evaluation system that is implemented: "In one month, teachers from various fields in the pesantren participate in evaluating the santri, covering all pesantren activities. For formal school activities, evaluations are conducted at different frequencies, for example every three months." They also apply educational takzir: "For example, when someone does not perform the prayer as part of a qualitative research approach, in depth interviews are an important tool for obtaining data directly from the source. The image below shows a recording of an interview with key informants at the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School in Mojokerto, namely the Kyai, Ustadz, and Santri. Through this direct interaction, researchers can learn about the views, experiences, and in depth understanding of the role of Kyai and Asatidz in instilling Islamic values. Kyai emphasized the main foundation of the pesantren: "First, the foundation for all santri, especially throughout Indonesia, is the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. For traditional pesantren that are not modern, it is said that every santri must adhere to the ulama. The source of guidance from the ulama comes from the Hadith and the Qur'an." He also emphasized the importance of morals: "Second, regarding morals, this occupies the number one position, especially in the current era. Even in the hadith, morals are placed above knowledge. However, on the other hand, manners must also be accompanied by knowledge." In terms of methodology, Kyai explained: "Third, specifically in Islamic boarding schools, the methods applied are not only taught verbally. Teaching does not stop there, but also applies the knowledge taught by the masyayikh. This method is strongly emphasized, especially in the application of morals."

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(According to Kyai Abdur Rosyid). A kyai has a very broad and profound role in a pesantren. According to Ustadz Abdur Rosyid, "The duty of a kyai is to be a person who practices the teachings of the Qur'an." If the knowledge contained in the book is not present in the kyai, then the santri cannot possess it. This shows that a kyai is not only a teacher who teaches, but also a good example in everyday life. In addition, he stated that "Islamic boarding schools are bastions of faith and traditional knowledge." This shows that kyai have a responsibility to maintain the integrity of Islamic teachings by adhering to the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic texts. The relationship between kyai and santri is also based on love. The bond between kyai and santri is based on love for Allah. From this love comes respect, ease in giving advice, and the strength to shape their character (adab)," he concluded. With exemplary behavior, authority, and love, a Kyai successfully shapes the personality and Islamic morals of the santri.



Figure 1. Interview with Kyai

In the first image, it discusses the main foundation for all students in Indonesia, as conveyed in an interview with a Kyai. Firstly, the foundation for all students, particularly across Indonesia, is primarily the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. For traditional boarding schools that are not modern, it is said that every student must firmly adhere to the scholars. The source of guidance from these scholars comes from the Hadith and the Qur'an. The process of deriving law, particularly in this context, is also carried out through the Qur'an and Hadith. Specifically for fiqh law, its determination is obtained through the ijтиhad of the scholars. The sources of their ijтиhad still utilize the Qur'an and Hadith. The entire process and outcomes of the scholars' ijтиhad are then compiled into guidelines in the form of yellow books. These books are not just any books, but are reliable texts recognized and trusted by the scholars of Ahlussunah wal Jama'ah (Al-Ghifari et al., 2024). Indeed, every effort of interpretation carried out by scholars always adheres to authentic sources, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. This deep and thorough thinking then results in practical guidance written in the form of yellow books. These books are not ordinary works, but have gained the status of mu'tabarah, recognition of their credibility and deep trust among the students of Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah, making them the primary reference in applying and understanding Islamic teachings. The majority of Indonesian students follow the Shafi'i school of thought, with the principle of consistently adhering to one school without mixing it with others. This methodological framework must be deeply instilled in the soul of the students. Morality occupies a primary position in pesantren education, although it must be accompanied by knowledge. Emphasis on morality and humility becomes an important foundation (Hakim, 2023). Thus, student education rests on two pillars consistency in following a school of thought and the cultivation of noble character.

Islamic boarding schools use an educational approach that relies not only on verbal instruction but also on the practices of the teachers, especially to build the character of new students. Nahwu and shorof are also taught to support a deep understanding of religion; both serve as tools for understanding the Qur'an, hadith, and classical Islamic texts (Ghafur, 2025). The goal of combining character education and mastery of these tools is to produce scholars who are not only knowledgeable but also have noble character.

Lessons at the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School are based on the Qur'an, Hadith, and recognized yellow books (whose authority is acknowledged) from the Shafi'i school of thought. The purpose of emphasizing one school of thought is to maintain methodological consistency and prevent confusion (talfiq) when deriving rulings. The curriculum aims not only to impart knowledge (ta'lim) but also to instill behavior and tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul). The main subjects include: Aqidah Aswaja, which enhances belief and protects students from radical ideologies. Each subject is carefully monitored to ensure there are no deviations. Fiqh, studied

through standard books such as *Fathul Qorib*. Arabic language, studied through *Nahwu* and *Shorof* sciences, which aid in understanding primary sources. *Akhlaq*, studied through the book *Tashilus Sibyan*, which easily discusses *aqidah*, ethics, and basic rulings (Hidayat et al., 2025). Thus, the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic boarding school uses an integrated education system based on the Qur'an, Hadith, and the classical *Shafi'i* texts. By emphasizing adherence to a school of thought, a cognitive spiritual approach, and closely supervised core material, this pesantren succeeds in shaping a Muslim generation that is both knowledgeable in Islamic sciences and strong in character and spirituality.

