Empowering Students Through Increasing *Santriprenuer* Knowledge

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Abstract	Islamic boarding schools are required to be agents of development, playing an active role in contributing to and transforming the field of economic empowerment and the quality of their resources. Many Islamic boarding schools have adapted and transformed into institutions that are participating in economic empowerment efforts. Still, the program only involves motivators and target groups without the involvement of the students, both cognitively and in terms of action. This assistance aims to enhance the understanding and awareness of students and *pesantren* on the significance of the creative industry for advancing *pesantren* and as a precursor for students after graduating from these educational institutions. The ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) approach is a service methodology employed in this mentoring program. The results service of this program can be said to have been fully achieved. This can be evidenced by the emergence of community or *pesantren* awareness of the magnitude of their physical and non-physical assets. The community demonstrated a high level of appreciation for the views and ideas born in the discussion between the mentoring team and the management of the boarding school. Furthermore, there has been a growing awareness of the potential of the *santri* and the emergence of interest in creative industries.

Keywords	Asset-Based Community Development; Empowering; *Santripreneur*

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1. INTRODUCTION

'Santri' describes students attending Islamic boarding schools, a common educational institution in Indonesia. These schools have an Islamic focus. As the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia (Fathoni & Rohim, 2019; Yasmadi, 2005), *pesantren* have undergone numerous developments (Hasan, 2015). In addition to its role as an educational institution, *pesantren* also serves as an Islamic broadcasting institution. It has been identified as a significant contributor to the development of Islamic scholarship and a pivotal center for the maintenance of traditional Islam (Azra, 2012; Azra, 2020; Dhofier, 1994; Maksum, 2015; Sahriansyah & dkk, 2013). The historical journey of *pesantren* is also not easy, with many obstacles and challenges faced, as well as resisting colonialism (Geertz, 1981; Noer, 1980; Rickles, 2010).

As a result of globalization and modernization, *pesantren* must adjust to the times (Syafe'i, 2017; Yasmadi, 2005). To avoid the limitations of a narrow interpretation as Wahidah (2015) Proposes that *pesantren* can be understood in three distinct ways. Firstly, *pesantren* is an educational institution where knowledge in religious sciences (*Tamaqua fi al-din) and Islamic values are* transmitted. Secondly, the *pesantren* is a religious institution that can exercise social control. Thirdly, the *pesantren* also functions as a religious institution that can provide recreation.

As Azra (2020) Asserts, an Indonesian educational institution undergoing extensive and rapid changes, is almost certainly a *pesantren*. Ahmad Faozan in Maksum (2015) and Aziz (2018) It also reinforces this view that, in recent times, *pesantren* have adapted and transformed into institutions that participate in making economic empowerment efforts in various forms, such as Supriyanto (2011) found. However, it still seems to be a patchwork program, including the absence of the involvement of students, both cognitively and in action (Abdurrahman, 1997).

The role of *pesantren* in the development of religious education is pivotal, as it also plays a significant part in supporting its students' development and potential development. In addition to being a place for students to study, Islamic boarding schools are also a place to develop creativity, both in the learning process and in creating future business opportunities (Putri et al., 2020). Given this, *pesantren* must become an educational institution that can effectively impart life skills education to its students. This education should not only cultivate students' life skills and competencies for their future (Fikri dkk., 2016) But also serve as a pillar of strength for the *pesantren* in maintaining their existence and independence (Maksum, 2015).

Previous service studies pertinent to the service in question include the service carried out by Kamila Fikri et al. (2016) Product Development and Marketing

Assistance for the Craft Division of *Santri Pesantren* Al-Khoirot Malang. Kamila Fikri et al. conducted this assistance by implementing an Ipteks for Communities (IbM) program. The conclusion was that the female *santri* of PP Al Khoirot already possessed the requisite skills to produce products. However, the designs were still perceived as monotonous and lacked the competitive edge required to succeed in the market. Consequently, Kamila Fitri et al. conducted counseling and training in product design with more varied and innovative approaches to provide insight into how *Santri* develops its products. This service also targets the ability of students to engage in marketing, which was previously limited to the internal environment of the cottage. It is hoped that it will expand with the reach of online marketing. Previously, Ghofirin and Karimah (2017) They researched community service at Pondok *Pesantren Qomarudiin*, *Desa* Bungah, Gresik, and *Santri* Entrepreneurship. The authors' shared belief inspired this service in the importance of entrepreneurship for students. By providing training in entrepreneurial insight, they aimed to contribute to developing entrepreneurial skills among students. These two types of service illustrate to the author that providing services to the industrial sector is necessary.

