



Improving knowledge, attitudes, and practices of COVID-19 reduction through Santri Husada Program

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ABSTRACT

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Prefentive and currative efforts of COVID-19 in *pesantren* is a crucial points to be done in order to conduct conducive and safe learning situation. This community service aims to form, train and assist Santri Husada in carrying out its role in the health sector of Islamic boarding schools. This campus environmental service program offers many paradigm shifts for students by allowing them to participate in maintaining the health of *pesantren* residents who have previously appeared to disregard health protocols. It was carried out in three phases, namely education and socialization, training, and intensive mentoring from March to May 2021 at Darul Faqih Islamic Boarding School Malang. The survey results on students' knowledge, attitudes and practices towards COVID-19 showed a good score with the correlation (R-square: P-Value) knowledge-attitude (0.167: 0.000), knowledge-practice (0.060: 0.000) and attitude-practice (0.051: 0.000). This community service program was carried out in collaboration with LP2M Universitas Negeri Malang, UPT Wagir Health Center, Polyclinic of Universitas Negeri Malang and the COVID-19 Task Force, Wagir District, Malang Regency. The Santri Husada Program has made a real contribution in suppressing the spread of COVID-19 in the Islamic boarding school environment and led it a tough Islamic boarding school area.

Peningkatan pengetahuan, sikap dan praktik tentang penanggulangan COVID-19 melalui Program Santri Husada. Upaya prefentif dan kuratif dari COVID-19 di pesantren merupakan pon penting yang harus dilakukan untuk menyelenggarakan situasi pembelajaran dan yang kondusif dan aman. Pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk membentuk, melatih dan mendampingi Santri Husada dalam menjalankan perannya di bidang kesehatan pesantren. Program pengabdian lingkungan kampus ini memberikan banyak perubahan paradigma santri dalam ikut serta menjaga kesehatan warga pesantren yang selama ini terkesan abai terhadap protokol kesehatan. Dilaksanakan dalam tiga fase yaitu edukasi dan sosialisasi, pelatihan, dan pendampingan intensif mulai Maret hingga Mei 2021 di Pondok Pesantren Darul Faqih Malang. Hasil survey terhadap pengetahuan, sikap, dan praktik santri terhadap COVID-19 menunjukkan skor yang baik dengan korelasi (R-square : P-Value) pengetahuan-sikap (0,167 : 0,000), pengetahuan-praktik (0,060 : 0,000) dan sikap-praktik (0,051 : 0,000). Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan atas hasil kerjasama LP2M Universitas Negeri Malang, UPT Puskesmas Wagir, Poliklinik Universitas Negeri Malang dan Satgas COVID-19 Kecamatan Wagir Kabupaten Malang. Program Santri Husada telah memberikan kontribusi nyata dalam menekan penyebaran COVID-19 di lingkungan pondok pesantren dan menjadikannya sebagai kawasan pesantren tangguh.



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INTRODUCTION

Pesantren (Islamic boarding school) based education is special in its own way and it is different from the non-*pesantren* education (Saefi et al., 2020a). Its characteristic shown in its integrity and balance in three intelligences, i.e intellectual, emotional, and spiritual (Llorent-Bedmar et al., 2020; Muazza et al., 2018). Education in *pesantren* is under

the basis of character building education that needs to be continuously monitored (Hanafi et al., 2021). However, the increase of positive cases of COVID-19 in Indonesia has driven number of parties to support the policy of closing the *pesantren* (Setiati & Azwar, 2020). In general, all activities in the *pesantren* must be totally stopped in the early spread of the pandemic. When non-*pesantren* education transformed into online learning, *pesantren* education is very much neglected. In fact, almost no virtual learning conducted as the learning resources are inadequate (Muazza et al., 2018). As a result, *santri* (students) stay at home with no integrated learning activities with the *pesantren* (Hanafi et al., 2021).

Psychologically, *pesantren* is a structured environment that supports students to interact with peers thus this setting help the students to building their character and personal identity (Putro et al., 2019). *Pesantren* closing has caused the students into depression and feeling guilty for the limited routines (Brazendale et al., 2017). Some students may have reduced their activity they would access during school hours (Stewart et al., 2018). However, most students do the opposite, they play outside the house with their friends without any strict supervision. This condition has encouraged the parents insisting their children to go back to the *pesantren*. They assumed that not all parents are able to play their roles in assisting and supporting their children at home.