At the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School, the Kyai and Asatidz carry out various roles as educators, teachers, spiritual guides, and life role models. They use the *sorogan* and *bandongan* methods, maintain the dissemination of pure knowledge, and emphasize character development based on Islamic values (Fathurrobbani, 2021). As a result, not only does this boarding school provide very beneficial education, but it also produces students of good character who are eager to contribute to society.

Pesantren use various approaches to ensure deep understanding. One of them is *Bahtsul Masail*, also known as Problem Discussion, held three times a week to study *Fiqh*, *Nahwu*, and *Shorof*. This forum teaches students to think critically. *Taqror*, or Repetition, is held in the afternoon to enhance memorization and comprehension. Practical Practice: Students not only learn theory but also apply knowledge, especially those about to graduate, to ensure complete life skills. Then there are class levels: students are divided into three different levels, from the highest, then middle, and lower, to ensure targeted development and prevent negative influences among students (Arifin et al., 2024). Islamic Boarding School I'anatut Tholibin uses a variety of teaching methods that are designed to be both effective and coherent in order to ensure that the entire teaching process is carried out. This pesantren does more than just increase the students' intellectual capacity; it also helps them develop critical life skills and protects them from harmful influences. This is done through the *Bahtsul Masail* forum, *Taqror* activities that enhance memorization, practical application in real life situations, and tiered classes.

The Educational Evaluation and Discipline System involves cognitive assessment (exams, memorization) and affective assessment (behavior, manners). Assessments are conducted periodically for activities at the Pesantren and every three months at school. Disciplinary methods are educational rather than harmful. When students commit minor violations, such as missing congregational prayers, they are reprimanded and given *takzir*, which consists of educational punishments, such as reading one *juz* of the Qur'an. For serious violations, such as dating, they are given constructive sanctions, such as copying the *Jurumiyah* book (basic *Nahwu*) in full, along with its translation. The purpose is not only to increase knowledge but also to reflect on what is wrong (Chandra, 2020). Thus, I'anatut Tholibin Pesantren develops a complete education system by implementing various effective and integrated teaching methods. Through the *Bahtsul Masail* forum, *Taqror* training, and memorization practice, this pesantren enhances the intellectual capacity of its students. In addition, they build self-esteem and protect themselves from environmental threats.

The I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School in Mojokerto actively protects students from the negative effects of the current era. For example, the prohibition of bringing mobile phones is used to prevent moral degradation and distractions from studying. Then, in terms of character development, I'anatut Tholibin Boarding School accepts students with problematic backgrounds, such as former "punk kids," and strives to improve their character through a controlled environment and in-depth approach. Furthermore, in creating internal filters, teachers are trained to pay attention to social media content and avoid getting trapped in negative content (Satiadharmano & Rahman, 2024). In summary, the boarding school actively protects students from the dangers posed by the times. The mobile phone ban helps prevent concentration disruption and moral violations. Character development is carried out through an in-depth approach and a controlled environment. Teachers are guided to create internal filters for social media content.

The Role of Asatidz (Ustadz) towards Santri

The view of the Asatidz (Ustadz) regarding Santri is that they serve as an extension of the Kyai. The Asatidz, or ustaz, work to carry out educational functions more strictly and technically on a daily basis. They are the frontline guardians who uphold the consistency and the 'lineage of knowledge' established by the Kyai. Teaching the Kyai's material (talaqqi) before it is presented to the students is a highly effective way to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information taught. In practice, through traditional teaching methods such as bandongan and sorogan, the Asatidz not only impart knowledge but also develop moral character through deep social relationships, discipline, and learning. As a result of their efforts to balance knowledge with the educational demands of the Santri, the educational process proceeds consistently and in a structured manner.



Figure 2. After the Interview with Ustadz

In the second image, it discusses the I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School in Mojokerto, where the ustaz or ustazah implement a structured and continuous evaluation system to instill Islamic values among the students. Over the course of one month, teachers from various fields within the boarding school participate in evaluating the students, covering all the activities of the pesantren. For formal school activities, evaluations are conducted at different frequencies, for example, every three months. Various aspects of teacher development are included in this evaluation system. To assess whether students are becoming more disciplined and orderly in living the boarding school life, evaluations can be made by observing their memorization, written exam results, or their manners.

Islamic boarding schools implement educational takzir sanctions for rule violations without physically or mentally harming students. The type of takzir is based on the level of violation. Reading one juz of the Qur'an is an example of a minor violation, while copying the Jurumiyyah book is an example of a major violation, such as dating (Hasbiyah et al., 2023). This mechanism is designed to guide and shape the Islamic character of students, not merely to punish them, so that they can apply the principles of Islamic teachings in their daily lives.

