Sincerity and Devotion-Based Education
(Case Study at Al-Ishlah Lamongan Islamic Boarding School)

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Abstract: This research provides valuable insight into the implementation of Education based on sincerity and service in Islamic educational institutions, especially the Al-Ishlah Lamongan Islamic Boarding School, as well as a basis for further understanding of the contribution of this Education to the formation of qualified and empowered individuals. The qualitative research method used involves observation, interviews, and documentary studies to understand the educational approach at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School. Various data collection techniques are used to gather accurate information. The research results show that Education at this Islamic boarding school is based on the principle of sincerity, where every educational activity is based on a sincere intention to seek Allah’s approval. Apart from that, the concept of devotion is aimed at God, others, and society. Al-Ishlah Lamongan Islamic Boarding School not only aims to convey religious knowledge but also to shape its students into empowered individuals with noble character and social awareness. Education based on sincerity and devotion at the Al-Ishlah Lamongan Islamic Boarding School provides a positive contribution to character formation and student empowerment in the context of Islamic Education. Education based on sincerity and dedication at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan has several significant implications: 1) Character Development: Students are taught to be sincere and serve sincerely, improving their character. 2) Improvement of Education Quality: Focus on sincerity and dedication enhances education quality. 3) and others.

Keywords: Sincerity; Devotion; Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang berharga tentang pelaksanaan pendidikan yang berbasis keikhlasan dan pelayanan di lembaga pendidikan Islam, khususnya Pondok Pesantren Al-Ishlah Lamongan, serta memberikan dasar pemahaman lebih lanjut tentang kontribusi pendidikan ini terhadap pembentukan individu yang berkualitas dan berdaya. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif, dengan menggunakan observasi, wawancara, dan studi dokumen untuk memahami pendekatan pendidikan di Pondok Pesantren Al-Ishlah. Berbagai teknik pengumpulan data digunakan untuk mengumpulkan informasi yang akurat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan di pondok pesantren ini didasarkan pada prinsip keikhlasan, di mana setiap kegiatan pendidikan dilandasi...
Introduction

Education is one of the main pillars in shaping an individual’s character and personality (Hafidz, 2023). Lack of understanding and awareness of the importance of sincerity and dedication makes the general public, especially the younger generation, trapped in a cycle of lack of strong moral values (Wijayanti, 2021). In addition, a model of Education that comprehensively integrates the values of sincerity and dedication in the learning process makes the formation of good character and personality increasingly manageable (Abdul, 2016). In facing this challenge, it is important for educational institutions, such as Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan, to become pioneers in teaching and implementing the concepts of sincerity and dedication as the main foundation in the learning process (Liyani, 2015). In the context of Islamic Education, sincerity and dedication are very important foundations for creating a generation with integrity, noble character, and the ability to make positive contributions to society (Muljawan, 2020).

Al-Ishlah Lamongan Islamic Boarding School is an Islamic educational institution that carries the concept of Education based on sincerity and devotion. This concept covers not only academic aspects but also the formation of students’ character and spirituality. Education at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School is based on the principles of sincerity, where every educational activity is based on a sincere intention to seek Allah’s approval and provide benefits to others.
Islamic Education highlights two crucial things. First, not all Islamic educational institutions have a comprehensive approach to teaching sincerity and dedication. Second, not all Islamic educational institutions have adequate resources to implement the concepts of sincerity and dedication in the learning process. These two things are real challenges in the effort to shape a generation with noble character and integrity. In facing these problems, there needs to be synergy between educational institutions, the government, and society to create a conducive and effective educational environment. Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan is an example of how Education based on sincerity and dedication can be a real solution to overcome these challenges.

Devotion, in the context of Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School, is not only defined as devotion to God alone but also devotion to others and society. Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School students are taught to become agents of change who contribute to building a better society. Education at this Islamic boarding school teaches human values, justice and social care as an integral part of the learning process.

Research Methods

This research employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of Education Based on Sincerity and Dedication at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan. Qualitative research is a method or method of research that emphasizes analysis or descriptiveness, while quantitative is a research method that uses many numbers (Sugiyono, 2020). Starting from the data collection process to its interpretation. Apart from that, the author also uses the content analysis method, which is a research technique used to make conclusions that can be adopted from the accuracy of data by paying attention to the context (Jaya, 2020).