Government policy on learning activities is changing from time to time. The latest one was the decision made by the Ministry of Religious Affairs that *pesantren* policy is submitted to the leaders of *pesantren*. If it is reopened, the leaders must take a strict procedure in regards of the circulation of religious practices, cleanliness, and social distancing. On the other hand, *pesantren* has its weakness on the habits of joint activities such as eating, praying, studying, and sleeping. Other habits are shaking hands between students, supervisors, and teachers. In short, the strategy to reopen the *pesantren* must take concerns on the pros and cons, as well as the weakness on *pesantren* education system. Thus, intensive education and mentoring for the students is an absolute action that must be done.

Some findings of literature review show that the closing of school facilities has successfully suppressed the spread of the virus, but its effectiveness is considered low (Brazendale et al., 2017; Jackson et al., 2014; Viner et al., 2020). In addition, a report shows that there is no evidence if school closure is an effective mean of suppressing the spread of COVID-19 (Lai et al., 2020). The fight against COVID-19 requires support from all parties, including the *pesantren* management. According to the theory of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (Li et al., 2015; Luo et al., 2019; Saefi et al., 2020a, 2020b), attitude and practice can affect significantly on action that reflects community compliance (Zhong et al., 2020). Negative attitude and practice from the *pesantren* on the health protocol are allegedly contributing to the risk of infection with the COVID-19 virus. Students of *pesantren* are used to get gather in their activities, such as eating and sleeping, thus, less attention on cleanliness and some learning interactions can cause a new case if takes place during the pandemic. An important lesson can be drawn from the action taken in the previous disease control (Driessche et al., 2009), mainly during SARS 2003 outbreak, which reported that public non-compliance with key measures would only worsen the condition (Person et al., 2004).

The implementation of Santri Husada which was formed as a preventive and curative part in overcoming the spread of COVID-19 in *pesantren* has become one of the positive responses from the *pesantren*. Santri Husada has a role of monitoring the health progress of all residents in the *pesantren*, conducting first aid, and enforcing the *pesantren* health protocol. If the health units is there at the *pesantren*, thus, it is worthy that *pesantren* to have professionally experienced and educated Santri Husada. This community service aims to form, train, and assist Santri Husada in carrying out their roles in the *pesantren* health sector. This community service has successfully contributed on the paradigm shift for students in participating to maintain the health of *pesantren* residents who previously ignorant to health protocols. Among the paradigm shifts after the implementation of this program are (1) students understand the COVID-19 more comprehensively; (2) they know what to do when they get sick and has the symptom of COVID-19; (3) the students are aware of the importance of keep the *pesantren* environment clean, sterile, and safe; (4) the students are more alert to strangers/guest visiting *pesantren*; and (5) last but not least, they understand that COVID-19 is a disaster that can be faced by efforts to maintain health protocols and the power of prayer. This project was done in *Pesantren Darul Faqih Malang* that the students studying at the school are from various regions, ranging from Tangerang, Merauke, Gresik, Jember, and some other cities in Indonesia

METHOD

To answer partner's problems, the project team designed an activity by training and mentoring the Santri Husada as a task force in overcoming the spread of COVID-19 in the *pesantren*. This campus community partnership program was implemented at *Pesantren Darul Faqih Pandanlandung Village Wagir District Malang Regency*, which is 5 km from the campus of Universitas Negeri Malang. The target of this program was 93 students. This activity was done from March to May 2021. In this pandemic COVID-19, the implementation of this community service had been consulted to the policy makers of the local officials, they are the government of Pandanlandung Village and Wagir Police officers as the person in charge of the COVID-19 task force in the area. This community service was done by implementing strict health protocols. The project team also collaborated with the polyclinic staff of Universitas Negeri Malang and health center of Wagir District as partners in carrying out the service.

The activity was done in 3 phases, the first phase, education, socialization, and understanding on the spread of COVID-19 in *pesantren* environment were done. In this phase, the project team did a pretest measuring students' knowledge, attitude, and practice toward the COVID-19. This is important step as an initial mapping of students' understanding. After the pretest, the team provided an insight on how to prevent and fight the virus of COVID-19 in

pesantren. Education and socialization were done by face-to-face learning that initiated with material explanation and continued with correct hand washing and COVID-19 corpse shrouding practice. According to Suswati and Maulida (2020), correct hand washing is the easiest and the most effective way to prevent from many diseases.