The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) methodology is appropriate for several reasons to adopt in this service work. Firstly, the ABCD methodology provides a different perspective, focusing on assets owned instead of problems. However, the *Al-Mujahidin* Islamic boarding school is not fully aware of the assets owned by the boarding school. Indeed, understanding the assets owned by an institution, particularly in the context of education, is of great importance for developing education. Secondly, asset-based community development is also a methodology that prioritizes joint work from the initial to the final stage (Purwanti et al., 2023). Consequently, the community is not regarded as a passive recipient of services but rather as a key stakeholder in the process.

Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujahidin Marabahan is one of the *pesantren* in Barito Kuala Regency, South Kalimantan Province. In the author's observation, it has not fully fulfilled its role as an Islamic educational institution, namely as an institution that empowers its students and develops the potential of *pesantren* in strengthening the *pesantren* economy. This condition has inspired the author to assist the students in that boarding.

This community aims to enhance the understanding and awareness of students and *pesantren* on the significance of the creative industry for advancing *pesantren* and as a precursor for students after graduating from these educational institutions (Elshaer et al., 2021). The objective of this assistance is to enhance the knowledge and

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awareness of students and *pesantren* of the significance of the creative industry for the advancement of *pesantren* and as a precursor to students after graduating from these educational institutions. This article examines the process and outcomes of empowerment initiatives in imparting knowledge and awareness to students and *pesantren* of the value of the creative industry. It also discusses the mentoring methods, results, and evaluations obtained and achieved after implementing empowerment.

2. METHODS

The author employs the methodological paradigm of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) to ascertain the potential assets owned by the assisted object. This approach is deemed the most appropriate for this assistance or service, as it prioritizes utilizing assets or potential, in this case, those owned by the boarding school. The service was conducted at the *Al-Muhajidin* Islamic Boarding School in Marabahan City, Barito Kuala Regency, South Kalimantan Province. By understanding the assets in question, the community can identify strengths/assets and build their community.

The approach comprises five stages: (1) Identification of community strengths through focus group discussion (FGD) and appreciative inquiry (AI), which aims to identify, track, and inventory community assets. The FGD participants were drawn from two distinct groups: those representing the researcher and service personnel and those representing teachers. The interview was conducted using the principles of Appreciative Inquiry, which involved focusing on past successes and exploring the assets possessed by the *pesantren*. (2) Asset mapping of the community, comprising personal/human, association/social, institutional, natural, physical, financial and spiritual/cultural assets. Asset mapping is initiated through discussions, analyses, and mapping exercises conducted in focus group discussions (FGDs) involving researchers, stakeholders, and teachers. (3) Planning the form of the mentoring program. The three stages are carried out by implementing five steps: discovery, dream, design, define, and destiny. The Discovery and Dream initiatives were designed to identify the community's strengths and ascertain the *pesantren's* aspirations. These two steps were carried out at the focus group discussion stage. The design stage follows the identification of the *pesantren's* desired outcomes. In this stage, the author, stakeholders, and the community collaborate to develop a program aligned with these objectives. The define stage, which follows the program definition, entails determining the program's form, implementation timeline, funding sources, training providers, and collaborative partners. Finally, the destiny stage assesses the

program's impact and outcomes. (4) Once these stages have been completed, the subsequent stage is program implementation. Finally, (5) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is conducted using the Most Significant Change (MSC) technique. The Most Significant Change (MSC) approach involves providing participants with a table that includes a description of the perceived change, the rationale behind its importance, how the change occurred, and suggestions for maintaining it.

