



Symbolic Interaction of Kyai and Santri in The Perspective of Ethical Leadership Based on Religious Values

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Abstract

Kyai is a key element in the growth and development of the pesantren community. The pesantren community under the leadership of Kyai is interesting to continue to be researched, one of which is in the aspect of symbolic interaction between kyai and santri which is unique in each pesantren. This research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) Pondok Joyo Jember with a qualitative approach, focusing on the symbolic interaction between kyai and santri from a leadership perspective. The results showed that in his leadership, Kyai at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) strongly emphasized the cultivation of ethical religious values through symbolic interactions carried out with students. This is reflected in the form of interaction in all activities carried out by the Kyai with students who are very concerned with the side of religiosity and moral values. The pattern of interaction carried out with *jismiyah*, *firkriyah*, and *ruhiah* so that it is able to form a meaning that manifests in the form of values and behavior of sincerity, simplicity, exemplary, assertiveness, and responsibility of students.

INTRODUCTION

The study of the existence of Islamic boarding schools as a Nusantara Islamic educational institution that is old and born from the local wisdom (local-genius) of the archipelago is an increasingly interesting phenomenon and continues to be worthy of research (Sarkowi, 2024). Various studies on pesantren cover all aspects of pesantren life from upstream to downstream. However, researchers continue to find different gaps in continuing the results of previous research. Especially along with the changes and challenges that accompany the growth and development of pesantren with various efforts and strategies in order to continue to survive and be competitive in realizing its goals.

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Pesantren as conventional Islamic educational institutions that are deeply rooted in Muslim communities in Indonesia, especially in East Java, continue to show admiration for their ability to face challenges and obstacles, both related to competition with modern pesantren and with public schools (Damanhuri et al., 2013; Ismayani et al., 2023; Mawardi & Mubarak, 2022; Sadali, 2020; Syafe'i, 2017). The negative stigma in recent years addressed to pesantren as a place for radical and militant Islamic cadres to destroy the popularity of pesantren in the global and digital era (Pratama & Amanah, 2021; Ridho & Tomohardjo, 2022; Sudharta, 2017).

Since 2023, the policy of integrating pesantren education into the national education system was born to realize the goals of national education, and then pesantren have increasingly received recognition, affirmation and facilitation from the government with the birth of the pesantren law number 18 of 2019 (Marita Sari, 2019; Pratama, 2019). Of course, this policy does not necessarily exist, but based on empirical and theoretical facts from various supporting data on the role, function and contribution of pesantren since the beginning of the Indonesian nation's journey until now. In fact, pesantren have been able to convince many parties in terms of quality and competitiveness amid the competition of educational institutions in the era of digitalization (Anwar, 2022; Dawami, 2022; Nofiaturrehman, 2017).

Mundiri & Zahra, (2017); Tabrani et al., (2021) in her research in observing the development of pesantren from time to time, that pesantren have the ability of gradual adaptation mechanisms in external aspects and accommodation in maintaining, strengthening and increasing the internal stability of pesantren. In the dissertation of (Kesuma, 2017; Meliani et al., 2022; Rachman et al., 2023), it is stated that Islamic boarding schools (*salaf*) are able to play their role in maintaining the value system and carrying out their traditional functions through learning, and until now their presence in the midst of society is still needed, especially the output products of pesantren with their Islamic character which are increasingly rare. Through this pesantren output or alumni, the degree of trust and expectations of the community towards the role and function of pesantren will be higher. Even alumni can be empowered through contributions of thought, finance, control, mediation, and empowerment of alumni abilities. The empowerment is carried out in accordance with the wishes and abilities of the alumni.

The survival and competitiveness of Islamic boarding schools do not only lie in the existence of superior educational plans and programs, but the leadership of the Kyai is the key to the implementation of all these things (Arfandi, 2019; Purwanti, 2023; Salmon et al., 2024; Zahroh, 2019). Effendi, (2020) in his research revealed that the success in the survival of salaf pesantren in the midst of the demands of the times, especially the flow of modernization, cannot be separated from the seriousness of the strategy of the pioneering kyai and the next generation in developing pesantren. Aisah, (2020) also emphasized that the survival of pesantren is determined by its ability to maintain its identity as an educational system dominated by kyai. The kyai occupies a central position with his knowledge and vision, as a leader, owner, manager and teacher of the yellow classical books as well as an imam (leader) in every program, activity and event held in the pesantren (Zainuddin, 2019). This is what is then symbolized by "Patron" because of the authority and power possessed and able to color all aspects of pesantren education that lasts a lifetime for both Kyai and students.