The second phase, the project team form and train Santri Husada as a trained task force in the health sector. These Santri Husada are the health ambassadors and pioneers in enforcing health protocols in *pesantren* environment. The training was carried out by the polyclinic staff of Universitas Negeri Malang. The third face, is to assist students to monitor and implement health protocols properly. During this mentoring period, monitoring religious activities that predicted to cause crowds was also undertaken at the *pesantren*. Wagir District health center played as a control partner in this phase. This community service is said to be successful by referring to the posttest instrument as a medium in measuring students' understanding on their knowledge, attitude, and practice in fighting and preventing the COVID-19 in *pesantren* environment. Participants' responses that show their knowledge, attitude, and practice are described in frequency and percentage. The correlation test was conducted to prove the existence of a relationship between the variables of knowledge, attitude, and practice in Santri Husada. Next, to measure the impact of this socialization and education, a comparison of the average pretest and posttest score of Santri Husada was undertaken.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This activity is named 'Santri Husada' which means students are understanding, sensible, adaptive, and responsive toward the spirit of new normal in *pesantren* life during the spread control of COVID-19. This activity was done in 3 phases. The first phase was educating, socializing, and understanding the students about the spread of COVID-19 in *pesantren* (Figure 1), also an interview on Santri Husada readiness (Figure 2).



Figure 1. The first phase activity in the form of education and socialization to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in *pesantren*



Figure 2. The first phase of interview session on Santri Husada readiness

In the second phase, the project team formed and trained Santri Husada to be a trained task force in the health sector. These Santri Husada are the ambassadors and pioneers of health protocol reinforcement in the area of *pesantren*. In this phase, there were two main activities, they were: (1) Training on health protocol reinforcement to guests visiting the *pesantren* and the practice of correct hand washing (Figure 3) and (2) Training on how to check health condition and swab test for early detection of students' condition (Figure 4).



Figure 3. Training on health protocol reinforcement to guests visiting *pesantren* and the practice of correct hand washing



Figure 4. Training on health examination and swab test for early detection of students' health condition

The third phase, the activity was done by monitoring students to check health condition and implement correct health protocol as well as evaluating the program. Program evaluation of Santri Husada was carried out with the leaders of *pesantren* and monitored by Wagir health center staff (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Program evaluation of Santri Husada was carried out with the leaders of *pesantren* and monitored by Wagir health center staff

This education and socialization to prevent COVID-19 was done in two terms, namely socialization and education for female and male students. This was done to prevent an awkward silence also to practice the health protocol of social distancing. The materials for socialization and education were presented by integrated service unit (UPT) Wagir health center and their health staff team. Those who joined the program were categorized as candidate of Santri Husada.

Table 1 shows that the activity of socialization is recorded to improve students' understanding about COVID-19.

Table 1. Pretest dan posttest result

| Frequency (N) | Average score of pretest | | Average score of posttest | |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|
| | Knowledge | Practice | Knowledge | Practice |
| 93 | 78.86 | 80.13 | 93.06 | 97.11 |

Knowledge is one of the foundations in the efforts of controlling the spread of COVID-19 (Okan et al., 2020). The conception of comprehensive knowledge of a disease will better prepare people to deal with the disease. This concept is also applied for COVID-19 (Maverick Insider, 2020). On the other hand, less detail understanding on this disease will

cause a person to make decisions that are harmful for others (DeWalt, Berkman, Sheridan, Lohr, & Pignone, 2004; Sørensen et al., 2012). As a result, the number of patients hospitalized and its cost of health care are more expensive. (Batterham, Beauchamp, & Osborne, 2016; Griffey, Kennedy, McGowan, Goodman, & Kaphingst, 2014; MacLeod et al., 2017; McCray, 2005).

Students who get high score on knowledge are then grouped as Santri Husada. These Santri Husada are then received intensive training related to the enforcement of health protocol in *pesantren* area. Santri Husada are expected to be a pioneers in COVID-19 control in *pesantren*. Some skills they received are the use of thermometer gun, early identification of symptom, student health screening, blood pressure checking, and some procedure need to be done when a student is indicated to have the symptom of COVID-19.

