

Defining Parental Involvement in Islamic Boarding School

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Abstrak

Penelitian yang berkembang menunjukkan bahwa keterlibatan orang tua (PI) adalah kunci keberhasilan siswa¹, namun studi tentang keterlibatan orang tua di Indonesia khususnya untuk pesantren masih kurang². Terlepas dari peran penting orang tua dalam mendukung pendidikan santri, pondok pesantren menawarkan suasana pendidikan di mana orang tua tinggal jauh dari anaknya. Ada beberapa perbedaan pemahaman tentang apakah orang tua memainkan peran penting dalam pendidikan di pesantren. Penelitian

- 1 J.L. Epstein, *School, Family, and Community Partnerships* (California: Corwin Press, 2009). See also Grolnick, W.S., & Raftery-Helmer, J.N. Core components of family-school connections: toward a model of need satisfying partnerships. *Foundational Aspects of Family-School Partnership Research*, Volume 1, 2015; see also Harris, L.A., & Robinson, K. A new framework for understanding parental involvement: setting the stage for academic success. *RSF Journal*. Volume 2(5), 2016; 186-201; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2016.2.5.09>.
- 2 Syamsudduha and Ginanto, "Parental Involvement in Indonesia: A Study on Two Public Schools in Makassar", *UNY ASSEHR*, 66 (2017). See also K. Yulianti, D. Denessen, and M. Droop, "Indonesian Parents' Involvement in Their Children's Education: A Study in Elementary Schools in Urban and Rural Java, Indonesia", *School Community Journal*, 10(1) 2019: 14-32.

ini mengkaji bagaimana orang tua mendefinisikan orang tua dan keterlibatan orang tua pada sebuah pesantren di Indonesia. Melalui wawancara dan observasi, penelitian ini menemukan beberapa definisi orang tua dalam konteks pesantren. Orang tua didefinisikan tidak hanya sebagai orang tua biologis seperti yang didefinisikan secara tradisional; studi ini menemukan bahwa orang tua juga didefinisikan sebagai guru yang melahirkan ilmu dan kerabat dekat. Selain itu, keterlibatan orang tua di pesantren juga terbilang unik dan di luar kerangka PI yang banyak digunakan di dunia barat seperti kerangka PI oleh Epstein³. Nilai-nilai keislaman mewarnai bagaimana orang tua dan keterlibatan orang tua didefinisikan dalam konteks pendidikan di pondok pesantren. Penelitian ini memberikan sumbangsi pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang keterlibatan orang tua dan orang tua dalam konteks pesantren.

Kata Kunci

Pelibatan orang tua, pondok pesantren, orang tua dalam pendidikan

Abstract

While a growing body of literature suggests that parental involvement is a key for the students' success¹, the study on parental involvement (PI) in Indonesia especially in religious boarding schools is still lacking². Despite the important role of parents in supporting students' education, the Islamic boarding school offers an educational setting in which parents live far away. There has been some disagreement about whether parents play an essential role in the Islamic boarding school setting. This study examines how parents define parents and parental involvement in an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. Through interviews and observations, this study found several definitions of parents in the Islamic boarding school context. Parents were defined not only as biological parents as traditionally defined, but also extended families. In addition, parental involvement was also uniquely perceived beyond the existing parental involvement frameworks widely used in Western areas such as Epstein's PI framework³. In addition, the study found that the values of Islam are influential in shaping the way parents

3 J.L. Epstein, *School, Family*.

and parental involvement are defined in the boarding school context. The study provides a deeper understanding of parent and parental involvement in the Islamic boarding school context.

Keywords

Parental involvement, Islamic boarding school, parents in education.

1 Introduction

Parents may send their children to different educational settings. These include public schools, charter schools, homeschooling, private schools, and boarding schools⁴. Except for boarding schools, students would most likely remain with their parents at home. In boarding school environments, students remain at the schools for a certain period of time, based on the agreement between the schools and parents⁴. As a result, boarding schools can vary from typical schools in terms of how parents are interested in their children's education. Parents send their children to boarding schools for a number of purposes, including to increase religious beliefs⁵, to prepare students with unique leadership skills⁶, and to provide educational opportunities for minority students⁷.

4 A.H. Sgro, "The Perception of Parents of the Appropriate Degree of Parental Involvement in an Independent Boarding School: A Matter of Trust", *Unpublished Dissertation*. University of Pennsylvania, 2006.