All aspects of Kyai's behavior will become a reference and role model, as well as an example for all his students, and even by the community (Ahmadi,

2020; Asy'ari et al., 2020; Musadat, 2020). Kyai will defacto and dejure replace and carry out the function and role of parents for santri when they are handed over and when they are in the pesantren environment. Kyai will always educate, teach, protect, guide, and advise his students (Khoeriyah et al., 2022). So, it is very appropriate when Kyai, besides being symbolized by Patron, is also symbolized by the agent of social change. This means that in social life, the role and function of a Kyai cannot be ruled out as a guardian of community morality who will voluntarily submit himself and his daughters to the Kyai in order to guide them to a straight path.

This research may be true if you look at the phenomenon from the aspect of sociopolitical relations between Kyai and society, but at the level of socio-cultural relations in social change, because Kyai is not only a cultural filter (cultural broker), even further, according to Geertz, Kyai actually spearheads social change (change agent) which in its own way offers a change agenda that it considers in accordance with the real needs of the community it leads, namely social control (social control) and social engineering (social engineering). The development of the social role of Kyai in the context of pesantren qualitatively today is part of the tradition, culture and behavior of its leaders to maintain the right to life of their community, which is forged with a powerful religious spirit (Atiqullah, 2012; Muqit, 2018; Pramitha, 2020).

The phenomenon of the uniqueness of the Kyai's leadership will certainly not be separated from the interaction process that is built, occurs and runs continuously between the Kyai and his students in an Islamic boarding school. The interaction pattern is a relationship that gives mutual influence and effect. Although in communicating with the kyai, the students will be very dependent on the norms, values, culture and rules that are constructed and enforced by the kyai in the boarding school. However, this condition is formed from and through a communication process that contains and transfers symbols that contain meaning as a reflection of the social situation in the boarding school. That is, Kyai with various symbols that exist and are integrated in him, then the santri are translated or interpreted through the interaction process so as to form a typical social order of the boarding school.

Humans have the ability to interact symbolically (Hannan & Abdillah, 2019; Ichsan, 2019). George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) as a pioneer of symbolic interaction theory which focuses its attention on interactions between individuals and groups, where these individuals use symbols in interacting (Bijaksana, 2025). The theory of symbolic interactionism seen from its emergence was born after the theory of social action of Max Weber (1864-1920) which later by some experts became the umbrella of symbolic interaction theory (Arimah, 2004). Weber in Campbell, 1994 says that an actor has an awareness of what he is doing which can be analyzed according to the intentions, motives, and feelings as they experience them. Thus, a person's actions are social because of the subjective meaning attached to them.

In the perspective of symbolic interaction theory, what is highly emphasized in the symbol exchange process is the level of activeness and creativity of the individual. Herbert Blumer Soeprapto in 2001 discusses actors who respond to the actions of others and he can interpret and define the actions of others either directly or not based on the assessment of these meanings. Interactions between individuals are bridged by the use of symbols to interpret the actions of others. In symbolic interaction theory, there are three important premises, namely: first, individuals respond to symbolic situations. Second, meaning is negotiated through the use of language as a product of social interaction that is not attached to objects. Third, meaning is

constantly changing because it is interpreted from time to time along with changes in the situation in social interaction.

In addition, in the process of symbolic interaction, the process of taking the role of the other is hidden even though it cannot be observed. Individuals will make efforts to anticipate the reactions of others, trying to find alternatives to the speech or actions they will take. Individuals imagine how others will respond to their actions. Therefore, symbolic interactionists recognize both inner actions and outer actions, considering outer actions as a continuation of inner actions. However, outer actions do not automatically indicate inner actions, as outer actions may simply be impression management. That is where the uniqueness of humans arises, they will manipulate symbols based on awareness. Likewise, in the pesantren community, they live in an environment full of symbols, especially religious symbols which are very thick with religiosity and ethics. Through their awareness, they will capture religious symbols, internalize and then present these religious symbols in the form of their behavior.

