

## **LIFE SKILL EDUCATION IN BUILDING THE INDEPENDENCE OF STUDENTS AT PONDOK PESANTREN FATHUL ULMUM JOMBANG**

Ikfi Khoulita  
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung  
e-mail: khoulita82@gmail.com

Siti Khoirun Nisak  
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung  
e-mail: sitikhoirunnisak@uinsatu.ac.id

Khoirun Nisa  
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung  
e-mail: syaanisaa257@gmail.com

**Abstract:** The aim of this research is to examine life skills education at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang. This research is particularly interesting because, as a pesantren still using the salafiyah learning model, life skills education is an inseparable part of the curriculum. The research uses a qualitative method, with data collection through interviews, observation, and documentation. The analysis is descriptive. The results of the study show that the life skills education provided at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang is fascinating due to its unique approach. Students who enter the Aliyah level are required to choose one of the available majors, one of which is the "preunur" (entrepreneurship) major. In this major, life skills education receives a larger portion than religious education, and students in this major are given the responsibility to manage the pesantren's businesses. Another unique feature of life skills education at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang is that there is a specific day dedicated to life skills education, focusing on all business aspects of the pesantren, which all students must participate in. Furthermore, the pesantren's caregivers provide lectures using the Ihya' Ulumuddin book, specifically the chapter on work, to strengthen students' enthusiasm and belief that life skills education is just as important as religious education. The implications of life skills education at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang are greatly felt by students and alumni in building their independence, both economically and in terms of entrepreneurial spirit.

**Keywords:** life skills education, independence

**Abstract:** Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pendidikan kecakapan hidup di Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang, penelitian ini sangat menarik untuk dikaji karena sebagai pondok pesantren yang masih menggunakan model pembelajaran salafiyah, pendidikan kecakapan hidup merupakan bagian yang tidak terpisahkan dari kurikulum

pembelajaran. Metode penelitian kualitatif, dengan metode pengumpulan data wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Analisis bersifat deskriptif.. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan life skill yang diberikan di pondok pesantren fathul ulum jombang ini sangat menarik karena diberikan dengan bentuk yang unik dimana santri yang memasuki jenjang Aliyah harus mengambil salah satu jurusan yang disiapkan dan salah satunya adalah jurusan preunur. Di jurusan preunur ini pendidikan life skill mendapatkan porsi lebih besar dari pendidikan keagamaan dan santri jurusan ini diberikan tanggungjawab mengelola usaha usaha milik pondok. Keunikan lain dari pendidikan life skill di pondok pesantren fathul ulum jombang ini adalah disediakan hari khusus dimana pembelajaran fokus pada pendidikan life skill di semua bidang usaha pondok dan wajib diikuti semua santri serta diberikan pengajian oleh pengasuh menggunakan kitab Ihya' Ulumudin bab Pekerjaan untuk menguatkan semangat dan keyakinan santri bahwa pendidikan life skill tidak kalah pentingnya dengan pendidikan keagamaan. Implikasi dari pendidikan life skill di pondok pesantren fathul ulum jombang ini sangat dirasakan oleh santri dan alumni dalam membangun kemandirian baik secara ekonomi maupun jiwa enterpreunurnya.

Kata Kunci: life skills education, independence

## INTRODUCTION

Life skills refer to an individual's ability to confidently face various problems and challenges in life, enabling them to continue to exist and thrive in society. Life skills education at pesantren is considered a crucial component in character development. Communication skills, time management, independence, and leadership are taught to students, equipping them with the ability to speak clearly, listen empathetically, and express their opinions constructively.<sup>1</sup>

An emphasis on moral and ethical values is a key component of life skills education at pesantren. This pesantren not only produces scholars proficient in debates but also leaders with strong social sensitivity and ethics. The students are taught to understand and appreciate differences, nurture a sense of social responsibility, and become individuals who positively contribute to society. Furthermore, life skills

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<sup>1</sup> Syaeful Rohman, "LIFE SKILL DI PESANTREN UPAYA PENINGKATAN DAN PEMBERDAYAAN SANTRI (Studi Kasus Di Ponpes Amparan Djati Desa Cisaat Kecamatan Dukupuntang Kabupaten Cirebon)," n.d., 37–52, [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://syekhnuurjati.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/empower/article/download/4638/2266&ved=2ahUKEwjCqJHQhpmMAxW-S2wG HZa MDEQQF no E CBYQAQ &usg = AOvVaw08fZA15aUYjq8BdLr\\_F4Bi](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://syekhnuurjati.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/empower/article/download/4638/2266&ved=2ahUKEwjCqJHQhpmMAxW-S2wG HZa MDEQQF no E CBYQAQ &usg = AOvVaw08fZA15aUYjq8BdLr_F4Bi).

