

# Management of Islamic Boarding School Caretakers in Improving the Economic Independence of Students Through Agribusiness Entrepreneurship at the At-Tadzkir Islamic Boarding School in Majalengka

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## ABSTRACT

*This study analyzes the role of boarding school management in improving the economic independence of students through an agribusiness entrepreneurship program at the At-Tadzkir Islamic Boarding School in Majalengka. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method, data was collected through in-depth interviews with the boarding school leader (K.H. Didin Misbahuddin), students, and teachers, as well as observation and documentation. The findings show that the management applies structured and organized management strategies (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) to integrate agribusiness entrepreneurship into the boarding school curriculum. This implementation not only equips students with practical business skills but also fosters independence, confidence, and responsibility. This study emphasizes that a holistic and collaborative managerial approach by pesantren caregivers can be an effective model for empowering students economically.*

**Keywords:** Caregiver Management, Student Independence, Entrepreneurship, Agribusiness, Islamic Boarding Schools.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the fourth most populous country in the world, faces major challenges in preparing competent human resources to compete in regional and global markets, including in the context of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Islamic boarding schools, as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, have a strategic role not only in religious education but also in community economic empowerment. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs shows an increase in the potential of Islamic boarding schools to establish economic business units, from 0.96% in 2004 to around 32% in 2019. This encourages Islamic boarding schools to not only produce scholars, but also students who have an entrepreneurial spirit (edupreneurs, entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs) and economic independence.

The At-Tadzkir Islamic Boarding School in Majalengka is an interesting case study due to its success in developing the economic independence of its students through entrepreneurship, particularly in the field of agribusiness. With 4 hectares of agricultural land and modern facilities, this boarding school integrates religious knowledge with business skills. The role of the mudir (boarding school supervisor) in managing and directing this entrepreneurship program is the main focus of this study, given the importance of leadership in shaping students who are religious and financially independent. This study aims to analyze how the management of the boarding school supervisor at At-Tadzkir increases student independence through entrepreneurship.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Management of Islamic Boarding Schools From an Islamic perspective, management is understood as activities that are responsible for organizing everything effectively and efficiently, in line with Allah's words in QS. Ar-Ra'd verse 11 about changes in the circumstances of people. Managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing, and controlling (POAC) have their basis in the Qur'an, such as the command to be fair (QS. An-Nahl: 90) and the importance of supervision (QS. Al-Infithar: 10-12).

Theoretically, Caretaker Management Theory focuses on the role of individuals in nurturing and managing human resources, including skill and character development. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the *mudir* as a caretaker manager not only regulates religious education but also manages entrepreneurial activities to develop the independence of students (Hadi, 2018; Suharto, 2016). Caretaker management involves planning objectives, organizing tasks, motivating, and supervising performance to achieve organizational goals (Siagian, 2008; Terry, 1997; Purwanto, 2005; Nawawi, 1989).

Independence of Islamic Boarding School Students Independence in Islam encompasses material aspects (QS. Al-Baqarah: 286), spiritual aspects (QS. Fussilat: 44), moral aspects (QS. Al-Hujurat: 11), and social aspects (QS. Al-Ankabut: 69). This concept emphasizes the individual's responsibility to fulfill their needs and not depend on anyone other than Allah.

Psychologically, independence is the ability of a person to manage themselves without depending on others, characterized by the ability to make decisions, take responsibility, and have self-confidence (Gea et al., 2003; Hurlock, 2004). Deci and Ryan's (1985) theory of self-motivation links independence with autonomy, competence, and social relationships. Student independence is also influenced by the family and school environment (Schunk, 2001) as well as the ability to manage time and set goals (Locke & Latham, 2002). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the independence of students is formed through the instilling of values of honesty, discipline, hard work, and responsibility (Amirulloh, 2015).

Entrepreneurship Entrepreneurship, introduced by Richard Cantillon in the 18th century, refers to the behavior, spirit, and competence to create something innovative and useful (Cantillon, 1755; Drucker, 1985). Schumpeter (1934) defines entrepreneurs as individuals who disrupt the economic system by introducing new goods and services. Entrepreneurship can be learned and taught, not just an innate talent (Hisrich, 1990).

In Islam, true entrepreneurs must possess characteristics such as piety, trust in God, honesty (*shidiq*), treating business as worship, discipline, hard work, tolerance, paying zakat, and maintaining good relations (Antonio, 2008). The goal of Islamic boarding school entrepreneurship is to produce a generation that is independent in the economic field through innovation, creativity, patience, and sensitivity to market opportunities (Suryana, 2003).

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen to explore in detail the phenomenon of caretaker management and entrepreneurial practices in Islamic boarding schools, as well as to understand their context and complexity (Creswell, 2014). Case studies allow for an in-depth focus on the application of entrepreneurial management at the At-Tadzkir Islamic Boarding School (Stake, 1995).

