

Contribution of Student Organizations to the Formation of Student Leadership Character

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Abstract— The research was conducted to analyze and evaluate the contribution of student organizations in the formation of student leadership character at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. The research method uses a qualitative approach with the type of case study research. The results of the study stated that to develop the leadership spirit of students who are students at Nurul Jadid University. Student organizations play an important role as a medium to train leadership skills through various programs, such as Leadership Training Camps, mentoring, and pesantren management materials. This shows that student organization activities significantly contribute to shaping the leadership character of students in Islamic boarding schools and the community. This research emphasizes the importance of collaboration between campuses and Islamic boarding schools in producing future leaders who have integrity, responsibility, and commitment to Islamic values.

Keywords—School Student Organizations, Leadership Development, Student Associations.

1 Introduction

Student organizations have a very important role in the formation of leadership character, especially in the context of education in Islamic boarding schools (Azidin et al., 2022). Pesantren, as a traditional educational institution in Indonesia, has a function that not only focuses on religious teaching, but also on the formation of morals and student leadership (Fatmawati et al., 2020). In this effort, student organizations in Islamic boarding schools play a central role as a forum to train leadership skills, strengthen character, and prepare students to become responsible leaders in the future (Prasetyo, 2022). The leadership character of students is often formed through various activities carried out in student organizations (Ningsih, 2022). Involvement in the organization provides opportunities for students to face real challenges, manage problems, and develop communication and decision-making skills (Katon et al., 2020). Activities such as deliberations, event organizing, and community project management allow students to learn how to lead wisely, listen to different views, and reach consensus in groups (Habsi & Yaqin, 2022). Furthermore, pesantren has a strong tradition of instilling religious and moral values in students (KHASAN, 2023). These values are the foundation for the leadership character that is expected to appear in every student. Student organizations, in this case, are a medium to internalize these values through direct practice. When students are involved in organizations, they not only learn about the concept of leadership in theory, but also implement the values that have been taught in a real context, which can strengthen their understanding of social responsibility and ethics in leadership (Nastiti, 2023). However, it is important to note that the contribution of student organizations to the formation of student leadership character does not occur automatically. Proper support from the pesantren management and consistent guidance are needed to ensure that the organization's activities run in accordance with the desired educational goals (Nur & Nasution, 2022). In addition, environmental factors, pesantren culture, and parenting styles of the kyai and ustadz also have a significant influence on how students internalize their experiences in student organizations (Nabila, 2024). In recent decades, there has been an increase in attention to the importance of developing holistic leadership skills among students (Abdullah & Rachmawati, 2022). The awareness of the need for leaders who are not only intellectually capable but also have strong moral integrity, encourages pesantren to better integrate student organization activities into their curriculum. Thus, pesantren not only play a role as a place to teach religious knowledge, but also as an institution that actively shapes the character of the nation's future leaders (Rosida, 2023).

The role of student organizations in cadreing leadership is also applied within Nurul Jadid University, where the university is committed to continuing to improve and improve the quality of leadership for students. Through the role of student organizations, the academic community feels helped in realizing all leadership cadre programs for students. Within the campus environment, students are advised to join several organizations that have been provided, such as PMII and HMJ (Department Student Association). The involvement of this organization has been going on since the beginning of the establishment of Nurul Jadid University. Student organizations at Nurul Jadid University play a crucial role in shaping and developing leadership skills among students. The university recognizes the importance of quality leadership cadre, so they continue to strive to improve existing programs. By involving students in a variety of organizations, universities provide a platform for them to learn and practice to be effective leaders.