In this perspective, there are premises that need to be understood, namely; the meaning of symbols, self, social interaction, and society. In reality, individuals are active, in understanding and displaying a behavior that is complex and difficult to predict. Individuals are active organisms whose behavior is not determined by structures and forces that exist outside of themselves. So that the interaction process is an important variable in determining human behavior (Pramitha, 2017). If the perspective of the theory is used as a tool to analyze Kyai's leadership in Islamic boarding schools, it is interesting to study, about symbols, for example, it can reveal the veil of what the symbols actually mean. Kyai, who acts as a leader in the boarding school, actualizes his concept of thought to the boarding school community (santri, administrators, ustadz). It could be that the boarding school community carry out their duties on the basis of devotion and dedicate themselves on the basis of commitment and sincerity, or maybe they carry out boarding school programs not on the basis of loyalty, and sincerity alone, but because they are dependent on the Kyai.

This paper is the result of research that aims to understand how Kyai's symbolic interactionism with santri in ethical religious-based leadership in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda Pondok Joyo Jember. In pesantren life, as in the community of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), Pondok Joyo Jember, the communication they establish is based on their personal actions, but because of their membership in pesantren community groups that are thick with ethical religious values in their lives and affect their leadership. In practice, they interact through symbols that can be in the form of words, gestures, values, norms, and roles which are then called symbolic interaction theory. As a theory, symbolic interaction tries to see the social reality created by humans.

In Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), it is clear that the orientation of education is human perfection (*insan kamil*) which leads to happiness in the world and the hereafter. In pesantren life, which is thick with religious and ethical values, such as sincerity, simplicity, brotherhood, independence and responsibility. These values are not only mastered in a cognitive sense, but also implemented into the affective and psychomotor of the students in the life of communication and interaction that occurs in the pesantren community for 24 hours. This is certainly strongly influenced by the leadership of a Kyai as a role model. As a result, Kyai and the students put the Quran and the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad Saw, as the main source and reference in interacting for 24 hours. This condition is very visible and radiates the daily

life of the Kyai and students, with the practice of devotion to Him, understanding and appreciating the sunnatullah and then surrendering to Allah, all the movements of his life are seen as worship to Him in order to seek His pleasure.

METHODS

The development of the Islamic boarding school community in an Islamic boarding school with all its uniqueness can be understood through qualitative research with a case study approach on the aspect of symbolic interaction carried out by the Kyai with the students in his leadership (Daulay et al., 2023; Engkizar et al., 2023; Hari et al., 2023; Jaafar et al., 2023; Nursyda et al., 2021; Sabiruddin et al., 2021). This research was conducted at the Nurul Huda Islamic Boarding School, Songon Hamlet, Pondok Joyo Village, Semboro District, Jember Regency, East Java Province 68157. The data were collected by the first, observation to understand the context of the occurrence of symbolic interaction between the Kyai and students in the social situation at the Nurul Huda Islamic Boarding School as a whole. The second interviews to understand the problems studied in more depth. The third, documentation to obtain records of past events. Then the data analysis was carried out interactively and continuously until the data was saturated with the data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verifications techniques a. As stated by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (Engkizar et al., 2024; Mardiana et al., 2021; Nawawi et al., 2024). Research seeks to obtain complete truth by avoiding bias and increasing the validity and reliability of data by triangulating data from various sources, methods, or theories when collecting and analyzing data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The existence of Kyai who is the founder, caregiver and leader of the boarding school can be seen as a unique and complex leadership phenomenon (Sarkowi, 2023). This condition also occurs at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), Pondok Joyo Jember. This pesantren, although located in the western suburbs of Jember Regency, has made a very large contribution in educating prospective leaders of the people and the nation. Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) was founded and cared for by a Kyai who was charismatic and highly respected by the surrounding community. This respect is certainly not without reason, but because he is an ulama' who is *tafaqub fiddin, wira'i, istiqamah, tawadhu'*, always present and provides solutions to various problems of the people, and has had a unique impact on learning and character building of students and society (Sarkowi, 2024). This is in line with the results of research from that life in pesantren has special characteristics socially and has succeeded in forming support in character, especially related to the role of the Kyai figure in providing normative learning (Hasan, 2016; Kesuma, 2017).

Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) is fostered specifically in a separate community assisted by several other ulama and *ustadz* (teachers) as a 'board of educators'. The santri live and stay with the satri in the dormitory provided, with a mosque or surau as the center of worship for male and female santri, and a building/classroom as a teaching and learning space. There are both resident and nonresident students in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH). Like other pesantren, where the kyai and the students live together and continue to be active in comprehensively designed activities for 24 hours (Awwaliah, 2019; Hakim & Ok, 2024). The existence of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) has succeeded in making community members in and around the pesantren to participate hand in hand in succeeding and building a

unique character of life. In general, it can be seen from the social interactions in the pesantren between Kyai, santri and the community with full of democratic, ethical, religious, harmonious, familial, familiarity, *tamadhu*, and supporting salaf values.

Researchers found an interaction practice in his leadership related to students at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) by applying values and ethics or called religious ethics both through direct and indirect symbolic interactions.

Kyai's leadership behavior based on ethical religious values

Islamic boarding schools as the oldest educational institutions that continue to maintain their traditional values on the one hand, also continue to make efforts to maintain their existence in order to survive in this modern era. These efforts and processes have been and will be passed by not being separated from the role of leadership. Kyai as the leader of the boarding school is one of the factors that determine the direction of the progress of a boarding school. Kyai in the boarding school is not only a formal leader with his position, but also a real leader with his personal qualities. In pesantren leadership, it tends to be value-based and ethical leadership (Gunawan, 2017).

In this study found several behaviors that have been carried out by KH. Abd Rouf, as the founder and caregiver of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH). First, KH. Abd Rouf is considered to have been able to make himself a very charismatic leader in the eyes of subordinates (santri, ustadz, management) and the people of Pondok Joyo. The trust in KH. Abd Rouf's leadership, in the assessment of the community, is not only because the community is assessed in terms of expertise in religious sciences (*tafaqquh fiddiin*), but also judged by the authority (charisma) that comes from its religious nature, such as *wara'*, *istiqamah*, and the *karomah* it has. From his long journey in managing the boarding school, it is obvious that managing the boarding school is not only based on the depth of religious knowledge and managerial skills in managing the boarding school, but also based on spiritual depth and ritual strength. This is also very evident from his commitment in instilling faith and devotion to his students both through education and daily habits so that one day they will become safe and successful people both in this world and in the hereafter.

This is what makes, the strength of his role in the internal pesantren and external community, where his presence is believed to bring blessings, for example, it is not uncommon for him to be asked to treat sick people, give religious lectures, lead prayers in every event, provide advice and solutions to various existing problems. This is in line with the results of (Hasanah & Putri, 2021; Imam Tabroni et al., 2021; Neliwati et al., 2022) which explains that the role of kyai in rural communities is not only limited to a religious issue. In the culture of the community, a kyai is used as a foundation in solving various kinds of daily problems related to household affairs, arranged marriages, and the economy. Thus, the community's dependence on the figure of the Kyai is very strong.

The Pondok Joyo community's very high trust in KH. Abd Rouf in solving various problems is supported by his potential, causing him to occupy an elite position in the social and political structure of the Pondok Joyo community. This is what causes him, in the perspective of Mujamil Qomar in 2007 to become a Kyai who is respected by the community even his respect exceeds their respect for local officials, his advice has the power of extraordinary energy attraction, and is very easy to mobilize the community either incidentally or organized.

Second, KH. Abd Rouf is considered to have been able to provide motivation and role models for students and the community. This can be seen from the various things he has done and exemplified to the students and the surrounding community. Where he not only sits in the pesantren, but he also plunges and is directly involved in various community activities. In various religious and non-religious events, he is always present and is often asked to be an imam, or give *tausiah*, and prayers. Not only that, he also has a generous nature, seen when there is an event for the congregation and the community around the pesantren, there must be food.