education helps students prepare to enter the workforce or manage their own businesses. Practical skills training opens up opportunities for students to create jobs and develop economic potential within their pesantren environment.<sup>2</sup>

Life skills education at pesantren not only provides practical abilities but also transforms the mental and emotional aspects of students. They grow into confident, independent individuals ready to face life's challenges with determination and intellect. Through life skills education, this pesantren has become a place that nurtures generations who are not only religious but also equipped to face the challenges of the world wisely. Life skills education at pesantren provides new opportunities for students to develop holistically, not only in religious matters but also in practical skills and values relevant to everyday life.

Since not all alumni of pesantren will become scholars or clerics and pursue religious fields, students need to be provided with additional skills, such as life skills education, before they enter the real world. Many alumni face the problem of lacking knowledge about the demands of the workforce, which leads to increased unemployment. Furthermore, graduates of pesantren are still not widely absorbed into the formal and non-formal education sectors. Therefore, pesantren education must begin early to integrate the educational world with the workforce, so graduates can be independent in all fields.

One pesantren that emphasizes life skills education without abandoning its distinct traditional Salafi education is Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang. This pesantren has shown creativity and innovation in integrating skills education alongside religious education, providing various skills to develop students' independence and entrepreneurial spirit. With its unique approach, Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang has been recognized as one of the leading pesantren in Jombang district for its excellent life skills education, without compromising its Salafi education. This is why the researcher is interested in studying how life skills education at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum contributes to shaping the independence of its students.

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<sup>2</sup> Kharis Zuhud Mujahadah, *Pendidikan Islam Di Era Revolusi Industri; Memperkuat Eksistensi Pendidikan Islam Dalam Menghadapi Era Revolusi Industry 4.0*, (Depok: Kamajoyo PRESS, 2019).51

## METHOD

This research is a field-based qualitative study. Qualitative research aims to explore information based on actual facts observed in the field, either from informants' opinions or observed behaviors.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, qualitative research is a scientific method that investigates a phenomenon, and the results are descriptive data, either written or verbal, from the subject being observed<sup>4</sup>. This research seeks to gather information about life skills education at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang to reveal the significance of this education in helping students build independence, both during their time at the pesantren and as alumni. This study uses a descriptive qualitative design, focusing on describing life skills education in shaping student independence at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang. At this stage, the researcher collects data from interviews, observations, and documentation, which are categorized according to the research problem. The data is then refined by further field research, continuing until saturation is reached. The detailed explanation of the data collection techniques is as follows: interviews, observation, dan documentation.

Data validity checks are conducted to ensure that the data and information collected during the research have validity or truth<sup>5</sup>. prolonged observation, increase in perseverance, data triangulation, data analysis technique. The goal of data analysis is to find meaning based on the data obtained. Since this is a qualitative study, the analysis follows the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana<sup>6</sup>. Data analysis requires specific techniques to process the data so that conclusions can be drawn. The data analysis method used in this research follows the Miles and Huberman model, which involves three key stages: data condensation, data display, and verification.

Data condensation is a form of analysis that reduces data to extract its essence and provide meaning regarding the focus of the study, resulting in a final conclusion. The product of data condensation is primary data, which will later be useful in providing meaning, as qualitative research aims to uncover the meaning behind

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<sup>3</sup> Lexy J. Moeloeng, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Rosda Karya, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> Lexy J. Moeloeng, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Rosda Karya, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> M. Lexy J. Moeloeng, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Rosda Karya, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> and Johnny Saldana Matthew B Miles, A Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (New York: Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014).

respondents' behavior or attitudes<sup>7</sup>. This condensation process is applied to all data obtained from Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang to filter and select data that will be used in drawing conclusions.

Data display is the presentation of the data collected from the field in the form of meaningful patterns, which can be verified or followed up on. Sutopo, explains that data display involves a researcher's narrative in the form of sentences, images, schemes, networks, or tables that are written clearly so others can understand<sup>8</sup>. The data from Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum that has been condensed is displayed in a way that can be easily understood according to the research focus.