Current research has relevance to some previous research, Junaedi et al. (2023) stated in his research that student involvement in student organizations affects their leadership qualities. Furthermore, leadership experience in student organizations is relevant to leadership skills outside of campus. Marine et al. (2024) stated that the results of the study show that the pattern of cadre external student organizations at STKIP PGRI Nganjuk has a clear and systematic training level. The activities carried out include studies, discussions, training on national values and beliefs, character building, critical thinking development, knowledge enrichment, and other activities to improve students' abilities as a provision after graduation. However, there are various problems in the development of soft skills, such as the lack of student interest in studies and discussions, low awareness, limited time and busyness, the absence of fixed funding, and campus policies that prohibit activities from external student organizations. Efforts made to maximize soft skill development include an intensive approach, scheduling activities, and improving communication. Sirait & Siahaan, (2020) stated that the results of this study show that student organizations have a considerable role in shaping character values through student activities provided in higher education. Because of the role of organizations on campus in the formation of student character, later students can have knowledge and experience in organizing, as well as character formation which can later become a characteristic of the student. Irhamdi & Jayadi, (2021) stated that training and skill development activities in the PMII organization include various activities such as short story writing training, scientific papers, bulletins, MCs, recitations, and hosting. These trainings are carried out to foster and improve the skills of members of Rayon Al-Ghazali, the Commissariat of the State Islamic University of Mataram. The role of the PMII organization in improving skills among students is very significant. However, there are several obstacles found at the location, such as inconsistency in cadres in participating in trainings held by rayon administrators and lack of cadre awareness in developing the potential that exists within them. Sari & Arif (2020) stated that the efforts of branch leaders in building prophetic leadership were carried out through the stage of preparing concept planning, work programs, and implementation of work programs to the follow-up stage after the implementation of the work program. The work programs that are seen to be able to build the prophetic leadership of cadres include: Darul Arqam Dasar, fundraising, people's schools, assisted villages, discussions, red shields, coaching of the Muhammadiyah Student Missionary Corps and regular meetings that began with the recitation of the Divine Kalam and a seven-minute lecture.

The difference between previous research and current research is that previous research that focused on the role of student organizations in the formation of student leadership character generally highlights aspects such as leadership skill development, moral improvement, and the role of extracurricular activities in strengthening student character. These studies use various approaches such as case studies, qualitative and quantitative analysis to describe the contribution of student organizations to the formation of leadership among students. However, current research seeks to deepen understanding of how specific interactions in student organizations, such as group dynamics, conflict management, and decision-making processes, directly affect the formation of student leadership character. This research also tries to explore more specifically how religious values taught in pesantren are integrated into leadership practices through organizational activities. In addition,

current research pays special attention to the context of modern Islamic boarding schools, which may have a different approach to managing student organizations compared to traditional Islamic boarding schools. Thus, this research is expected to provide a more comprehensive insight into the role of student organizations in shaping future leaders who are not only competent, but also have strong moral integrity in accordance with Islamic values.

The purpose of the research CONTRIBUTION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS TO THE FORMATION OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP CHARACTER is to analyze and evaluate the contribution of student organizations in the formation of student leadership character at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. This research aims to identify the factors that affect the effectiveness of student organizations in shaping leadership character, understand how religious values are integrated into the process of leadership formation through organizational activities, and explore the role of student organizations in preparing students to become leaders with integrity and responsibility in accordance with Islamic teachings. Through this research, it is hoped that comprehensive insights can be obtained about the strategic role of student organizations at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School in producing quality future leaders.

2 Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of Case Study. In qualitative research it is necessary to emphasize the importance of proximity to people and research situations, so that researchers gain a clear understanding of realities and real-life conditions.

In this study, the author uses data collection techniques, namely interviews and observations. Interviews are submitted to the relevant and if necessary, questions are asked to students who have student status. Observations were carried out to directly observe the process of forming the character of leaders through student organizations at Nurul Jadid University, therefore the researcher was directly involved in these activities. The steps of data collection and analysis begin with an interview. Several informants have been selected to then proceed with member checks. And it is equipped with observation data and document data (triangulation). Next, test the assumptions or problems that exist with the data to find alternative explanations for the data. After data analysis is found to answer the research question, it is then presented in the form of a research report on the results.