3.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As previously stated, the author and the service team initially conducted exercises to identify the community's strengths. These included focus group discussions (FGD) and appreciative inquiry (AI)/appreciative discovery. Additionally, they employed asset mapping to identify, track, and inventory community assets. During the FGD and AI/AI exercises, the author and the *pesantren* identified many assets owned by the *pesantren*. Furthermore, Asset Mapping was employed to inform the design of the program. This involved five stages: discovery, dream, design, define, and destiny. The five stages are explained as follows:

3.1   *Discovery*

This stage involved identifying the strengths of the community. This was conducted through focus group discussions (FGDs) and appreciative inquiry activities. Among our findings in the human asset section is the conclusion that the strength of the *santri* and the teachers (*ustadz/ustadzah*) is a significant asset. In addition, in the institution asset section, the *Almujahidin pesantren* is widely known as an Islamic educational institution, and interaction with the community is intense. This opportunity can be seen in the mosque owned by the *pesantren* as one of the community's choices in carrying out Friday worship. In addition to human and institutional assets, *Almujahidin* also has an association or social asset, where the caretaker is a religious figure whose role is significant within the community and who performs a recitation. Similarly, numerous teachers and alumni occupy pivotal roles in government institutions such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs, KPU, and *Bawaslu*, as well as in educational institutions, including formal schools, both public and private, and universities.

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3.2 Dream

Identifying the aspirations of the *pesantren*. This was conducted through focus group discussions (FGDs) and appreciative inquiry activities. The author's findings indicate that the *pesantren* anticipates activities designed to provide students with new insights related to entrepreneurship.

3.3 Design

Once the desired outcomes of the *pesantren* have been identified, the author, stakeholders, and the community collaborate to develop a program that will facilitate the realization of these aspirations. This program includes entrepreneurship seminars, which professionals and entrepreneurial practitioners with *santri* backgrounds deliver. This approach is crucial to ensure that *santri* can provide insights and concrete examples.

3.4 Define

Once the agreed program, namely the entrepreneurship seminar, has been determined, the next step is to define the program itself. This will be delivered as a seminar, with materials such as entrepreneur, motivation, and invitations to build entrepreneurial courage. The implementation date was 16 September 2021. The financing and funding for this activity will be provided by the 2021 BOPTN, with the Litapdimas scheme. The parties responsible for providing the seminars are former students active in the HIPMI South Kalimantan organization and have several businesses.

3.5 Destiny

This section outlines the targets to be achieved in this assistance. The author and the *pesantren* agreed that the minimum achievement is that *santri* has a new and open view of entrepreneurship. This will enable them to develop social capital in the field of religion and to become less reliant on academic knowledge.

Figure 1. Photograph taken during the visit of the Community Service Team/Researcher to

Al-Mujahidin Islamic Boarding School, where Appreciative Inquiry and Asset Mapping were conducted.

Furthermore, the service team, in collaboration with the boarding school (stakeholders and community), devised the framework for the assistance program. The planning process yielded several conclusions, including the decision to hold the *Santri* Entrepreneurship Seminar on 16 September 2021 at the *Al-Mujahidin Marabahan* Islamic Boarding School Mosque. The seminar speaker was selected from Entrepreneurs with a *santri* background who were invited to attend the seminar with the intention that they would gain a deeper understanding of the *santri* community and be able to adopt an appropriate approach to engaging with them. Muhammad Fitrajaya, S.Pd. a HIPMI South Kalimantan Province member, was selected as the seminar speaker.

The *Santri* Entrepreneurship Seminar is a form of assistance carried out with the *Santripreneur* theme and the objective of fostering awareness of the potential of *santri*. This program was implemented to provide a broader view of the world for *santri* after they graduate from *Pesantren*. This seminar was held at *Al-Mujahidin* Islamic Boarding School and was attended by almost all students, with 190 students in attendance and several teachers. Regarding the resource person, the service team requested the assistance of an active entrepreneur in HIPMI South Kalimantan Province. The resource person is also a former *santri* in one of the boarding schools in South Kalimantan. This approach is deemed appropriate as the resource person is intimately familiar with the lives of *santri*, thus facilitating the provision of diverse perspectives.

The seminar was held on 16 September 2021 at the Pon*dok Pesantren Al-Mujahidin* Mosque in Marabahan, Batola, South Kalimantan. The following details are provided for the convenience of the reader:

Figure 2. Muhammad Fithrajaya, S. Pd, Young Entrepreneur, and HIPMI South Kalimantan Executive Board presented the importance of becoming an entrepreneur.

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The objective of this activity is to foster awareness among *santri* of the potential they possess. In addition, it aims to encourage them to take control of their future. This activity is distinctive in that it differs from previous forms of assistance, which have typically been in the form of goods and funds. Instead, it focuses on developing competence and soft skills.