In qualitative research, drawing conclusions starts as the researcher enters the field, collects data, notes, forms patterns, and makes causal connections<sup>9</sup>. Conclusions (provisional conclusions) are drawn gradually until the researcher is confident that the data is credible. After the condensed data is displayed for understanding, conclusions can be drawn regarding the results of the research on life skills education at Pondok Pesantren Fathul Ulum Jombang

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. The Implementation of Life Skills Education in Shaping the Independence of Santri at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Jombang

Life skills education at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Jombang aims to foster the independence of santri, equipping them with entrepreneurial skills to avoid solely relying on salaries from teaching. Moreover, the kyai emphasizes that to be successful in worldly affairs, one must possess life skills. This aligns with the theory stating that life skills consist of a set of knowledge and abilities needed to live independently<sup>10</sup>. Life skills generally cover areas such as: (a) the world of work, (b) practical life skills, (c) personal

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<sup>7</sup> M. B. & A. M. H. Miles, *Analisis Data Kualitatif* (Yogyakarta: UI-Press, 2017).

<sup>8</sup> M. B. & A. M. H. Miles, *Analisis Data Kualitatif*

<sup>9</sup> Harsono, *Latihan Kondisi Fisik Untuk Atlet Sehat Aktif* (Jakarta: Remaja Rosda Karya, 2018).

<sup>10</sup> Brolin, D.E., *Life Centered Career Education: A Competency Based Approach* (Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children, 1989). 20

development and management, and (d) social skills. Work skills refer to the abilities that support an individual in performing their tasks effectively<sup>11</sup>

The introduction of life skills education is essentially an effort to reduce the gap between education and the realities of life, so that education can be balanced and in accordance with life values. Consequently, education becomes more meaningful when individuals acquire the necessary skills to live and compete.

The implementation of life skills education in shaping the independence of santri at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School follows the typical program implementation process: planning, execution, and evaluation. Planning is essential for organizational management as it provides clear and directed goals, ensures that all parts of the organization work toward the same objectives, helps identify challenges and opportunities, and increases efficiency and effectiveness. Planning can also be understood as an activity for monitoring and helping to reduce mistakes and deficiencies. Before managers can organize, lead, or control, they must make plans that define the organization's actions. This is the first step in the planning process. During the planning stage, managers must determine what needs to be done, when, by whom, and how. This planning is already included in the curriculum, as the schedule for life skills activities has been arranged, allowing santri to study and practice entrepreneurship.

Planning activities at the pesantren include: determining the schedule for pre-uneration trips, deciding on life skills activities at each educational level, setting criteria for santri at the Aliyah level who will take the pre-uneration track, planning life skills activities, planning incidental life skills education for santri, and determining routine and mandatory life skills education activities as part of the pesantren curriculum. This demonstrates good planning, in line with Arief Bowo's theory from T. Hani Handoko, which simplifies the planning process into four main stages: 1) goal setting, 2) forming a situational overview, 3) identifying possible actions, and 4) developing and implementing the plan.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Johannes Sapri, "Penerapan Paket Program Pendidikan Berwawasan Keterampilan Hidup (Life Skills) Berbasis Potensi Daerah Bagi Siswa SMA di Propinsi Bengkulu" *Jurnal Kependidikan Triadik*, April 2010, Volume 13, No.1, 23

<sup>12</sup> Arief Bowo. *Perencanaan*, (Jakarta: Universitas Mercu Buana, 2008) 30

The life skills education at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School uses several models: the life skills education model for learning and the life skills education model to reduce unemployment. These models align with the theory of life skills education. Some models of life skills education include: the model of life skills education outside formal educational institutions. In such a program, life skills management begins by recruiting students or community members who are economically disadvantaged, lack skills, and are between 18 and 44 years old. The selected students and community members are then educated for a specific period by the implementing parties of the out-of-school education program. After the learning period, an evaluation is carried out to assess the outcomes related to skills, entrepreneurial abilities, and other competencies. The skills acquired are then applied to the workforce or independent entrepreneurship. Those who aim for independence are assisted with capital and mentoring.

The life skills education model in learning is used as a means to guide students' abilities so that they are equipped for life, to earn a living, and to interact within society in the future. The learning model that integrates life skills with learning and contextual teaching and learning (CTL) is an approach aimed at developing life skills competencies.