3 Findings And Discussion

The research was conducted at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School and at Nurul Jadid University, Paiton Probolinggo. Nurul Jadid University is one of the universities that interacts pesantren education with campus education, so that in the implementation of learning, both course learning and soft skills development have an attachment to pesantren values. This research focuses on student leadership which is aligned with Robert K. Greenleaf's theory of Servant Leadership.

Student organizations as the development of students' Soft Skills

Robert K. Greenleaf, the originator of the theory of Servant Leadership, asserts that a true leader must prioritize the interests of his followers over personal interests. According to him, leadership is not about the power or authority possessed by the leader, but about the responsibility to serve and ensure the welfare of the people he leads. In this view, the leader should be the first servant who facilitates the growth, well-being, and satisfaction of his followers (Schowalter & Volmer, 2023). Greenleaf emphasizes that good leaders are those who can create an environment where others feel supported, encouraged, and able to thrive (Demeke et al., 2024). This concept is in line with the leadership principles applied at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. In this Islamic boarding school, students are taught to become leaders based on Islamic values, which emphasizes the importance of servant leadership. Students are expected to be able to become leaders in society by prioritizing the welfare of the people, not just personal interests. The Islamic values taught in this Islamic boarding school, such as justice, togetherness, and social responsibility, encourage students to understand that being a leader means carrying out a mandate that must be accountable to Allah SWT and society. Ideal leaders are those who are able to prioritize the welfare of the people and carry out their leadership with integrity.

The development of the leadership spirit of students at Nurul Jadid University is carried out in several activities, such as activities in student organizations. Through active involvement in various student organizations, such as the Student Executive Board (BEM), the Department Student Association (HMJ), and religious organizations, students are forged to develop a leadership character that is oriented towards service to other students. These organizations provide a forum for students with the status of students to practice the values taught in Islamic boarding schools and universities, namely leadership that involves high social responsibility and morality.

According to Ageng Febriyan, one of the administrators of the Student Executive Board (BEM) said that through organizational activities, students at Nurul Jadid University are trained to collaborate with fellow students in achieving common goals, overcoming challenges, and solving problems in an inclusive and wise way. They also learn to put the common good ahead of personal or group interests, which is in line with Greenleaf's concept of Servant Leadership. For example, in the organizational structure of BEM, a chairman is not only responsible for directing his members in running the program, but also has to listen to the aspirations and needs of all students. The decision-making process is based on deliberation and consensus, where the interests of all members are considered before a final decision is made.

The formation of student leadership character through student organizations at Nurul Jadid University also includes the development of the values of simplicity, discipline, and independence. In various organizational activities, students learn to manage resources efficiently, manage their time well, and show exemplary in their daily actions. Students are encouraged to lead by setting a good example, prioritizing noble morals, and maintaining good relationships with their colleagues. This creates leadership that is not only results-oriented, but also on an ethical and sustainable process.

The involvement of students in leadership organizations at Nurul Jadid University strengthens the attachment between the concept of Greenleaf Servant Leadership and the leadership practices applied. Students are trained to be caring leaders, who always put the welfare of their followers above personal ambition. They are taught that a good leader is one who is able to embrace all of his members, provide room for them to grow, and support them in reaching their best potential. This is especially relevant in the context of a diverse society, where the ability to understand and prioritize the needs of others is key to effective leadership.

In addition, student organizations at Nurul Jadid University not only function as a means to learn leadership, but also as a forum to implement the values of leadership that serve. Social activities held by student organizations, such as social service, community service, and religious activities, provide opportunities for students to apply their leadership skills in a real context. In this activity, students learn to see the needs of the community and respond to them with useful and sustainable solutions. This strengthens their understanding of the importance of serving others as an integral part of effective leadership.

The alignment between Greenleaf's Servant Leadership concept and the leadership model developed at Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School and University shows that effective leadership values are not only relevant in the modern context, but also very much in line with local traditions and values. A good leader is one who has the awareness to serve and benefit others, a principle taught both by Greenleaf and by the education system implemented at Nurul Jadid.