At-Tadzkir Islamic Boarding School, Majalengka, was chosen because of its complete and modern facilities, innovations in agribusiness, its rural location with 2 hectares of farmland managed by students, and two main types of learning: religious studies and agribusiness entrepreneurship. Primary data was obtained from in-depth interviews with the head of the At-Tadzkir Islamic Boarding School (K.H. Didin Misbahuddin), students involved in agribusiness, and the accompanying *asatidz* council. Secondary data came from internal boarding school documents (annual reports, management manuals), journal articles, and online interviews with alumni.

### 1. Data Collection Techniques

- 1) Literature Study: Collecting relevant references on agribusiness entrepreneurship management and santri independence.

- 2) Participant Observation: Researchers are directly involved in activities at the pesantren, observing environmental conditions, actors involved, and managerial processes (planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling) in agribusiness.
  - 3) In-depth Interviews: Conducted with boarding school leaders, students, and teachers using structured/semi-structured interview guidelines.
  - 4) Documentation: Collecting written evidence such as activity plans, reports, agribusiness management policies, and photos of activities.
- 2. Data Analysis Techniques** Data analysis follows the Miles and Huberman (1994) model.:
- 1) Data Collection: Recording, documenting, and storing data from literature studies, observations, and interviews.
  - 2) Data Reduction: Simplifying and summarizing the collected data, selecting relevant information related to agribusiness entrepreneurship management and santri independence.
  - 3) Data Presentation: Structurally organizing the filtered and summarized data.
  - 4) Conclusion Drawing and Verification: Drawing preliminary conclusions which are then verified with sufficient evidence, aiming to produce a clearer picture or new theory.
- 3. Data Validity Technique.** Data validity is ensured through source triangulation, which involves comparing results from various data sources (interviews, observations, documentation) to reduce bias and increase the reliability of findings (Sugiyono, 2013; Denzin, 1978; Flick, 2009).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Management of Islamic Boarding School Caregivers in Enhancing Student Independence*

#### **1. Result of Findings**

- 1) The Central Role of the Islamic Boarding School Leader: K.H. Didin Misbahuddin plays an important role in designing, directing, and motivating students and teachers in entrepreneurship programs, applying POAC managerial functions.
- 2) Strengthening the Value of Independence through Agribusiness: The agribusiness program (hydroponics, catfish farming, crop processing) tangibly shapes the students' economic independence, responsibility, and decision-making skills.
- 3) Collaborative Strategy between Asatidz and Students: Asatidz act as field practice mentors, providing guidance, evaluation, and motivation, strengthening practice-based learning.
- 4) Integration of Non-Formal Curriculum: Entrepreneurship activities are integrated as compulsory extracurricular activities, becoming part of the pesantren's character and skills education system.
- 5) Supportive Pesantren Environment: The physical and cultural environment of the pesantren encourages independence through the management of daily needs by santri.
- 6) Constraints and Challenges: Limited modern tools, the absence of a standardized training system, and crop yield fluctuations are constraints, but pesantren are innovating to find solutions.
- 7) Long-Term Impact: Students demonstrate improved soft skills and economic understanding, with some alumni successfully starting small businesses.

#### **1.1 Dialectical Analysis**

**Thesis:** Caregiver management at At-Tadzkir is based on pesantren values (discipline, responsibility, independence), with caregivers as strategic leaders oriented towards religious and economic guidance for santri through agribusiness, gradually implementing POAC managerial functions.

**Antithesis:** There are challenges such as limited resources, lack of formal training, and the lack of integration between the formal curriculum and entrepreneurship, as well as

the difficulty of students in internalizing the spirit of independence due to their heavy study load.

**Synthesis:** Caretaker management develops a collaborative approach by involving asatidz as mentors, building a practice-based learning system (experiential learning), and expanding external cooperation networks. This makes pesantren management transformative, where entrepreneurship becomes an important part of character education and student independence.

## 1.2 Thematic Analysis

**Transformational Leadership of the Caretaker:** K.H. Didin Misbahuddin as the driver of economic change for santri through entrepreneurship, with a long-term vision of santri independence.

**Structured Entrepreneurship Program Planning:** Gradual and measurable planning, from mapping potential to scheduling, demonstrates mature management.

**Involvement of Santri and Teachers in Agribusiness:** Santri are directly involved in practice, accompanied by asatidz, forming experience-based learning.

**Value-Based Supervision and Evaluation:** Supervision is integrated with pesantren values, evaluating usefulness, work processes, and discipline.

**Integration of Independence Values with the Curriculum:** Entrepreneurship is integrated into the education system, forming a holistic ecosystem between religious knowledge and life skills.