The life skills education model to reduce unemployment is designed to address the increasing unemployment rate due to the number of graduates without sufficient skills. Life skills education could be an effective solution. The community college model provides opportunities for students to develop their potential over a specific period to meet the demands of the labor market.<sup>13</sup>

The implementation of life skills education focuses on: a) uncovering the individual abilities of students so they can be applied to solve the problems they face, b) providing a space for educational institutions to implement holistic learning methods, and c) maximizing the use of potential at both the school and community levels by applying school-based management principles

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<sup>13</sup> Wartanto, "Pengembangan Model Pengelolaan Kursus Ketrampilan Berbasis Life Skill Dengan Menerapkan Prosedur Mutu Di Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar" (Disertasi Doktor., Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, 2007)

At Fathul Ulum, the implementation includes: determining which Aliyah-level santri are allowed to take the pre-uneration track, assigning the management of the pesantren's businesses to the pre-uneration students without neglecting their religious study responsibilities, implementing mandatory life skills education every Tuesday and Friday for all santri with predetermined activities for each education level, holding a study session on the book *Ihya' Ulumuddin* about work (kasbu) directly led by the kyai, conducting pre-uneration trips to business locations twice a year, and collaborating with external parties such as BUMN and private companies to provide better facilities and support for life skills education.

Evaluation includes reporting on life skills activities carried out at the pesantren's businesses during the annual meeting. This is a systematic process of collecting factual data, known as evaluation. The purpose of evaluation is to determine if changes have occurred and the extent of those changes. In theory, evaluation involves measuring against a specific standard and is quantitative, while assessment involves making decisions based on criteria of good or bad and is qualitative. Evaluation encompasses both processes: measuring and assessing, with measurement taking place before assessment. The term evaluation refers to the assessment process following measurement<sup>14</sup>. The main function of evaluation is to: evaluate the results achieved, support planning, and improve what already exists.<sup>15</sup>

## **B. Implications of Life Skills Education on Santri Independence at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Jombang**

Initially, education in pesantren focused solely on religious studies. However, as times progressed, pesantren began to give more serious attention to the development of life skills. This is also motivated by the pesantren's desire to meet the challenges of the rapidly advancing industrial era and the implementation of government regulations or legal frameworks concerning the development of life skills.

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<sup>14</sup> Cepi. Arikunto, Suharsimi dan Safruddin, *Evaluasi Program Pendidikan Pedoman Teoritis Bagi Mahasiswa Dan Praktisi Pendidikan* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2018).

<sup>15</sup> Anas Sudjiono, *Pengantar Evaluasi Pendidikan* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2013).



Salafiyah Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Jombang is among the pesantren that strive for innovation by integrating life skills. Some important aspects that make life skills beneficial are: Life skills education provides knowledge about various business options that could become potential livelihoods for santri when they return to society. Life skills education cultivates entrepreneurial spirit in santri, so that when they graduate, they are bold enough to start businesses for financial independence. By taking the pre-uneration track, santri can help ease the cost of living in the pesantren, making it a great relief for their parents, and life skills education greatly helps instill independence in santri, which continues even after they become alumni

One of the principles instilled in the santri is courage and independence, in addition to simplicity and modesty. Courage and independence are attitudes that individuals need to develop their self-potential and life skills. This can be seen in the definition of life skills itself, which is the ability and courage to face life's challenges, and then actively and proactively seek and find solutions to overcome them.<sup>16</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The concept of life skills education at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Jombang is fascinating to study because, as an Islamic boarding school that still uses the traditional salafiyah model, life skills education is an inseparable part of the curriculum. Life skills education is placed on par with religious education, allowing both to proceed side by side, producing santri who possess the skills necessary for success in both this world and the hereafter. The integration of life skills education with the pesantren curriculum greatly supports the preparation of santri for economic independence or even creating job opportunities for others.

The life skills education provided at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum is unique because it is offered in a distinct form where santri entering the Aliyah level must choose a specialization, one of which is pre-uneration. In this track, life skills education takes precedence over religious education, and the students are given the responsibility to

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<sup>16</sup> Martinis Yamin, *Paradigma Baru Pembelajaran* (Jakarta: Reference, 2017). 282

manage the pesantren's businesses. Another uniqueness is the designated days where the focus is solely on life skills education across all pesantren's business fields, and it is mandatory for all santri to participate. Additionally, the kyai provides guidance using Ihya' Ulumu'ddin to strengthen the spirit and belief of santri that life skills education is just as important as religious education.

The implications of life skills education at Salafiyah Fathul Ulum are deeply felt by both the santri and alumni in building their independence, both economically and in their entrepreneurial spirit. For santri in the pre-university track, life skills education significantly aids in expanding knowledge about economic ventures and supports economic independence by managing pesantren businesses, which reduces living costs. For alumni, life skills education greatly assists in developing an entrepreneurial mindset, equipping them with the courage and capability to either start their own business or work in existing jobs without feeling self-conscious or embarrassed.

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