Planning

Planning in the context of Servant Leadership focuses on an approach that prioritizes the wellbeing, growth, and needs of the organization's followers or members. Leaders who apply the principles of Servant Leadership will direct the planning process to achieve collective goals, while paying attention to the development of the individual and the community they lead (Mohzana et al., 2023). Planning for the development of student leadership at Nurul Jadid University actually has the same planning as non-student students, but all planned plans are related to leadership in the context of management. Pratama Arhan stated that through student organizations, such as the Student Executive Board (BEM) and the Department Student Association (HMJ), it is also indirectly designed to train students to be able to lead younger students at Islamic Boarding Schools. This planning involves various programs that aim to hone the leadership, management, and social responsibility skills of students. These programs are also related to the values taught in Islamic boarding schools, such as simplicity, responsibility, and concern for others. First, BEM Nurul Jadid University plays a role in designing leadership training programs that are general but relevant to the context of students. One of the programs that is usually designed by BEM is the Leadership Camp or Pesantren Leadership Training which focuses on developing basic leadership skills, such as the ability to communicate well, lead a team, and make decisions wisely. This activity is often carried out in the form of leadership camps in the pesantren environment, where students are taught to face real situations in leading small groups. The purpose of this program is to provide practical experience to students in leading and managing daily pesantren activities, which they can later apply in leading younger students.

In addition, BEM also organizes a mentoring program that brings together senior and junior students. This program aims to provide direct guidance from more experienced students on how to lead and manage the life of students in Islamic boarding schools. Through this mentoring program, senior students can share their experiences in managing the schedule of pesantren activities, helping to solve problems faced by junior students, and guiding them in improving independence and discipline. This program is very important in building bonds between senior and junior students, as well as helping students develop their leadership qualities in a challenging pesantren environment.

Meanwhile, HMJ Nurul Jadid University also designed more specific programs according to the field of study of each major, but still referred to leadership development for students. One of the programs designed by HMJ is pesantren management training which focuses on managing daily activities, organizing large events, and solving problems effectively. In this program, students are trained to manage the resources in the pesantren, including organizing learning activities, compiling a schedule of religious activities, and ensuring that each activity runs smoothly. This training aims to provide managerial skills to students, which can later be used to lead small units in Islamic boarding schools.

Activity Planning	HMJ/BEM	Purpose of Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School	Harmony
Leadership Training	BEM	Producing students who are able to become leaders in the community.	This program teaches service-oriented leadership, in line with the goals of the pesantren in forming students who care and are responsible (Organizational and community awareness).
Program Mentoring	BEM	Fostering students so that they can guide their younger students	The mentoring program provides opportunities for senior members to guide junior members, in line with the values of the pesantren that emphasizes management values.
Scientific and Islamic Studies	НМЈ	Improving students' understanding of religious science and Islamic leadership	This study supports the mission of pesantren in fostering students who excel academically and have moral and spiritual integrity.
Conflict Management Training	НМЈ	Preparing students to become leaders who are able to solve problems	This program teaches how to deal with conflicts wisely, in harmony with pesantren that encourages students to become wise and fair leaders.

Table 1. HMJ Nurul Jadid University

HMJ also designs Islamic discussion and study activities focused on leadership themes in Islam. This activity provides an opportunity for students to understand the concept of leadership according to the Islamic perspective taught at the Islamic boarding school, such as the concepts of trust, justice, and deliberation. Through this discussion, students were invited to reflect on their role as leaders in Islamic boarding schools, as well as how they can apply leadership values in accordance with religious teachings. Activities like this also help students in strengthening their understanding of social responsibility and moral leadership needed in managing pesantren life.