The research "Education Based on Sincerity and Devotion at the Al-Ishlah Lamongan Islamic Boarding School" was designed by combining two models of data collection techniques, namely: First, through filling out questionnaires both online and manually. The type of questionnaire that will be used is a closed questionnaire; this aims to provide the right direction according to the desired target of the respondent's answers and reduce too wide an understanding of their answers. Second, direct interviews with respondents aim to directly describe the understanding of the research carried out by the researcher so that the researcher gets a direct picture regarding the character of the object being studied.
Location and Data Sources for the Study related to the effectiveness and efficiency of the study, and considering the geographical location of the Indonesian region, the researcher focused on Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School located in Sendangagung Paciran Lamongan village and the sources around the boarding school with various considerations and reasons including its relevance to the theme, accessibility, and also being a representative boarding school among others. The sources of this research are First, Pondok Caretakers, who are the main foundation for cultivating the Pondok spirit, especially sincerity; Second, asatidz and ustadzat, which are the extension of the caregivers in implementing and applying values to the students; Third, the students who are the object of discussion, Fourth, the guardians of the students who with sincerity entrusts their children, fifth, alumni who are products of the application of the board’s spirit, especially sincerity, and other parties if needed. The selection of these sources is based on the knowledge of the sources, their involvement in the process, and the representation of various backgrounds.

The methods and procedures for collecting data in the research carried out by this researcher used several methods, namely, Questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. Firstly, the questionnaire is only structured into several questions that are relatively general but still focus on the theme you want to research. This aims to reduce answers that lead to the assumption that they are being forced from the respondents, with the hope of being able to explore views, knowledge, experience and application. Alternatively, the practice of cultivating the value of sincerity in the Al-Ishlah Sendangagung Islamic Boarding School environment can be derived from the formulation of the Islamic boarding school spirit. The order of questions does not reflect a particular value, so question number one does not mean it is more important than number two and has more value, number two is not more important than number three and so on. Second, conducting interviews aims to obtain feedback data from respondents, whether from caregivers, asatidz wa ustadzat, students, alumni, and others.

This data consists of three main points, namely: First, knowledge about sincerity, which is one of the souls of the Al-Ishlah Islamic boarding school; Second, knowledge about sincerity. Third, educational values should be instilled based on sincerity and devotion. Furthermore, the data that has been collected will be analyzed continuously.
Results and Discussion

Understanding Sincerity and Its Meaning

Linguistically, the word sincerity is taken from the Arabic khalasa-yakhlusu, which means purification of something and its selection. In language dictionaries, the term sincerity means purification, sorting out dirt that is mixed with something (Al-Asfahani, 2009).

Meanwhile, in terms of terms, the definition of sincerity varies, including the definition expressed by Al-Wahibi, which is that sincerity is intentionally worshiping a god, and that alone is worthy of worship. Sincerity is also defined as the purification of secrets, words and deeds. Apart from that, sincerity can also be interpreted as purifying the heart from all impurities that can damage the clarity of the heart and from all things that are reflected and can pollute others, so if a person's inner self is clear and not polluted, then it is called sincerity (Al-Wahibi, 1433).

The meaning of sincerity is varied, including the following:

a. al-Istifa' wa al-Ikhtiyar (choice)

b. al-Khulus min al-Shawabib (free from all reproach)

c. al-Ikhtisas aw al-Khususiyah (specialization)

d. al-Tawhid wa al-Tathir (confirmation and purification) (Al-Munjid, 2009)

Apart from that, sincerity also has several equivalent meanings in Arabic, including the following:

a. al-Ibtigha' (seeking)

b. al-Iradah (desire)

c. al-Raja' (hope)

d. Islam al-Wajh

e. Fi Sabilillah

Understanding Devotion and Its Meaning

In Arabic, the word khidmah is often mentioned as devotion, which is the masdar form of the word khadama-yakhdumu (Kamus Al-Maany, n.d.). In the KBBI, service is defined as the process, method, or act of serving or dedicating (Kamus, n.d.). So, in general, service means serving or devoting; a citizen who serves his country will
fight for the country without expecting anything in return as well as other forms of service.

Serving is a surrender to "something" that is considered superior, usually done sincerely, even accompanied by sacrifice. Where sacrifice means a gift to express devotion, which can be in the form of material, feelings, body and soul; in this way, devotion is good deeds in the form of thoughts, opinions or energy as a manifestation of loyalty, love, affection, respect or a bond and all of this is done sincerely. Devotion can also be called a sense of responsibility (Apriliah, n.d.).

Humans are creatures created by God, and as humans, we are obliged to serve God. This devotion means complete surrender to God, and it is a manifestation of one's responsibility to God Almighty. Good service can be interpreted as an action based on sincerity and willingness to help. Devotion can also be interpreted as a person's life choice, whether they want to serve their parents, religion and God or the nation and state, where service will contain an element of sacrifice and the obligation to do so, which will usually be appreciated and depends on what one is dedicated to. For example, suppose parents are devoted to raising their children. In that case, likely, their children will also be filial to their parents, or a civil servant's service to his nation and state will usually be given some kind of award/sign of service from the country concerned (Apriliah, n.d.).