5 Andrea Smith, Indigenous peoples and boarding schools: A comparative study. *Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues* (8th edition), prepared for the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2009. See also: L.A. Harris, L.A., and K. Robinson. A new framework for understanding parental involvement: setting the stage for academic success. *RSF Journal*. Volume 2(5), 2016; 186-201. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2016.2.5.09>.

6 Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez, "What is an Elite Boarding School? Review of Educational Research, 79(3), 2009. pp. 1090-1128; See also: A.H. Sgro, A.H. The perception of parents of the appropriate degree of parental involvement in an independent boarding school: A matter of trust. *Unpublished Dissertation*. University of Pennsylvania, 2006; dan Martin et al., 2015

7 D. Hirshberg and S. Sharp, *Thirty years later: The long-term effect of boarding schools on Alaska natives and their communities*. (Institute of social and

Regardless of why parents send their children away, boarding school limits the parents' roles to monitor and nurture their children. Researchers have discovered that when parents actively encourage their children at home and at school, their children do better than those whose parents are not involved in their children's education⁸. Due to the distance, parents may not make visits to the boarding school frequently, and students may not return to their parents frequently⁹. These circumstances raise concerns about the various roles that parents play in the educational lives of boarding school students, as well as what factors influence the extent of parental involvement.

The boarding school offers different educational settings for parents, teachers, and students. Parents could not supervise students at home; parents could not drop and or pick up their child regularly; parents could not communicate with their students and teachers often; and parents could not visit the school regularly. The boarding school will not be able to use the conventional approach to involving parents in the same way as public schools do. Parents may believe that by enrolling their children in a boarding school, they have already done their part. As a result, parents can depend solely on teachers and school staff to shape their children's future and education by financially supporting the school. However, it's quite conceivable that the opposite is also true. Using the boarding school viewpoint, the boarding school might have its own approach to engaging parents.

economic research University of Alaska Anchorage. 2009); V.E. Curto and R.G. Fryer. "The potential of urban boarding schools for the poor: Evidence from SEED." *Journal of Labor Economics*. 32(1) 2012, p. 65-93. see also: Yangbin, C. "Uyghur students in a Chinese boarding school: Social recapitalization as a response to ethnic integration." *Unpublished doctoral dissertation*. The University of Hong Kong. 2006.

- 8 J.L. Epstein, *School, Family*. See also: Hornby, Gary. *Improving parental involvement*. (London, UK: Cassell, 2000); see also Lareau, Annette. *Home advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education*. (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000)
- 9 Andrea Smith. "Indigenous peoples and boarding schools: A comparative study." Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (8th edition). *Prepared for the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*. 2009.

Therefore, the current research aims at seeking information whether sending children to boarding schools clashes with the notion of parental involvement. The study found that distance gaps, connectivity problems, and volunteering issues have all made it difficult for most boarding schools to include parents¹⁰. Furthermore, Sgro (2006) boarding schools are considered to be special entities that have educational benefits that regular public schools cannot. This involves educational systems that are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and allow students and faculty to connect on a regular basis. Students may participate in more extracurricular activities and have more time to collaborate with their peers and faculty¹¹. This research would also fill in the gaps by looking at how parents and teachers in Islamic boarding schools identify parents and parental participation. Finally, this paper looks at the reasons why parents send their children to the various school settings.

2 Boarding School

So, what is a boarding school? A boarding school is a type of school where its students reside in the boarding homes provided by the school¹². Sgro (2006) defined boarding school as a unique environment in which students and faculty can interact on a daily basis. Martin et al. (2015) have a similar definition of a boarding school in terms of its ability to provide an opportunity to increase networking among students and faculty. They called boarding school students *boarders*¹³. The boarders vary in how long they will stay in the dormitory; there are some who visit parents weekly, monthly, every semester, or even yearly. The boarders will have their mentors in the dormitory as a

10 A.H. Sgro, A.H. "The perception of parents of the appropriate degree of parental involvement in an independent boarding school: A matter of trust." *Unpublished Dissertation*. University of Pennsylvania. 2006.

11 A.H. Sgro ... The perception.

12 C. Tan. "Educative tradition and Islamic schools in Indonesia." *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, 14, 2014; 47-62

13 A.J. Martin, B. Papworth; P. Ginns; and L.E., Malmberg. "Motivation, engagement, and social climate: An international study of boarding schools." *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 2015; P.1-15

replacement of the parental roles, such as helping the students with homework, helping students with consultation, and helping students with behavioral issues¹⁴. Martin et al. (2015) conducted a study on motivation and engagement using international samples, including students from Australia, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom, and discovered that because boarders spend most of their time at school, they, therefore, will have a better understanding of the educational contexts. Similar to this finding, Maphaso and Mahlo (2014) conducted a study of 339 schools in South Africa (51 boarding schools and 288 non-boarding schools); they found that the boarding schools had a significant positive impact on students' performance. This success was because the government gave serious attention to the boarding schools, especially to help the low socio-economic status students to advance¹⁵.

