

# Optimizing the Role of *Kiai* in Preparing Competitive *Santripreneurs*

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## Abstract

*Pesantren economics has increasingly gained attention from various circles, moving away from the traditional stigma of being solely traditional educational institutions. This article explores the role of the Kiai of Darul Pesantren, Menganti, in developing and preparing santripreneurs. This article employs qualitative research with a case study approach. Use the triangulation method. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and verification. The validity of the findings was ensured through extended observation and methodological triangulation. The study's findings reveal that the role of the Kiai in preparing santripreneurs is carried out through several methods: a) Doctrination of students through the learning process, b) Aligning students areas of expertise with their interests and talents, c) Establishing partnerships and collaborations with third parties, d) Incorporating santripreneur education into extracurricular activities at the pesantren, e) Providing educational scholarships for students, f) Requiring all students to have savings in the pesantren through BMT (Baitul Maal wa Tamwil). On the other hand, the challenges faced include: a) A lack of motivation among students to learn entrepreneurship, b) Time constraints for both students and instructors, c) Limited entrepreneurial capital, d) A shortage of human resources within the pesantren.*

**Keywords:** *Optimizing, The role of Kiai, Santripreneurs, Pesantren,*

## Introduction

History records that Indonesia's oldest Islamic educational institution is the Islamic boarding school, or "*Pondok Pesantren*". When they were first established in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, there were only four pesantren: Pondok Pesantren Al Kahfi Somalangu, Pondok Pesantren Luhur Dondong, Pondok Pesantren Nazhatut Tullab, and Pondok Pesantren Babakan Ciwaringi.<sup>1</sup> These four *pesantren* were the first traditional Islamic educational institutions, aimed at studying and exploring religious knowledge to serve as a guide for life in society. In addition to focusing on religious studies, *pesantren* also became a base for the struggle of indigenous nationals during the colonial era. With all its unique characteristics, Gus Dur referred to *pesantren* as a distinct subculture within Indonesian society.<sup>2</sup>

*Pondok Pesantren* not only fulfills its primary role as an Islamic educational institution but also endeavors to nurture its students with self-reliance, simplicity, perseverance, and camaraderie, aiming to produce knowledgeable scholars and future community leaders.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, *pesantren* seeks to foster a spirit of self-reliance

<sup>1</sup> Muhtar, "Mengenai Pondok Pesantren, Lembaga Pendidikan Tertua di Indonesia," UICI, 2023, <https://uici.ac.id/mengenai-pondok-pesantren-lembaga-pendidikan-tertua-di-indonesia/>.

<sup>2</sup> Endang Sriani, "Peran Santripreneur Pondok Pesantren Edi Mancoro terhadap Kemandirian Pesantren dan Masyarakat," *JIEI: Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (2022).

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Idris Usman, "Pesantren Sebagai Lembaga Pendidikan Islam (Sejarah Lahir, Sistem Pendidikan, dan Perkembangan Masa Kini)," *Jurnal Al Hikmah*, Vol. 16, No. 1, (2013).

through entrepreneurship “entrepreneur” among its students. This independent spirit must be continuously cultivated to ensure that no student relies on others for their livelihood.

In modern times, the role of *pesantren* extends beyond instilling values, ethics, and religious knowledge alone, with many institutions also emphasizing the cultivation of entrepreneurial values.<sup>4</sup> The main goal is to effect social transformation by encouraging appreciation for change and fostering an independent attitude through active participation in the economy. One of the objectives of engaging in the economy is to cultivate self-reliance. With economic independence, individuals will have the capacity to support their livelihood in the future.

The growth of the economy in the era of Industry 4.0 presents challenges for educational institutions to develop their values by shifting from classical paradigms to more progressive, modern, dynamic, and creative ways of thinking.<sup>5</sup> This goes beyond modernizing teaching methods to include the development of creative economies, which will enhance the economic well-being of the students. Therefore, students are encouraged to acquire skills in developing creative economies to create opportunities for entrepreneurship and job creation in society.<sup>67</sup>

The current progressive industrial development demands that *pesantren* increase its capacity as an Islamic educational institution with an advanced civilization.<sup>8</sup> This growth also corresponds to the expanding economies of ASEAN countries, including the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), where Indonesia needs to enhance the soft skills of its workforce to compete globally. The role of *pesantren* is vital in addressing these challenges while preserving its spiritual Islamic values.<sup>9</sup>

To achieve this, the role of the “*Kiai*,” the central figure in the *pesantren*, is crucial. The *Kiai* not only imparts religious knowledge and skills but also serves as a role model for their students. The *Kiai* has the noble task of guiding their students toward the right and beneficial path, especially in their future interactions with society, where they will carry out religious propagation (*dakwah*).<sup>10</sup> Thus, the *Kiai* plays an essential role in cultivating the student’s character to become knowledgeable individuals with moral conduct, which will influence their daily lives by religious

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<sup>4</sup> Yoga Gandara, Zulkifli Zulkifli, and Febri Saefullah, “Penanaman Nilai-Nilai Kewirausahaan di Pondok Pesantren sebagai Implementasi Economic Civic,” *Jurnal Civic Hukum*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (November 24, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Aziz, “Regulasi Zakat di Indonesia; Upaya menuju Pengelolaan Zakat yang Profesional,” *Al-Hikmah Jurnal Keislaman*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2014).