Correlation of Sincerity and Devotion (Amal)

Sincerity has an influence on deeds, including the following:

a. As a condition for accepting charity
b. As a means of receiving prayer
c. As a means of obtaining intercession
d. As a means of multiplying rewards
e. As a means of accepting repentance
f. As a means of obtaining rewards without doing charity work (Al-Wahibi, 1433).

Apart from that, sincerity also has fruits or results that can be achieved if you do something sincerely, including:

a. Acceptance of charity
b. Get rewards
c. Small charities can become big
d. All sins are forgiven

e. Get the reward of charity even though you are not able to carry it out

f. Changing permissible actions and habits can become an act of worship that earns rank with Him.

g. Protect the soul from satanic interference

h. Stop worrying and distance yourself from Riya

i. Free from slander

j. Elimination of doubts and lots of sustenance

k. Relieve difficulties

l. Allah fulfills his needs

m. A sincere person is decorated with a sense of wisdom

n. Someone who does something, even if it is wrong, still gets a reward if it is done sincerely

o. In sincerity, everything is good (Al-Munjid, 2009).

Apart from the fruits of sincerity, as mentioned above, many more fruits can be produced from sincerity. In his book Fadhlu al-Ikhlas, Thamir Ibn Mubarak al-’Amir mentions more than 80 things (Al-’Amir, 2021); there are also dangers of acting without sincerity, among them are:

a. Not going to heaven

b. Go to hell on the Day of Judgment

c. Not accepting a charity


After we know what sincerity is and the things related to it, then we also need to know that the essence of sincerity is to clear things up with the aim of getting closer to Allah Ta’ala, imitating and following everything that Allah has commanded and abandoning everything that He has forbidden. This is what is meant by sincerity in monotheism and the elimination of worship other than worshiping Him (Al-’Amir, 2021).

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state, where service will contain an element of sacrifice and the obligation to do so, which will usually be appreciated and depends on what one is dedicated to. For example, suppose parents are devoted to raising their children. In that case, likely, their children will also be filial to their parents, or a civil servant's service to his nation and state will usually be given some award/sign of service from the country concerned (Al-‘Amir, 2021).

The emergence of service because there is responsibility, service is divided into several types, including:

1. Devotion to God

   As creatures created by God, humans are obliged to serve God. Devotion means complete surrender to God, and it is a manifestation of one's responsibility to God Almighty. This is as Allah says in surah al-Zariyat verse 56: I did not create jinn and humans but so that they would worship Me.

2. Devotion to family

   Devotion to the family can take the form of devotion to the wife and children. Wife to husband and children, or children to their parents.

3. Community service

   If a person who lives in society does not want to socialize himself and always isolates himself, then if he has extraordinary difficulties, he does not get help from society. Sooner or later, he will realize and surrender to the society around him. Therefore, for the sake of society, community members must be willing to dedicate themselves to society. He must have a sense of responsibility to society.

4. Service to the Country

   Humans are part of a nation or citizens. Therefore, a citizen will love his nation and country, which is usually manifested in the form of devotion. Abd al-Malik al-Qasim explained several things that need to be devoted to Muslim attacks on their religion, including:

   1) If we are in a state of true desire and honest intentions, then what we can dedicate ourselves to is doing charity sincerely, only hoping for Allah Ta’ala's approval.
2) If we know the straight path, then what we can devote ourselves to is following the straight path taught by the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam in terms of preaching.

3) If we are in a state of convenience, then what we can devote ourselves to is using these conveniences for things that are permitted by Allah and staying away from things that are prohibited.

4) If we are in a position to have property, then what we can dedicate is to use the excess property for religious matters.

5) If we become scholars or preachers, then what we can devote ourselves to is being patient in carrying out our duties, being patient with all fatigue and the results.

6) If we are far from feeling lazy and weak and proud of ourselves, then what we can do is be grateful for this situation because this religion is full of ideals, courage and strong desires.

7) And so on (Al-Qasim, n.d.).

In devotion or in doing good deeds, it is very dangerous if it is not accompanied by sincerity; among the dangers of doing good deeds in religious matters, what is only expected in worldly matters is that there is also shirk which reduces the perfection of monotheism which is obligatory by law and eliminates the reward for good deeds, and this is of greater danger. Rather than Riya because his desire for the world is greater than his desire for charity in the afterlife (Al-Qahtani, n.d.).