Boarding schools offer the bulk of times for students to interact with their teachers, peers, and school staff, which can eventually increase students' motivation and students' relationships with teachers¹⁶. Students are also offered an adequate time to ask clarification questions or help for homework from teachers and peers who are also residing at boarding houses¹⁶. Additionally, Martin et al. (2015) argued that, due to the regulations and schedules enforced in the boarding houses, the students naturally show good discipline. The rules in the boarding schools cover almost all of students' daily lives, including time to sleep and wake up; time to have dinner, lunch, and breakfast; time to do homework; and even time for leisure¹⁶.

3 Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia

There are at least two reasons why a study of Islamic boarding schools

14 V.E. Curto and R.G. Fryer. "The potential of urban boarding schools for the poor: Evidence from SEED." *Journal of Labor Economics*. 32(1), 2012. p. 65-93.

15 L.S. Maphoso, and D. Mahlo. "The influence of parental involvement on academic achievement in boarding schools and non-boarding schools." *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*. 5(2), 2014. p. 155-163.

16 A.J. Martin; B. Papworth., P. Ginns., and L.E. Malmberg. "Motivation, engagement, and social climate."

in Indonesia is relevant. First of all, unlike the boarding schools' history in the UK, America, Australia, Canada, or New Zealand that received a great amount of challenge from parents due to some abuses; in Indonesia, parents and students are greatly appreciative of the Islamic boarding schools¹⁷. In Indonesia, the educational system is noticeably distinct because it is under two different ministries, the ministry of education and cultures and the ministry of religious affairs. The Islamic boarding school is under the ministry of religious affairs.

Tan (2014) reported that the increasing number of students studying in *pesantren* is due to the parents and students wanting to better balance the modern, Western type of education with Islamic education and values. *Pesantren* offers national curriculum in addition to the Islamic teachings provided by the Islamic scholars and teachers. According to Tan (2014), the Islamic boarding schools are growing due to their ability to adapt to the changing times and places. The Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are recognized as some of the most innovative and the most open-minded in the world because of their willingness to go beyond religious studies and offer marketable skills for the students¹⁸. This is an interesting case because there are several objections to boarding schools in English speaking countries such as in the USA, UK, Australia, and Canada because there were so many reports of boarding schools being places of physical abuse, sexual abuse, loss of languages and cultures, trauma, and other negative effects as described above¹⁹. The growing acceptance of

17 C. Tan,. Educative tradition and Islamic schools.

18 Nurhayati, E., & Yasin, B.N. "Pengaruh lingkungan social dan non social pondok pesantren terhadap prestasi belajar matematika siswa kelas VIII Mts Husnul Khotimah Pondok Pesantren Husnul Khotimah Manis Kidul-Jelaksana-Kuningan (The influence of social and non-social of boarding school environment at the Husnul Khotimah Islamic boarding schools of Husnul Khotimah Manis Kidul-Jelaksana-Kuningan)." *EduMa Journal*. 1(1). 2013; 65-74.; Tan, 2014; See also: N. Azizah. "Dukungan orangtua bagi anak yang belajar di pesantren." *A proceeding*. National Conference on Parenting. 2013.

19 D. Hirshberg., and S. Sharp. "Thirty years later: The long-term effect of boarding schools on Alaska natives and their communities." *Institute of social and economic research* University of Alaska Anchorage. 2005; see also:

parents and students toward the Indonesian boarding schools is an important phenomenon and makes research on Indonesian boarding schools critical.

The second reason why studying Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia is important is that the Islamic boarding schools offer significant benefits in addition to preserving Islamic values. Nurhayati and Yasin (2013) conducted a research in an Islamic boarding school in Kuningan, Cirebon, Indonesia. Nurhayati and Yasin (2013) mentioned at least five benefits of studying in *pesantren*: (1) there is no discrimination against socio-economic status; (2) *pesantren* has more peer collaborative learning; (3) it has stronger relationships between teachers and students, between teachers and teachers, as well as between students and students; (4) it offers opportunities to develop self-regulation and self-determination for students; and (5) it has more community engagement.