**Challenges and Solutions:** Obstacles such as capital and training are overcome through a collaborative approach and external cooperation.

## **Implementation of Caregiver Management through Entrepreneurship in Improving the Independence of Islamic Boarding School Students**

### **1. Result of Findings**

- 1) The Role of Entrepreneurship in Economic Independence: Agribusiness programs (chicken farming, cassava chips) significantly increase the economic independence of students, reducing their dependence on external funds.
- 2) The Role of Caregivers in Implementation: K.H. Didin Misbahuddin plays a key role in managing and guiding, providing motivation, and having a clear vision that entrepreneurship shapes character and life skills.
- 3) The Involvement of Asatidz in Coaching: Asatidz not only teach religion but also provide practical training, demonstrating a holistic approach.
- 4) Financial Management and Business Management Learning: Santri are involved in the systematic and transparent financial management of the business, learning about cost, income, and capital calculations.
- 5) Student Independence in Facing Challenges: Students demonstrate increased independence, confidence, and responsibility in managing businesses.
- 6) Program Success in Quality of Life: The program improves students' quality of life through access to resources and life skills development.
- 7) Implementation Challenges: Limited initial capital and product marketing pose challenges.
- 8) Program Development Potential: Significant potential exists for developing new businesses and enhancing students' managerial capacity (e.g., digital marketing).
- 9) Recommendations for Improvement: Strengthen marketing networks and integrate technology into business management.

### **1.1 Dialectical Analysis**

**Pesantren Caretaker Management:** Caretakers actively plan, organize, and implement entrepreneurship policies for the economic independence of santri. This

management is inclusive and focused, integrating entrepreneurship as a key strategy (Siagian, 2008).

**Student Independence:** The main goal of entrepreneurship is student independence, who are trained to make decisions, interact with the market, and overcome business challenges. This builds independent character and self-confidence (Hurlock, 2004).

**Entrepreneurship:** Entrepreneurship is an important means for the economic independence of santri, through agribusiness that teaches practical skills, innovation, and risk-taking. Entrepreneurship also provides social value through income contributions to Islamic boarding schools (Hisrich, Peters, & Shepherd, 2008).

## 1.2 Thematic Analysis

**Planning, Organizing, and Coaching by Caregivers:** Caregivers design and manage entrepreneurial activities, select types of agribusiness ventures, organize students, and provide ongoing coaching.

**Development of Student Economic Independence:** Entrepreneurship provides opportunities for students to develop practical skills, increase financial independence, and practice decision-making and problem-solving.

**Entrepreneurship as a Tool for Achieving Independence:** Agribusiness in Islamic boarding schools equips students with business planning, capital management, and marketing skills, as well as developing soft skills such as leadership and teamwork.

**Evaluation and Continuous Coaching:** Caregivers conduct regular evaluations and provide continuous coaching to ensure the effectiveness of the program and help students overcome challenges.

## CONCLUSION

The management of caregivers at the At-Tadzkir Islamic Boarding School in Majalengka plays a very important role in improving the independence of students. Through systematic stages of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating, caregivers create a conducive learning environment that facilitates the development of students' independent living skills, self-confidence, and decision-making abilities. The implementation of caregiver management is realized, among other things, through an agribusiness entrepreneurship program that has proven effective in shaping students' economic independence. The program not only teaches students to think critically, take calculated risks, and seek business opportunities, but is also implemented through structured management stages ranging from planning and resource organization to evaluation. With the support of practical training and intensive guidance from teachers, students can develop financial independence as well as life skills relevant to future needs.

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study reinforces the theory of caretaker management by showing that the systematization of POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) by Islamic boarding school caretakers can effectively increase the independence of students, even beyond religious aspects. Furthermore, this study provides empirical evidence that entrepreneurship education in Islamic boarding schools is an effective means of fostering the economic independence of students, in line with the developmental psychology perspective on self-efficacy and independent decision-making skills. Another contribution demonstrated is to entrepreneurship theory, namely that entrepreneurship is not limited to economic activities, but also functions as a means of self-development that fosters independence, self-confidence, and life skills among students.

In terms of practice, there are several important implications that can be applied. First, other Islamic boarding schools can adopt a structured management model (POAC) such as that implemented at At-Tadzkir, by integrating entrepreneurial activities to strengthen the economic independence of students.

Second, Islamic boarding schools are advised to develop entrepreneurship programs that are relevant to local potential and the interests of students, not limited to agribusiness but also other business fields. Third, continuous training and guidance are very important to be provided, both through experienced mentors and adequate resource support so that students' businesses can develop optimally. Finally, external collaboration with the government, financial institutions, and business actors needs to be established to support capital, training, and market access, so that santri have greater opportunities to develop economic independence.

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