In fostering santri, it is carried out directly and gradually through the example of the kyai and also through various activities in the pesantren. He is a figure who is never tired of educating his students in learning the *kitab kuning* books, always giving explanations in the form of examples in everyday life according to the material presented. Even with his affection, he directly participates in every activity in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) such as community service, he directly monitors these activities and buys food for the students which provides its own enthusiasm for the students, wakes up the students for the congregation for morning prayers and various other activities in the pondok.

KH. Abd. Rouf is very concerned about the behavior of his students in every activity. Every student who makes a mistake, he immediately reprimands then reminds and practices the correct example to his students directly and is guided until his students can actually carry out what he expects. As when learning in the classroom there are students who are crowded, the kyai immediately shuts up and then reminds them with gentle words.

In this description, KH Abd Rouf is very good at motivating and inspiring santri and the surrounding community with ethical emphasis, *akhlaq al-karimah*. This makes the students and the community to have high enthusiasm in serving and developing the boarding school. Some of the strategies that have been carried out include: i) making himself an *uswatun hasanah* / good example for students and the community; ii) giving rewards / awards for students and the community who do a good job; iii) always holding meeting activities by gathering students and the community in order to lead to change and improvement and become one of the communication media.

With the leadership behavior that occurs in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) as the place of this research, the researchers identified that KH. Abd. Rouf's leadership behavior is religious and ethical value-based leadership. His leadership is rooted in the principles and teachings of Islam with an emphasis on moral integrity, justice, honesty, responsibility, and exemplary. Leaders act as servants to those they lead, are responsible and aim for the welfare of the people, are able to inspire and motivate their followers through good example, and ensure that their decisions and actions are always in accordance with moral values.

The process of instilling religious and ethical values in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) by KH. Abd Rouf is carried out through various activities that allow interaction between Kyai and Santri. There are several routine activities carried out at the cottage, namely: i) study after congregational dawn prayer; ii) formal schooling at the level of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, and Madrasah Aliyah, iii) diniyah after asyar prayer; iv) Alquran learning after Maghrib congregation, v) *kitab kuning* study after congregational Isya prayer and vi) 5-time congregational prayer, vii) *yasinan*, *tablilan*, *shalawatan* activities on Tuesday night and Friday night. In addition to these routine activities, there are other activities carried out by the Kyai and santri, especially

those involving the surrounding community, such as commemoration of Islamic holidays, commemoration of national days, community service, morning sports, and other activities.

From the above discussion and description related to Kyai's leadership behavior, the following propositions can be formulated: having spiritual depth, ritual strength, charisma, *istiqamah*, discipline, being a motivator and inspirational figure, and caring for his subordinates are KH. Abd Rouf's leadership behaviors in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) which lead to an Ethical Religius-based leadership style. These values are implied when there is interaction between Kyai and santri in various routine and incidental activities. Through this interaction, there is a planting of religious and ethical values in shaping the character and morals of santri (Pertiwi, 2017). In addition, it was found that there were supporters in the smoothness and ease of instilling religious and ethical values at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), including strong willingness from within the students themselves, support from the santri's guardians, and the participation of the surrounding community. The willingness and awareness from within the students will make it easier for Kyai to instill religious and ethical values.

Patterns of symbolic interaction in implementing ethical religious values

Kyai is a person who must be respected and obeyed every deed and word. Besides having a role as founder, caregiver, educator, he is also a parent for the students. This relationship leads to obedience from the students and a very positive response from the community inside and outside the pesantren. The interaction between them is not the same as the interaction between the principal and his students. Kyai and santri interact more deeply with various expectations, including to gain knowledge and blessings (*barakah*) of Kyai. Mentioned in the research of Fauzan, (2022) that *barakah* itself is a favor or gift of greatness from Allah to His servants. In order for the students to also get it, one of the ways that is believed is to respect, obey and obey the scholars and kyai who are ethical religious personalities and lovers of Allah SWT. This is one of the successes of the kyai in his care and leadership while still holding the principles of local values and being good at interacting with global values. This leadership allows the boarding school to maintain the rooted tradition of the boarding school so that it can face the global values that hit the boarding school (Aziz & Taja, 2016).