In a similar study by Tan (2004), he argued that parents are interested in sending their kids to Islamic boarding schools because (1) *pesantren* in Indonesia are increasingly using student-centered pedagogy, which is necessary for the students' creativity; and (2) *pesantren* are growingly served with more extracurricular activities, such as robotics, English debate, sports, and scientific experiments, which are important to support the students' personal growth.

4 Parents and Parental involvement in Boarding School

Within Indonesian Islamic boarding school context, parents send their children to send their children to the boarding school is to equip them with the Islamic values; while to make sure that parents and children can follow the school's rules, parents need to sign upon a seal an agreement with the school²⁰. Therefore, parents handed over

Smith, Andrea. "Indigenous peoples and boarding schools: A comparative study." *Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues* (8th edition). Prepared for the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2009.

20 E. Kusnadi; K. Sobur., A. Aziz. "An Islamic boarding school: A study of Al-Mubarak Al-Islam within the social changes of seberang kota Jambi." *AD-DIN Journal*. Vol. 11(1), 2017.

their role to the schools when their children resided in the boarding school. In the boarding school context, *kyai* or teachers at Islamic boarding schools have multiple roles such as parents, educators, community leader, as well as a manager. In this case teachers at boarding school are also considered as caregivers that substitute parents' role at school²¹.

Parents' support for children's education in the boarding school context is deemed necessary even though they live far away from their children²². According to Azizah (2013) when students are on school break, parents need to maintain the rhythm of schooling at boarding school even though they are at home. Parents do not put enough attention and caring for their children will have a great impact on their children as a result their children will find such caring from other people. In addition, Azizah (2013) contended that parental support for school could be in the form of facility support, emotional support, material support, motivational support, and feedback support.

5 Method

This case study (Yin, 2018) is part of a wider ethnographic research project and is guided by two research questions: how do parents and teachers in Islamic boarding schools define parent and parental involvement? and what motivates parents in sending their children to the boarding school settings? We employed a purposeful sampling interview (Patton, 2014) by recruiting the parents, teachers, and school leaders after consulting the school principal at *Nurul Huda* (pseudonym). We interviewed parents who are diverse in terms of gender, distance to school, and their backgrounds. The teachers (*ustadz*, male teachers and *ustadzah*, female teachers) also varied based on their gender and subjects they teach.

The purpose of the interview protocol in the current study

21 K. Anwar. "The leadership of Kyai in Islamic boarding school (a study of Islamic boarding school in Jambi)." *Al-Ta'lim Journal*. 2015. DOI: 10.15548/jt.v22i1.113; see also: Kusnadi. Sobur. Aziz. An Islamic boarding school: A study.

22 N. Azizah, N. Dukungan orangtua bagi anak.

was from the larger study intended to learn more about parental involvement in Islamic boarding schools using Epstein's (2009) parental involvement framework. For this study, researchers focused on how parents define the term parents and parental involvement and their motives in sending their children to the boarding school.

Interviews were conducted both in local language and Bahasa Indonesia. using local language and Bahasa Indonesia would ensure that the interviewees could express their ideas clearly. To make the interviews accessible for all, the interviews were then transcribed and translated into Bahasa Indonesia and English.

In addition to interviews, this study used observation for data collection. The researchers spent four months in the boarding school with the focus on gaining information of how parent and parental involvement were perceived among teachers and school leaders. Taking notes of what the researchers see, hear, and feel was the main way to gather necessary data in this observation. The data were critical to complement and clarify the participants' statements in the interviews.

In data analysis, the researchers coded the data obtained from the interviews and observation using open coding, which then continued to the next level of identifying the data as reflected in the literature²³. In analyzing the data, the researchers use an analytic matrix in order to track patterns in the data related to the key concepts in the literature²⁴.

6 Findings

The purpose of this study is to examine how parents define parents and parental involvement in an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. From the data collected through interview and observation, certain themes regarding parent and parental involvement in the boarding school setting were identified. The themes include how parent and

23 Saldaña, J. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2015)

24 Miles, M., & Huberman, M. *Qualitative data analysis*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994)

parental involvement were defined among parents, teachers, and school leaders. Furthermore, the study revealed the motivation of parents to school their children in a boarding school. These themes are further discussed below.

Definition of Parental Involvement

Parents and teachers collaborate to help students in the first definition; parents provide guidance to the school in the second definition; and parents are the primary source of support for students in the third definition. We included a purposeful question during the interview process to identify parents' concepts of parental involvement.