Following the program's implementation, the service team conducted monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation are employed to ascertain the efficacy of the program. The Most Significant Change (MSC) technique is employed for this purpose. It entails describing the changes experienced, the rationale behind them, how they occur, and the means of sustaining them.

The data obtained indicate that the assisted community welcomed the activity. This leads to the conclusion that the activity has an impact and influence in building the knowledge and motivation of *santri* to become an entrepreneurs. The data indicates that *Santri* 2, 4, and 6, for instance, expressed opinions regarding the assistance program.

> "The activity is engaging and offers the opportunity to gain experience and develop entrepreneurial skills" (*Santri* 2).

> "The seminar was both interesting and enjoyable. It provided an insight into the world of entrepreneurship and offered the chance to gain knowledge that could be applied in the future" (*Santri* 4).

> "The Entrepreneurship Seminar was an enlightening experience for me and has reinforced my desire to become an entrepreneur" (*Santri* 6).

Furthermore, entrepreneurial independence is a novel insight gained by participants or communities.

> "This entrepreneurship seminar was highly informative, and I concluded that being an entrepreneur is an intriguing pursuit because it does not have to be or need to be regulated by others." *(Santri 3)*

> "The seminar was highly informative, as it highlighted that entrepreneurship allows us to become independent of superiors, with success ultimately dependent on our efforts." *(Santri 10)*

In addition to the students, several teachers were also in attendance at the activity. The presence of the board of teachers provides a positive meaning because changes in views, perceptions, or paradigms in building the independence of boarding schools through assisting students' life skills also need to be owned by the board of teachers as educators and people directly involved in the process. In conclusion, this activity can be regarded as a success and an influential factor in implementing the

mentoring program. *Ustadz* 1, for instance, asserted that entrepreneurship seminars are beneficial for students, particularly in a boarding school setting, as they facilitate the development of independent life skills in the future. Running an independent business is intriguing, as it can enhance one's financial stability and create employment opportunities (Ortiz & Huber-Heim, 2017); (Zhan & Santos-Paulino, 2021). Based on the monitoring and evaluation process findings, the desired service outcomes of the mentoring program can be categorized into short-term and long-term targets. The short-term targets of the program have been largely met, indicating that it has been a successful initiative (Prabowo et al., 2021).

The monitoring and evaluation results indicate that the desired service achievement targets in the implementation of mentoring have both short-term and long-term targets. The short-term targets expected from this program can be said to have been fully achieved (Marsan et al., 2022); (Patriani et al., 2023). The emergence of community or *Pondok Pesantren* awareness of the magnitude of their physical and non-physical assets. The community demonstrated a profound appreciation for the insights and suggestions from the mentoring team's engagement with the boarding school's management (Van Tulder et al., 2021); (Tyagi, 2023).

The boarding school's students showed a growing awareness of their potential and an emerging interest in the creative industry. The objective can be achieved through the process of service and mentoring (Soliati, 2019). Referring to the monitoring results, *santri*, who are the subjects of the service, have changed their perception of the world of work. They have ceased to view employment solely as a government position and have developed the courage to consider other opportunities for economic independence in the future (Nugroho & Hidayah, 2020).

The changes and openness in students after this training are important indicators of progress in implementing religious values. As stated by Ghofirin and Karimah (2017), the openness and changes in views related to wantrepreneur by students and teachers indicate the implementation of Islamic values themselves, supported by talent and religion. Furthermore, using the ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) methodology is crucial for fostering *pesantren* awareness of their inherent potential and the optimal utilization of these assets. Syarifuddin and Nildawati (2017) I have confirmed that this methodology can provide a comprehensive overview of the assets owned by a community. The ABCD methodology, initiated by McKnight (1996), can be employed in a multitude of fields (Mallapiang dkk., 2020).

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4. CONCLUSION

The program of empowering *santri* through increasing entrepreneurial knowledge has been successfully implemented, achieving its short-term goals. It can be concluded that the program was successful as Islamic boarding schools demonstrated awareness of the extent of their physical and non-physical assets. *Santri* showed awareness of their potential and expressed interest in the creative industry. However, it is crucial to note that further tangible training is essential to enhance their knowledge effectively.

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