According to Muhammad Bakron, Head of the Human Resources Division and Chairman of the HMJ Demission, stated that BEM and HMJ Nurul Jadid University also plan collaborative programs between universities and Islamic boarding schools involving student students as activity leaders. For example, social service or community service activities that involve students as team coordinators, so that they can hone their skills in managing the team and interacting with the outside community. This program provides direct experience to students to play the role of responsible leaders, not only in the pesantren environment, but also in the wider community's life.

Implementation

Execution according to Servant Leadership refers to a leadership approach that focuses on how the leader serves, supports, and empowers his followers when implementing a plan (Rasheed et al., 2023). The implementation of student leadership development planning at Nurul Jadid University involves collaboration between the campus and the Islamic Boarding School, which provides full support to student students to participate in all forms of leadership activities on campus. This support is realized through the granting of permission by the pesantren to students to be involved in activities organized by the Student Executive Board (BEM) and the Department Student Association (HMJ). Pesantren understands the importance of leadership development for students, especially in preparing them to lead the younger students in the pesantren environment and in the wider community.

At the implementation stage, the planned programs began to be carried out gradually and in a structured manner. For example, the Leadership Training Camp program initiated by BEM is carried out in the campus environment, but with activities that are relevant to the values of the pesantren. This training involves leadership theory and practice sessions, where students learn basic skills such as communication, decision-making, conflict management, and empathy in leading. Participants also undergo leadership simulations in the form of role plays and case studies that challenge them to become servant leaders, in accordance with the concept of servant leadership. The pesantren supports this activity by giving special permission to the students involved to be absent from several pesantren activities during the training, so that they can focus on participating in activities without neglecting their main duties as students.

In addition, BEM also carries out a mentoring program that involves senior students as mentors for junior students. This program aims to provide direct leadership experience, where students who are managers not only lead formally, but also guide and serve junior students in terms of academic learning and daily life at the pesantren. The pesantren strongly supports this initiative because it is in line with the values of Islamic leadership that they instill, namely that leaders must be able to be role models and support the development of others.

On the other hand, HMJ implements a Pesantren Management program, where students are trained to manage activities at the pesantren effectively. This program was held through several training sessions involving pesantren administrators and lecturers as resource persons. Participants are trained to compile a schedule of daily activities for the pesantren, manage available resources, and organize religious events and other major activities. Pesantren provides facilities and access for students to practice these skills in real activities in the pesantren environment. This pesantren support ensures that the program runs well and students can immediately apply the leadership skills they learn.

According to Nauval Rizki Putra, one of the members of HMJ as well as a student stated that in addition to these programs, HMJ also holds Islamic leadership discussions which are routinely held every month. This activity was attended by students from various departments, where they were invited to understand the concept of leadership in Islam, such as trust, deliberation, and justice. This discussion was guided by lecturers who are experts in the field of Islam, and followed by an interactive question and answer session. The pesantren fully supports this discussion because it is in line with their mission in forming students who not only excel in science, but also have a strong leadership character. In the final stage of implementation, BEM and HMJ also collaborate with Islamic boarding schools to hold social service activities involving students as activity coordinators. This activity provides an opportunity for students to directly practice their leadership in a broader context, namely serving the community. The pesantren not only provides permission, but also supports this activity by involving the pesantren management in planning and implementation, so that the activity runs smoothly and provides real benefits to the community.

Overall, the implementation of this leadership development plan went smoothly thanks to good collaboration between the campus and the Islamic boarding school. The pesantren gives permission and fully supports every activity held by BEM and HMJ, with the belief that these programs will help form the leadership character of students who are strong, resilient, and ready to lead the younger students in the pesantren and contribute positively to the community. Through the implementation of these programs, it is hoped that students will not only be able to become effective leaders, but also leaders who serve with full responsibility and sincerity, in accordance with the principles of servant leadership.