The first concept is that there must be cooperation between teachers and parents to support student achievement. Mr. Anas, a father from the neighborhood area, claims that it is the parents' duty to educate their children. Parents, on the other hand, may not be able to devote their entire time to their children's education. As a result, when parents send their children to school, they must also assist the teachers. "So, all parents are responsible for our children's education," Mr. Anas said. In reality, however, parents have their own constraints, such as time limits. As a result, they enroll their children in schools." Mr. Karyadi, a parent of a student, described parental involvement as some joint behavior between parents and teachers so that students can learn some life skills for the future. Mr. Karyadi said:

For me, parents should engage to their children's education, because all children are invaluable assets to this country. So, parents must be willing to collaborate with the school in order to educate and prepare their children for the future.

Furthermore, Mr. No said that he was very involved in his daughter's education. He would make sure to teach his daughter at home. He mentioned:

Not only do I love my daughter, but I also participate in her education. So, when she came home for the summer, it was our turn to teach her in the same manner as when she was at school. So, relying solely on the school is insufficient.

The second principle of parental involvement is when parents

offer valuable input to enhance the standard of the school. Mr. Han, the vice principal of education, offered this explanation. He claimed that “parents have had a major impact on providing school feedback and input.” He added “...suggestions like “lost and found” and other positive input from parents are valued at this school. We also take good care of all constructive parental feedback.” Mr. Sidiq, a student's father, accepted that parental involvement could be defined as parents' role in providing input and feedback to the school. Mr. Sidiq presented the following case:

We are also encouraged to provide the school with ideas and feedbacks. Parents are welcome to serve as assessors or evaluators for their children. If a child is unable to respond to parental questions, a remedial program is required.

The last definition of parental involvement according to parents comes from Mrs. Yantoro and Mr. Sidiq. Mrs. Yantoro argued that even the slightest expression of support from parents counts as parental involvement. “I visit my son every two weeks,” Mrs. Yantoro claimed, adding that sending additional meals for her son and his friend during the school visit is also called parental involvement. Mr. Sidiq clarified what he meant by parental involvement. He used the concept of education from a well-known Indonesian educator and linked it to the definition of parental involvement. Here is what Mr. Sidiq defined as parental involvement:

So, parental engagement, in my view, is just what our Founding Fathers meant when they talked about education. *Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo* (be a role model), *Ing Madyo Mangun Karso* (be a goal creator, be an innovator), *Tut Wuri Handayani* (be a motivator). It means that when we're with our children, we should be their friends and encourage them to be creative. We must be able to inspire our children to move forward while we are behind them. And we must set an example for them while we are in front of them.

Based on the definitions above, we could infer that parental participation is a joint effort between home and school to promote children's education. Furthermore, parental engagement is a joint effort between all participants, including the home, education, and event groups. Finally, the performance of the students is the

overarching objective of parental participation.

Definition of Parents

When asked specifically who "parents" are, participants in the study described them in a specific way. At Nurul Huda, the home and school do not only identify parent as biological parents, as we do in the traditional definition. However, in this analysis, biological parents, spiritual/knowledge parents, and extended parents were all used as meanings of parents. "Parental involvement" went beyond the conventional roles of mother and father in these respects.

a. Biological Parents and Spiritual/knowledge Parents

Some parents and teachers differentiated between two types of parents, stating that there are two types of parents. For example, according to Mr. Suyat, the school principal of Nurul Huda Boarding School:

I'd like to explain what the concept of parent is at this school. So, we have two types of parents: biological and spiritual. Your biological parents are your parents, father, and mother. Your male teachers are your fathers, and your female teachers are your mothers, while spiritual parents refer to parents who deliver wisdom to you.

Similarly, Mrs. Jamal, the school owner's wife, divided parents into two categories: biological and knowledge parents, stating, "In this school, there are two kinds of parents, one is biological parents, and the other is the parents who deliver the knowledge or teachers." So, it is critical. It is the responsibility of both biological and spiritual parents to educate their children."

In line with this, Mrs. Gusreni, an Indonesian teacher, and Mr. Han, the vice principal, agreed, proposing that teachers or mentors who reside in the boarding school should serve as parents to stand in for parents at home, such as when students have homework questions. Mrs. Gusreni said:

That is the responsibility of the room mentor. The room tutor is in charge of schoolwork and memorizing the Quran. This is because the room tutor will be assisting students with homework after 3 p.m. It implies that teachers in schools often play a parental role.