Due to the position and status of the Kyai, they become Patrons and santri will become Clients in the boarding school. This condition is formed naturally through the process of instilling values complete with symbols. For example, a Kyai who is giving direction and wisdom to the students, the students will immediately obey and obey what the Kyai says. In addition, there are values in pesantren that strengthen the formation of patron-client relationships between Kyai-santri, as said by James C. Scott, in his writing entitled "The Erosion of Patron-Client Bonds and Social Change in Rural Southes Asia". First, santri as clients will have a dependent attachment because they have and will continue to get various services from Kyai as a patron. Second, the existence of a personalized pattern of reciprocity between Kyai and Santri creates a sense of dependence trust, as can be seen in the culture of individual cult-like respect by Santri to Kyai. Third, the dependence is spread thoroughly, flexibly and indefinitely due to the strong belief in the values that have been built in an Islamic boarding school, for example, the absence of Santri's courage to argue about any matter with the Kyai or argue with him because they can be repulsed.

As a lover and leader in the pesantren, from the results of (Pramitha, 2017), that the interactions carried out with the internal community of santri with a) physical interaction (*al-mu'amalah al-jismiyah*), b) mindset interaction (*al-mu'amalah al-fikriyah*), and c) spirit interaction (*al-mu'amalah al-rûhiyah*). This was also done by KH. Abd. Rouf, where he was never absent and very intensive in various *ma'badiyah* activities, *ubudiyah*, *ta'limiyah*, *khuluqiyah*, and various activities in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH). The intensity of this interaction is one of the reasons for the strong respect and *tawadhu* of the students towards KH Abd. Rouf. This can be seen from the results of observations, where they listen carefully without arguing with what the Kyai says, hasten the work that the Kyai asks them to do, keep away from things that can cause less satisfaction, uphold every word of the Kyai.

From the results of the interview, it is known that there are verbal and nonverbal symbols used by the Kyai in his leadership when interacting with PPNH students. The most dominant symbols are direct symbols both verbally with spoken language and behavior and indirect symbols through written language. The direct symbol implies more direct emotional touch, while the written text is in the form of slogans displayed in the Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) environment. All of these symbols have become a reference for thinking, behaving, and acting of the students in strengthening and improving the religious, spiritual, scientific, and professional aspects of the students in shaping themselves as the next generation of the struggle of the ulama who are the heirs of the Prophets. There are nonverbal symbols in the form of friendly, polite, and courteous forms of attitudes or expressions to align their nonverbal messages with certain brief verbal messages (Arimah, 2004). In Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), nonverbal communication can be seen from the many gestures they use, to reinforce or strengthen their verbal messages such as the smiling aspect that is highly emphasized in each of their interactions. In addition, there are also other symbolic behaviors of santri in terms of cleanliness, discipline, dress.

The santri always interpret the symbols they find from the Kyai. This means that when they get verbal or non-verbal symbols that are directly or indirectly received, they interpret messages or behaviors based on the meanings that “something” has for them. The existence of symbols in the interaction between Kyai and santri is able to bridge the meaning they get through interpretation and certainty of the meaning of the actions of other students. Between the stimulus and response, there is an “insertion” of the interpretation process. The meaning of this symbol determines the santri's response to the stimulus given by the Kyai, namely the response to act based on the symbols interpreted in their social interactions. Therefore, the interaction of santri is a symbolic interaction about the symbol itself, in which there is an exchange of symbols, an exchange of meanings, an exchange of interpretations of symbol meanings.

For example, the existence of smiles, greetings, greetings, politeness, and courtesy from the Kyai to Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) students, is used by the students as one of the verbal symbols that can remind them of the guidelines for friendly behavior and behavior, not only to please others or strengthen a relationship, but also meaningful as a form of alms (*idkhal al-surur wa al-sadaqah*). Even built into the 5S slogan (smile, greeting, greeting, politeness, and courtesy) can improve the quality of students' interpersonal relationships even more intensively. Meanwhile, in the 3S slogan (which stands for the spirit of brotherhood, the spirit of finding solutions, and the spirit of mutual benefit) which is intended to worship Allah, does not expect replies,

awards or praise from creatures (other people).