Evaluation

Evaluation according to Servant Leadership is a reflective process that focuses on assessing not only performance outcomes, but also on the well-being, growth, and development of followers (Jiménez-Estévez et al., 2023). To improve the leadership spirit of students with student status, evaluation is an important step that must be carried out systematically and continuously. This evaluation not only serves to assess the success of the program, but also to identify weaknesses and opportunities for improvement that can be applied in the next leadership development program. In this context, management evaluation theory is very relevant to be applied, because it includes planning, implementation, supervision, and feedback from various activities that have been carried out by student organizations such as BEM and HMJ at Nurul Jadid University.

The evaluation program designed to improve the leadership spirit of student leadership at Nurul Jadid University involves several stages that aim to get a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the program. The first stage of evaluation is evaluation planning, where the objectives of the evaluation are clearly established. In this case, the main purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which leadership programs that have been running, such as Leadership Training Camp, student mentoring, and pesantren management, are able to equip students with the leadership skills needed to lead students in pesantren. At this stage, success indicators must be defined, such as students' ability to make decisions, lead teams, communicate effectively, and serve and guide others, as reflected in the principle of servant leadership.

Furthermore, at the evaluation data collection stage, evaluation is carried out through various methods, such as surveys, interviews, and direct observation during the activity. For example, surveys can be given to students participating in the program to assess how much they feel an improvement in leadership skills after participating in activities. Interviews with mentors, supervisors, and pesantren administrators can also provide a deeper perspective on the development of student leadership. In addition, direct observation of how students lead groups in mentoring or social service programs can provide a real picture of their level of effectiveness in practicing the leadership theories that have been learned.

The next stage is the analysis of evaluation data. In this stage, the data collected is analyzed to evaluate whether the programs that have been implemented achieve their goals. If it is found that most students show improvement in leadership skills, then the program can be considered successful. However, if there are weaknesses that arise, such as the lack of understanding of participants regarding the service aspect in leadership, then this must be followed up with improvements in future program planning. Management evaluation theory emphasizes the importance of data-based decision-making, so the analysis must be objective and based on the facts collected.

After the analysis, the stage of reporting the results of the evaluation is carried out by compiling an evaluation report that summarizes the findings of the evaluation process. This report includes successes, challenges, and recommendations for improvement for future leadership development programs. This report is submitted to BEM, HMJ, universities, and Islamic boarding schools, so that all stakeholders understand the results of the evaluation and can contribute to program improvement.

The last stage of the evaluation program is the implementation of feedback from the results of the evaluation that has been carried out. One concrete example of the implementation of this feedback is the adjustment of the leadership training program where greater focus is given on developing communication skills and service to other students. If the evaluation results show that participants find it difficult to lead a group or collaborate with others, BEM and HMJ can integrate more collaborative exercises or real-life simulations in the next training program.

This comprehensive evaluation is in line with the theory of management evaluation which underlines that evaluation is not just an assessment process, but also a tool for further program development. This evaluation allows student organizations to not only assess the effectiveness of existing leadership development programs, but also improve and update student leadership development strategies in the future.

4 Conclusion

Student organizations such as BEM and HMJ at Nurul Jadid University have a function as an effective media in developing student leadership. This organization provides the right forum for students to practice leadership based on the principle of servant leadership, where leaders are expected to be able to serve and prioritize the interests of others. In planning, the programs designed by BEM and HMJ target the formation of leadership skills, such as through Leadership Training Camps, mentoring, and pesantren management activities, which are relevant to the pesantren environment and the community.

The implementation of these programs is fully supported by the Islamic boarding school, which provides permits and facilities for students to be actively involved in various leadership activities on campus. Through this collaboration, students gain direct experience in leading and serving, both in the pesantren environment and the community.

Program evaluation is conducted comprehensively using management evaluation theory, which includes data collection, analysis, and application of feedback for continuous improvement. This evaluation ensures that the programs carried out not only function as a formality, but also have a real impact on improving the leadership spirit of student leadership. The results of this evaluation are used to improve the program in the future, so that it is more effective in producing future leaders who have integrity and are able to lead with sincerity and responsibility, both in Islamic boarding schools and in the lives of the wider community.

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