Mr. Han also discussed the role of mentors in students' homework, saying, "Very often with their teachers. As a result, each room has an instructor who acts as a mentor to the students. As a result, students will have more opportunities to connect with their mentors and ask detailed questions about Islamic material. Since this school puts a greater focus on Islamic content."

b. Extended families as parents

Extended families are the third definition of parents. Mrs. Jamal argued that students' families, including grandparents, uncles, and others, must support them in order for them to achieve their full potential. She stated:

When I met students who were dissatisfied at Nurul Huda Boarding School, for example, I would ask their parents, "Are you really satisfied with your child's studies here in this school, or do you really approve your child's studies here in this school?" "Yes, we do, but we remember our child when I eat some good meals. In this situation, I always told the parents not to worry about it and not to be worried about their children. TUMUS was the name we gave it in Javanese. TUMUS is a heart attachment. When one parent, for example, the mother, is dissatisfied, but only the father is happy with their children's attendance at boarding school. Or even a member of the extended family, such as grandparents, a brother, a sister, or an uncle. The child would most definitely feel the same way. In this scenario, all members of the family must be honest and happy to allow the students to attend the boarding school. Students will be happy and feel at ease in this setting.

Mrs. Jamal's concept of parents does not restrict the parents to mother and father. Instead, all family members who are related to or have a special relationship with the child are considered guardians.

In summary, "parents" in this study are identified as teachers, spiritual and information parents, biological parents, and extended families based on the interviews. Parents and teachers agreed that parents should not be identified solely as mothers and fathers. Teachers who live on campus and act as a student's mentor have a more parental role in boarding schools since the school mentor will assist students in coping with their needs after school

hours. And extended families who used to live with the students, such as an older brother, an older sister, an uncle, an aunty, and grandparents, may be considered parents. This is because students in Indonesia usually live with their father and mother, as well as their extended families.

Parents' Motivation in Sending Their Kids to Boarding School

Parents' motivation to send their children to Nurul Huda Boarding School is also a significant aspect of this research. Given that the number of boarding schools in Indonesia is growing, recognizing parents' reasons for sending their children to boarding school would help in understanding why there is a rise in the number of boarding schools in Indonesia.

Parents have three distinct reasons for sending their children to Nurul Huda Boarding School. The following are some of the motivations: to provide students with religious and general knowledge, to improve students' moral performance, and to provide students with life skills.

The first motivation is to provide students with theological as well as general knowledge. Mrs. Marni says that she is sending her daughter to Nurul Huda Boarding School so that she can learn something that is just as important as the general knowledge taught in public schools. Most Muslim families in Indonesia want their children to learn about Islamic religion, which is only taught for two hours a week in a typical school environment. "My motivation is for her to understand not just general knowledge but also religious content," Mrs. Marni argued. Our public schools do not have adequate religious instruction. "Similarly, Mrs. Yantoro said that her son's religious knowledge would be beneficial to her after she passes away. "So, my motivation is that I want at least one of my children to deepen his awareness of Islam so that he can pray for his parents when they die," Mrs. Yantoro explained. He can also be a valuable member of his community." Finally, Mr. Suyat makes a similar point

to Mrs. Yantoro, claiming that by including religious material in the curriculum, students would be able to meet the hopes of the majority of Muslim parents. Most, if not all, Muslim parents believe that God will keep them responsible when they are buried. One way to reduce or eliminate the punishment is to have their children pray.

As a result, providing adequate Islamic awareness to the children will allow them to send a prayer to their parents when their parents pass away. "Parents also hope that when they die, their son will be able to give them prayers," Mr. Suyat added.

The moral of students is the second reason why parents send their children to boarding schools. Students have encountered both positive and negative results as a result of globalization and social media. On the negative side of technology, many students are caught in negative habits as a result of social media, excessive gaming, or viewing of adult or other objectionable material. As a result, parents must be extremely cautious and mindful of the negative aspects of the social media and technology age. Mr. Sidiq explained why he sent his daughters to the boarding school in great detail:

The distance was not a motivation for me to send my son here. Our house is not far from the school. Rather, it's about having complete control over the school. Since the school is a boarding school, my child will always be under the full guidance of his teachers, 24 hours a day. The school has all of the rules in place, from when the students wake up and when they go to bed at night. Due to the globalization period, including juvenile delinquency and fornication, we now recognize that religious education is needed for our younger generation. Since most parents are extremely patient with their children. As a consequence, it's tough to keep kids under hand. Teachers, on the other hand, will still follow the rules and regulations in a boarding school environment.