Considering on the test result of knowledge (Table 2) and practice (Table 4), about COVID-19 in the area of *pesantren*, it shows a clear picture about the readiness of the *pesantren* to implement face-to-face learning. As many of 80.64% students declared that *pesantren* residents must keep the health protocol of COVID-19 although efforts and prayers through supplications given by the supervisor have been observed. This indicates students' serious attention to their outer and inner efforts in dealing with the COVID-19 outbreak. Their understanding and comprehension about COVID-19 is considered very good, as their average score is 90.86%, this shows that the students understand the danger and impact of this epidemic. In addition, as many of 92.47% students have already understood about the symptom that arise to a person who is infected by COVID-19. This shows that literacy level of students at Pesantren Darul Faqih is relatively high. Based on the survey done by Saefi et al. (2020a, 2020b), there is correlation between knowledge, attitude, and practice. In this case, the project team also conducted an assessment to students' practice skill in the efforts of preventing the COVID-19 transmission in the *pesantren* area.

Table 2. The responses of students' knowledge towards COVID-19 ($n = 11$ items) modification of KAP instrument (Saefi et al., 2020a)

| No. | Question | Correct answer | | Incorrect answers | |
|-----|---|----------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | | Freq (n) | % | Freq (n) | % |
| K1 | COVID-19 is a disease caused by corona virus | 90 | 96.77 | 3 | 3.23 |
| K2 | The main clinical symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, fatigue, dry cough, and breathless | 86 | 92.47 | 7 | 7.53 |
| K3 | Patients with COVID-19 do not show any symptoms is called OTG (People with no Symptoms) | 79 | 84.94 | 14 | 15.06 |
| K4 | Patients with COVID-19 who suffered with chronic disease such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity have increasingly severe condition | 80 | 86.02 | 13 | 13.98 |
| K5 | Children and adolescents do not need to make efforts to prevent COVID-19 infection because they have a strong immune system | 72 | 77.41 | 21 | 22.59 |
| K6 | A person with a strong immune system will not get infected COVID-19 | 52 | 55.91 | 41 | 44.09 |
| K7 | Unburied corpses of COVID-19 can be a source of spread of the COVID-19 | 75 | 80.64 | 18 | 19.36 |
| K8 | COVID-19 cannot penetrate the cloth mask that people usually wear | 69 | 74.19 | 24 | 25.81 |
| K9 | COVID-19 only spreads through objects, not through the air | 68 | 73.11 | 25 | 26.89 |
| K10 | To prevent the transmission of COVID-19, we must avoid crowded places such as markets and train stations, also to avoid using public transportation | 92 | 98.92 | 1 | 1.08 |
| K11 | Isolation and treatment of patient infected with the COVID-19 is an effective way to reduce the spread of the virus | 89 | 95.69 | 4 | 4.31 |

Table 3. The responses of students' attitude toward COVID-19 ($n = 7$) modification of KAP instrument (Saefi et al., 2020a)

| No. | Statement | Disagree | | Uncertain | | Agree | |
|-----|--|----------|-------|-----------|-------|----------|-------|
| | | Freq (n) | % | Freq (n) | % | Freq (n) | % |
| A1 | To be updated about information about COVID-19 number of cases is important for students | 4 | 4.30 | 8 | 8.60 | 81 | 87.09 |
| A2 | After knowing the information on number of COVID-19 cases, I am worried/scared | 9 | 9.67 | 12 | 12.90 | 72 | 77.41 |
| A3 | To follow the information about the government's call to prevent the COVID-19 is important for the students | 6 | 6.45 | 5 | 5.37 | 82 | 88.17 |
| A4 | All COVID-19 patients are the ones who violate government's call in preventing COVID-19 transmission | 12 | 12.90 | 8 | 8.60 | 73 | 78.49 |
| A5 | Patients with COVID-19 should not be given a negative stigma in pesantren area and also in the community | 1 | 1.07 | 9 | 9.67 | 83 | 89.24 |
| A6 | Patients with COVID-19 who self-isolated themselves should show their responsibility in preventing the COVID-19 transmission | 3 | 3.22 | 7 | 7.52 | 83 | 89.24 |
| A7 | Students must maintain the health protocol even though they have the belief that prayer is the weapon of Muslims | 5 | 5.37 | 13 | 13.97 | 75 | 80.64 |