From the application of these symbols in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) students will have knowledge, understanding and awareness as well as a person who is sincere, independent, simple, empathetic and responsible (Sarkowi, 2024). All forms of speech, attitudes, and actions both directly and indirectly, both inside and outside Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), will reflect the five values above. First, KH Abd. Rouf always invites to be *istiqamah* in terms of doing good and worshipping Allah SWT. He always sets an example by leading congregational prayers, teaching the *kitab kuning*, reading dhikr and all activities at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH). All of these will strengthen the foundation of the faith of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) students which will give birth and form an attitude of sincerity and sincerity. So, they are able to become a person who all forms of action are oriented solely to worship Allah, seek His pleasure, serve Him.

Second, KH. Abd Rouf in his daily behavior and his care and leadership at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) in various activities that exist and are held by Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) are packed with simplicity. Simplicity is the middle ground between excess and lack, which means elegance, not being over consumptive or over povertive, and even changing consumptive elements to be productive, and from povertive to innovative-creative attitudes. Interaction with this symbol of simplicity will build healthy interactions and be able to control between lust which will give birth to Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) students with the virtue (*fadhilah*) of creativity, or spiritual power such as *tafakkur* (thinking), *takhayyul* (delusion) and imagination.

Third, KH. Abd. Rouf always gives examples of the importance of independence to build a self-reliant spirit to build strength for survival. Since they are separated from their parents, and set foot in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), they must begin to become individuals who have a tough character, have the ability to help and support themselves, solve various problems and not depend on outside themselves. This independence will form a person who is able to provide life solutions, instead of becoming a maker and spreader of problems in life. The activities of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) students, from waking up and preparing to do the morning prayer congregation to sleeping again at night after the completion of all activities are arranged in such a way as to strengthen discipline and bring out the character of independence.

Fourth, KH. Abd. Rouf builds an atmosphere of life and education in Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) that is full of the spirit of *ukhuwah* as a strong foundation that encourages collaboration, harmony and togetherness among santri. Namely, a life and educational atmosphere that is full of a sense of brotherhood, unity and mutual cooperation, close brotherhood, full of intimacy, no insulting and bullying each other who are of different ethnicities, sharing each other's joys and sorrows, helping each other friends who are afflicted with disasters. In addition, Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) has developed a unique way of regulating the association of santri through written and unwritten systems and rules. There are rules for realizing association and *ukhuwah* in the Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) environment, such as the manners of speaking with fellow students or with the Kyai, and with other parties.

Fifth, KH. Abd Rouf is very strict on violations of all obligations that must be carried out by the students. He wants to show the importance of

building a spirit of responsibility in all students. Namely, Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH) students are expected to have the attitude and behavior to always carry out their duties and obligations that they should do, in all their positions, both as servants of Allah and as *khalifatullah*, starting from when they are in the pesantren until they finally go directly to the community. Being responsible is symbolized by the desire and willingness to carry out all duties and obligations seriously, with all the consequences as a whole, from understanding, attitude, to actions.

CONCLUSION

Among the people of Pondok Joyo Semboro Jember, the figure of KH. Abd. Rouf is perceived as an integrative ulama'. He is a reflection of a figure who is very *wara, istiqamah, tawadhu', tafaqquh fi al-diin*, and prioritizes exemplary *al-karimah* morals. KH. Abd. Rouf not only acts as a teacher and educator, but also as a leader who can create a social structure in the life of Nurul Huda pesantren. In nurturing Pondok Pesantren Nurul Huda (PPNH), he balances interactions with the pesantren community, both the internal community (*santri/asatidz*) and the external community (society), through *jismiyah* (physical) interactions, *fikriyah* (mindset) interactions, and inner interactions (*ruhiah*). Through his leadership, kyai as an actor performs these interactions through symbols with santri to create the social world of pesantren in his setting. Leadership that is implemented is based on religious and ethical values. Based on religious values in leadership is related to the attitudes and behavior of a leader who is based on and based on obedience and obedience in getting closer to Allah and implementing his religious teachings as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad, and *salaf al-sholeh*.

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