Mr. Anas believed that sending children to the boarding school would help students improve their morals. "So, I want my children to have good morals through Islamic studies and teachings," Mr. Anas said. I want my children to recognize their Muslim responsibilities." In addition, Mr. Suyat, the school principal, said that his school would teach his students how to defend themselves from the detrimental effects of social media.

They now recognize that Islamic boarding schools provide parents with the tools they require to shield their children from the overwhelmingly harmful effects of social media and internet access. As a result of their attendance at boarding school, students will be prepared with religious information that will shield and filter the negative effects of the free globalization age and technology.

Finally, parents want their children to be equipped with additional life skills that will benefit their community and country. Mr. Karyadi wished for his children to be valuable members of society: "So, because I want all of my daughters to be righteous and capable of supporting their culture, faith, and nation in the future." "So, I just want my daughter to understand the national law and Islamic law, so she can be useful for her community and country in the future," Mr. No, the other parent, said. Mrs. Yantoro, as a mother, also emphasized the essential life skills she hopes her son would gain from the school: "In order for him to receive a decent education. And so that he can develop his life skills knowledge." Finally, Mr. Suyat had this to say regarding boarding school and the importance of life skills:

Even if they do not continue their schooling, the society assumes that boarding school graduates would have more skills than those from general public schools.... As a result, we train our students to support the community. Teaching elementary and middle school students, organization skills, and communication skills are examples of such skills.

Overall, parents have a number of explanations for sending their children to boarding schools rather than public schools. In the interview, parents decided that they would like to provide alternative points that are not available in public schools. The teachers also assure parents and the community that the NHBS will have expertise that they will not be able to learn in public schools. The Islamic boarding school is able to answer the parents' puzzle in dealing with children's life such as more constructive behavior, religious material, and life skills. In the midst of globalization, where parents struggle to regulate their children's use of social media, technology, and other negative social experiences, parents continue to invest in good moral conduct. According to the parents, the NHBS school has achieved

their goal of implementing certain positive rules and regulations in order to promote positive behavior among their children. Second, parents want their children to learn about Islam for more than two hours a week, as is the case in public schools. Finally, in addition to general knowledge and Islamic knowledge, parents want to see their children learn life skills that will help them even if they do not seek higher education. Basic skills such as computer skills, calligraphy skills, Islamic leadership skills, and teaching skills would be valuable assets for the student in his or her job search or in starting their own company.

7 Discussion

This study came to the same conclusion as previous studies on why parents send their children to boarding school. According to the literature, there are at least two explanations why students in Indonesia attend Islamic boarding schools. According to Nurhayati and Yasin (2013), the first explanation is that parents want to provide their children with not only general knowledge but also Islamic values. The second explanation according to Tan (2014) is that the boarding school's determination to go beyond Islamic teachings and provide life skills for the students' future career is the second explanation.

Similarly, the parents in this study thought the school was important because it provided not only general knowledge but also religious content knowledge. Mrs. Marni, Mrs. Yantoro, and Mr. Suyat were assured that the school would do everything possible to provide the highest quality public and religious material to the students and parents. Their routine begins at 3:30 a.m. with early morning prayers and lasts until 11:00 p.m. with academic and nonacademic events.

Nurul Huda Boarding School's parents and teachers have emphasized the importance of morality in the school for the students. Teachers will be able to track students' behavior 24 hours a day because students and teachers live on campus. The problems of juvenile delinquency and fornication were brought up by Mr. Sidiq.

Mr. Sidiq argued that the fact that the school tracks the student's behavior 24 hours a day benefits him and his daughter. Additionally, the school prohibits students from using mobile phones. Students can only use the phones of their teachers or the school to contact their families. Mr. Suyat also claims that teachers are qualified to teach students how to filter their use of social media. The NHBS is dedicated to safeguarding their students from social media bombs as well as harmful teen influences such as bullying and other types of juvenile delinquency.

The school's mission reaches beyond academic and religious instruction. Nurul Huda boarding school, like the previous findings on an Indonesian boarding school, provides its students with life skills that will support them in the future. Mr. Suyat, the school's principal, argued that the school provides teaching skills, Islamic leadership skills, calligraphy skills, information and technology skills, and Islamic organizational skills that are not available in public schools. Even though the students have not yet graduated from high school, these skills have been shown to be successful. When the twelfth graders are deployed in the community development program, the community really values the student's effort in serving the community. The local community even rates Nurul Huda Boarding School's community development as better community service compared to the college students' community development.