Analysis of Sincerity and Devotion-Based Education at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School

In relation to the sincerity carried out by the elements of the Al-Ishlah Islamic boarding school, starting from the caregivers, teacher board, students, and workers, we surveyed what extent these elements understand in interpreting and practicing sincerity in their service.

a. When respondents were asked about their understanding of sincerity, with a total of 294 respondents chosen randomly, the result was 173 people, or 58.8%, stated that their understanding was good. In contrast, 93 people or 31.6%, stated that their understanding of sincerity was very good, while the remaining 28
people or 9.5%, stated that their understanding of sincerity was very good. Enough to understand sincerity. Here is more or less an overview:

b. When respondents were asked about their understanding of service, with a total of 293 respondents selected randomly, the result was 183 people, or 62.5%, who stated that their understanding was good. In contrast, 54 people or 18.4%, stated that their understanding of service was very good, while the remaining 56 people or 19.1%, stated that their understanding of service was very good. Enough to understand sincerity. Here is more or less an overview:

c. When respondents were asked about the importance of sincerity in service, with a total of 294 respondents chosen randomly, the results were 227 people, or 77.2%, stated that sincerity was very important in service. In contrast, 67 people or 22.8%, stated that sincerity in service was important, and none of the
respondents stated that sincerity was not important in service. Here is more or less an overview:

d. When respondents were asked about the extent to which elements at the Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School had implemented sincerity in their service, with a total of 294 randomly selected respondents, the result was 70 people, or 23.9%, stated that elements at the Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School had applied sincerity in their service. In contrast, 20 people or 6.8%, said they had not, and a total of 204 people or 69.6 said that every element in the boarding school had implemented sincerity in its service but could have been more optimal. Here is more or less an overview:

e. When respondents, especially those in the final class who were going to continue their studies, were asked whether their choice of place of study, major and so on was influenced by their upbringing at the boarding school, which
implemented sincerity in their service? A total of 274 respondents were chosen randomly, and the result was that 217 people, or 79.2%, answered yes. In contrast, 15 people or 5.5%, said no, and 402 people or 15.3%, said they did not know. Here is more or less an overview:

![Graph showing the survey results](image)

f. Kyai M. Dawam Saleh, as the caretaker of the Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School, always emphasizes that in every activity agenda contained in this boarding school, all elements are expected to serve with full sincerity. He explained that sincerity is quieting pamrih, rame ing gawe (doing without wanting to be noticed by others).

Education based on sincerity and dedication at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan has several significant implications, including: 1) Character Development: Education based on sincerity and dedication helps in the development of student's character. They are taught to be sincere and serve sincerely, which is an important characteristic in everyday life. 2) Improvement of Education Quality: Focusing on sincerity and dedication helps improve the quality of Education provided. Teachers and boarding school administrators will be more focused on character formation and service to students. 3) Improvement of Social Life Quality: Students trained in sincerity and dedication will become better members of society. They will be more able to contribute positively to various aspects of social life. 4) Development of Social Skills: Education based on sincerity and dedication helps in the development of students' social skills. They are taught to communicate well, work together in teams, and understand the needs of others. 5) Improvement of Life Quality: With good character and strong social skills, students will be more able to face various challenges
in life and achieve sustainable success. 6). Positive Influence on the Surrounding Environment: Education based on sincerity and dedication at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan can also have a positive impact on the surrounding environment. Students trained in these values will become agents of positive change in society. 7). Improvement of Teaching Quality: Teachers and boarding school administrators will be better trained in providing effective and relevant teaching. They will be more able to inspire and motivate students to study diligently. 8). Improvement of Leadership Quality: Students trained in sincerity and dedication will become better leaders in the future. They will have integrity, empathy, and the ability to lead by example. 9). Improvement of Service Quality: Boarding schools will be more focused on serving students and the community. They will strive to provide better service and be more oriented towards the needs of students. 10). Development of Entrepreneurial Skills: Education based on sincerity and dedication can also help in the development of students' entrepreneurial skills. They are taught to be responsible entrepreneurs and contribute to economic development.

Thus, Education based on sincerity and dedication at Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan has broad and significant implications for character development, education quality, social life quality, and overall community development.

Conclusion

When we are in a deadlock in this life and our position as Muslims in this modern era, we need sincerity with a very deep need to improve this situation and to be able to get out of this deadlock or distress. Apart from that, there are Islamic laws that encourage goodness to be able to stand and develop. However, in the future, they will fall apart due to a lack of sincerity in their implementation, and the actors in the project will be polluted with a sense of riya', sum'ah, wanting worldly and distant rewards. Out of sincerity, they did these jobs, but they caused the downfall of the Shari'a. A sense of sincerity must also accompany individual work. Hence, improving intentions is very important because how can it be possible to improve the situation if the intentions contained in the heart have yet to be set? You also have to understand the concept of sincerity, how someone can act sincerely but need help understanding what it is, wallahu a'lam.
REFERENCES