The Role of Santri towards Kyai and Asatidz

As subjects of education, students not only adopt a passive attitude but also actively participate in the pesantren system with respect and obedience. The students' direct experiences, such as being inspired by Ustadz Jamaluddin's example in reading the Qur'an, demonstrate that their positive acceptance of authority figures is a key component in the successful internalization of values. Students' adherence to discipline, such as acknowledging the prohibition of mobile phone use, and participating in programs specifically designed for them, shows their role as

recipients and implementers of the values being taught. Through this reciprocal relationship, the educational ecosystem improves. Students help maintain the traditions and authority of kyai and teachers through diligence and respect in learning.



Figure 3. Interview with students during group discussion

In the third picture, the students explain that some of the most memorable and profound lessons are found based on the direct experiences of the students. One of them is the lesson on tajwid, which is considered very useful for memorizing the Quran because it provides a strong foundation for reading the holy book correctly and fluently. Mastery of tajwid is not merely theoretical; it becomes an obligation that students can apply in their daily lives. Figures such as Ustaz Jamaluddin, who was born into a Kyai family, exemplify the principles of Islamic education. His ability to read the Quran easily and clearly has a positive impact on the lives of the students. From such experiences arises the motivation to continue learning and absorbing Quranic knowledge, showing how teachers can be students who motivate learners to study (Husni et al., 2023). So, the tajwid lessons are the most memorable because they provide a practical foundation for reading and memorizing the Qur'an. Ustazs like Ustaz Jamaluddin serve as role models who motivate the students. This hands-on learning experience fosters a desire to learn more about the Qur'an and demonstrates how effective teachers are in the teaching process.

In the daily life of the pesantren, the values of Islamic teachings are internalized through various practical activities. Congregational prayer, for instance, is not only a religious obligation but also a very effective way to teach discipline and manage time. Moreover, students gain direct knowledge of fiqh, especially regarding the pillars of prayer, which are performed regularly. Since teachers and kyai provide concrete examples in everyday life, the concept of ta'dzim becomes easier to understand and practice. By following the example of the kyai and teachers, the emulation of these values occurs naturally, without pressure, and arises from the internal awareness of the students.

Pesantren function as a spiritual fortress in the digital era by training the ability to filter information and emphasizing the intensive instillation of moral values. This distinctive pesantren education system differs from general education because its main focus is on shaping a complete Islamic personality through strengthening self-filters and emphasizing ethics, thereby building a strong Islamic character in each student (Prasetyo et al., 2022). Therefore, pesantren not only serve as traditional educational institutions but also function as environments strategically designed to develop Muslim generations who are spiritually and morally strong amid the challenges posed by the computer and internet era.

The kyai and teachers at Pondok Pesantren I'anatut Tholibin use various methods and approaches to create a holistic educational environment where Islamic teachings are understood cognitively, internalized, and practiced in daily life. The process of value formation occurs

through role modeling, habituation, and the creation of an environment that supports the development of morally upright Muslim individuals.

Advantages and Disadvantages

I'anatut Tholibin Islamic Boarding School has many advantages in its educational system. Some of these include a solid foundation of knowledge based on the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Shafi'i school texts; emphasis on moral and character education; the integration of sorogan, bandongan, and Bahtsul Masail forum methods; discipline management through educational takzir; policies that control the environment, such as banning mobile phones; and the multifunctional role of kyai and teachers as educators and role models.

On the other hand, the boarding school has some limitations. For example, their religious knowledge is limited to the Shafi'i school and classical texts, the rigid hierarchical structure restricts room for critical discussion, a total ban on mobile phones hampers technological advancement, the evaluation system is not comprehensive and focuses only on cognitive-affective aspects, and an overly controlled environment can lead to social isolation and difficulty adapting to new environments.

D. CONCLUSIONS

This study found that Pondok Pesantren I'anatut Tholibin uses an integrated system to teach Islamic values to its students. Its success depends on strong collaboration between the Kyai, teachers (Asatidz), and students. The education is based on the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical texts to ensure that the teachings are genuine. The Kyai serves as the main role model, loved and respected in this pesantren, during their daily teaching, teachers and Asatidz use the sorogan and bandongan methods. Through tradition, examples, and a clean environment, the pesantren not only provides education but also builds character and morals. The rules and sanctions used here are more educational than punitive. In essence, this pesantren creates a conducive environment to produce a generation of Muslims who are intelligent, moral, and capable of facing the times.

SUGGESTIONS

Pondok Pesantren I'anatut Tholibin has the ability to improve the quality and relevance of education by enhancing the curriculum to include broader and more modern knowledge insights, as well as teaching students how to wisely use digital technology. The evaluation system needs to be refined to better measure the development of students' character and spirituality, accompanied by preparation programs for graduating students so they can adapt to community life. Finally, long-term research to monitor the success of alumni is highly recommended as a means of evaluation to continuously improve the pesantren education system.

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