These results shed light on why a growing number of Indonesian parents are sending their children to Islamic boarding schools. Parents want their children to not only learn general and Islamic material knowledge, but also for the school to assist students with their values and soft skills. The NHBS could have skills and character education that aren't available in the community's public or private schools. This finding backs up a previous study (Kementrian Agama Indonesia, 2011) on why Islamic boarding schools are becoming more common in Indonesia.

We also found an important finding regarding the definition of parents. The current study defines parents as not merely as biological parents, rather also inspired and guided by the Islamic teaching. The

teachers in NHBS defined parents as those who deliver knowledge to the students, and therefore need to be respected by the students. This definition was in line with the Quran teaching that the people with knowledge should be put on the higher level as “Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge” (Qur’an, 58:11).

Another important finding was that sincerity is very important when parents decide to send their children to the boarding school. As Mrs. Jamal repeatedly mentioned that all family members need to be sincere for the students to feel comfortable at school and for students to get the blessing from Allah. This finding is also in line with the teaching of Islam in which a Muslim must practice their faith with sincerity (*al-ikhlas*). As mentioned in the Quran: “Say, I am commanded to worship Allah, being sincerely devoted to Him alone (Quran, 39:11).

Finally, unlike the common definition of parental involvement in most studies conducted in Indonesia, this current study found that parental involvement’ definition is not merely defined as material supporter, rather a broader definition as a main supporter for school in terms of teaching the children at home and giving feedback and input for the school. This definition enriches the current definition of parental involvement in Indonesian context, as well as within the Islamic boarding school context that both parents and teachers have mutual understanding of parental role in supporting children’s education.

8 Conclusion

In this study, we have shown how parents who send their children to study in an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia reflect upon their definition of parents and parental involvement. While the discourse of boarding school education in the literature still generally focuses more on the gloomy historical past of European colonization in American and Australian continents which results in massive

linguistic and cultural genocide and intergenerational trauma²⁵, Islamic boarding school in Indonesia is different and the study related to parental involvement in such setting is still limited or even unavailable. The findings of this study show that parents intentionally send their children to such schools because they want their children not only to learn general school subjects as mandated by the national curriculum but also to have a deeper understanding on Islam and skill sets essentials for a job market, which is a new addition to the findings of early studies that highlighted only the first two reasons.

Regarding the definition of parents, both parents and teachers in this study agree that the definition of parents does not only refer to biological parents, but also spiritual, academic, and extended parents. Therefore, when the students are at school, they will show a high respect to their *ustadz* (male teachers) and *ustadzah* (female teachers) the way they respect their father and mother at home. Similarly, they also see the students as their children. The *ustadz* and *ustadzah* are the representation of their parents at school, while the school is an imagined community²⁶ of home and society. Therefore, what they are learning and doing at the boarding school also represents such a real-life situation. Like parents at home, the *ustadz* and *ustadzah* help students to acquire knowledge, skills, and values to be applied in society. It is a transition from the imagined community to a real community of practice, however not only with sufficient academic and non-academic knowledge and skills and good characters, but also with a strong Islamic foundation.

In this study, it was also found that there has also been a long-standing debate on to what extent parents should be involved in their children's education at the boarding school. Some people agree

25 C. Jack. *Recovering boarding school trauma narratives: Christopher Robin Milne as a psychological companion on the journey to healing*. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020); see also Lomawaima, K. T., & McCarty, T. L. "To remain an Indian": Lessons in democracy from a century of Native American education. (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2006).

26 Anderson, B. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. (London, UK: Verso Books, 2006).

that parents need to be actively involved and frequently visit their children to support them. However, some others disagree with the idea, as children need to learn to be more independent and focus on their education. In relation to this disagreement, this study will provide new insights for future studies, for instance in relation to the concept of parental involvement proposed by Eipstein (2009). Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia provide contexts that are different from mainstream schoolings, in which the concept is commonly applied.

However, given that this study was conducted in one Islamic boarding school that has one particular set of rules that might be different from other schools, the results of the study tend to be relatively context specific. Further studies need to consider both cross sectional and longitudinal investigations in several Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia to see a more generalizable pattern of parental involvement in this particular context and setting. A comparative case study of parental involvement in Islamic boarding schools and mainstream public schools in Indonesia also needs to be done to seek best practices that can be adopted and adapted in both educational settings.

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