Table 4. The responses of students' practice toward COVID-19 ($n = 9$) modification of KAP instrument (Saefi et al., 2020a)

| No. | Question | Never | | Sometimes | | Always | |
|-----|--|--------------|------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| | | Freq (n) | % | Freq (n) | % | Freq (n) | % |
| P1 | In the last few days, have you ever put on mask while in <i>pesantren</i> area? | 1 | 1.07 | 13 | 13.97 | 79 | 84.94 |
| P2 | In the last few days, Dalam beberapa hari terakhir, have you ever implemented a physical distancing while doing activities in <i>pesantren</i> ? | 4 | 4.30 | 11 | 11.82 | 78 | 83.87 |
| P3 | In the last few days, did you use hand sanitizer or regularly wash your hands with soap when you were in a crowd? | 2 | 2.15 | 6 | 6.45 | 85 | 91.39 |
| P4 | In the last few days, did you sleep keeping physical distance from your friends and not shaking hands? | 3 | 3.22 | 20 | 21.50 | 70 | 75.26 |
| P5 | As a student, have you advised your friend around you with knowledge about COVID-19 prevention? | 3 | 3.22 | 23 | 24.73 | 67 | 72.04 |
| P6 | In the last few days, I have been eating vegetables and fruits, exercising and taking a rest well. | 1 | 1.07 | 7 | 7.52 | 85 | 91.39 |
| P7 | In the last few days, I have been consuming vitamins or supplements to boost my immune system. | 2 | 2.15 | 7 | 7.52 | 84 | 90.32 |
| P8 | In the last few days, I have been cleaning my personal clothes, room, and eating utensils more often. | 2 | 2.15 | 13 | 13.97 | 78 | 83.87 |
| P9 | In the last few days, I check my health condition in UKS more often. | 5 | 5.37 | 15 | 16.12 | 73 | 78.49 |

Based on the assessment on knowledge, attitude, and practice of Santri Husada, a correlation between variables can be drawn. Table 5 shows the result of correlation test among the score of knowledge, attitude, and practice of Santri Husada.

Table 5. The correlation score of knowledge, attitude, and practice of Santri Husada

| Variable | Correlation | |
|----------------------|-------------|------------|
| | R Square | p -Value |
| Knowledge – Attitude | 0.167 | 0.000 |
| Knowledge – Practice | 0.060 | 0.000 |
| Attitude - Practice | 0.051 | 0.000 |

In the program of Santri Husada, the community service team from Universitas Negeri Malang not only do incidental activities but also gives impact to the sustainability of the initiated program. After the second phase, forming Santri Husada team in Pesantren Darul Faqih, the project team did a periodic control and monitor in every week for two months under the supervision of NU Doctors Associations Malang Raya and UPT health center of Wagir District Malang Regency. This is done to ensure that the COVID-19 health protocol is well implemented. The control undertaken include regular health checks, education and assistance for Santri Husada by introducing the types of diseases and the way of treatment, as well as tracking and rapid test or antigen swab to students, administrators, and teachers.

The result above shows that the practice of health protocol implementation in the area of Pesantren Darul Faqih Malang is in accordance with the government's COVID-19 task force standards. At least, this capital can be used as a benchmark for government of religious boarding-based education. Through their thorough understanding to take care of each other and contribute to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in *pesantren* area, thus, Santri Husada program that has been initiated, is part of tough *pesantren*. Community service through Universitas Negeri Malang PNPB community partnership program in 2021 has made areal contribution in joint effort to break the chain of COVID-19 spread in the community.

CONCLUSION

This community service has proven to contribute in giving complex understanding of COVID-19 prevention to students of pesantren Darul Faqih Malang. In addition, students are educated about what they should do during the pandemic. Students' education has been successfully done which is shown by the improvement of the average score of pretest and posttest before and after the program. Students' knowledge, attitude, and practice in managing the *pesantren* area has been observed to become the priority for learning in adapting with the new normal. The program of Santri Hudasa at least has become the driving force for the pesantren's health business. A task force to handle the COVID-19 has been formed in *pesantren* as it is expected by the Ministry of Religious Affairs as the body that takes

responsibility on the implementation of education in *pesantren*. Santri Husada, as the embodiment of the vision of independent pesantren in the health sector, has been able to undertake early detection of pesantren residents who infected the symptoms of COVID-19.

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