<sup>6</sup> Nadhira Ulfa and Maftukhatusolikah, “Minat Wirausaha Kaum Santri dan Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhinya) Studi pada Pondok Pesantren Ar-Riyadh Palembang,” *Economic Journal*, Vol. 01, No. 01 (2015).

<sup>7</sup> Haris Al Reza, *et. al.*, “The Opportunities Swallow’s Nest Business to Increase Community Income from Islamic Economics Perspective,” *Islamic Economics Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2023).

<sup>8</sup> Mohamad Nur Efendi, *et. al.*, “Madiun City Government Economic Policy Strategy: Islamic Economic Perspective,” *Islamic Economics Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2023).

<sup>9</sup> Moch Shofiyuddin, *et. al.*, “Strategi Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren dalam Pengembangan Ekonomi Mandiri Santripreneur,” *Review of Islamic Education*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2021).

<sup>10</sup> Mashur, “Kepemimpinan Kiai dalam Mengembangkan Pendidikan Berbasis Karakter di Pesantren Al Urwatul Wutsqo Jombang,” *Al-Idaroh*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2017).

norms.<sup>11</sup> The main objective of the *Kiai* is to build their students' character, making them knowledgeable, virtuous, and economically self-reliant individuals.<sup>12</sup>

One of the *Kiai's* efforts to develop their students abilities is through the "*santripreneur*" movement, which emerged in 2015 to promote new entrepreneurship within the *pesantren* environment and implement the government's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) empowerment program.<sup>13</sup> With the "*santripreneur*" program, current students are encouraged not only to deepen their religious knowledge but also to become entrepreneurs. *Pondok pesantren* has the potential to empower the economy, as many institutions have established cooperatives, developed various small and medium enterprises, and set up business incubators. All these potentials strengthen the *pesantren's* capacity to face the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 in the context of the global economy and the ASEAN Economic Community (MEA).

*Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan*, through its program to prepare superior and capable *santripreneurs*, has implemented various strategies that extend beyond merely providing entrepreneurship training. These include activities such as culinary business, household appliance repair (e.g., rice cookers, irons), motorcycle maintenance, car detailing, laptop and computer repair, among others.<sup>14</sup> However, these efforts are further supported by other factors, such as theoretical education in classrooms to foster creative thinking at a productive age. Additionally, this approach helps to develop students' interests in specific fields, making it easier to guide them toward achieving their aspirations. Students are also taught financial management, including the importance of saving and being required to have savings accounts at BMT. Likewise, *Kiai* is expected to build extensive networks to bridge the interests of students who wish to directly engage in business or government sectors, enabling them to recommend their students for suitable opportunities. Through the integration of these interconnected elements, it is hoped that students will develop an entrepreneurial spirit and contribute to national progress in the entrepreneurial sector. The unique *santripreneur* program at *Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan* has sparked the researcher's interest in conducting a further comprehensive research. This study will take a case-study approach to describe the role of the *Kiai* at *Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan Menganti, Gresik* in preparing competitive *santripreneurs*.

## Methodology

The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive, which is a study conducted by directly engaging with the subject, especially in the effort to collect data and various other information.<sup>15</sup> The research conducted by the researcher also

<sup>11</sup> Moh Amin, "Kepemimpinan dalam Islam," *Resolusi: Jurnal Sosial Politik*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (December 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Apud Apud, Hj Sammali Bin Hj Adam, and Ferdiansyah Irawan, "Kyai Leadership in Internalizing Nationalism Values at Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (December 31, 2020).

<sup>13</sup> Qurrotul Aini, Umi Muawanah, and Oyong Lisa, "Peran Kiai dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan Pesantren," *Kontan: Jurnal Ekonomi, Manajemen dan Bisnis*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Agustus 2022).

<sup>14</sup> Agustin Mila Arlina, "Strategi Pengembangan Ekonomi Pesantren Perspektif Panca Jiwa Santri Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan Menganti Gresik" (Surabaya, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2024).

<sup>15</sup> Zuchri Abdussamad, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Makassar: CV Syakir Media Press, 2021).

falls into the category of field research. Field research is an intensive, detailed, and in-depth study of a particular object by studying it as a case.<sup>16</sup> With the presence of this research, is expected to systematically, factually, and accurately describe, depict, or portray the facts, characteristics, and relationships between phenomena that occur in the field.<sup>17</sup>

The selection of Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan in Menganti, Gresik, was not without reason.<sup>18</sup> First, because in the *pesantren* there are entrepreneurial facilities developed by the *Kiai* of the *pesantren* as a form of life skills education for the students. Second, Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan also has a skilled *Kiai* in building relations with the government to obtain entrepreneurial capital. Third, there are many entrepreneurial locations developed by the students there, such as bread production facilities, workshops/service centers, which are the implementation of the *santripreneur* program being carried out with a partnership model there, despite the various challenges and obstacles faced by the *Kiai* and *pesantren* managers in implementing their entrepreneurial programs.<sup>19</sup>

## Result and Discussion

### The Role of *Kiai* in Preparing *Santripreneurs* at Darul Ihsan *Pesantren*

The main and essential key in the world of education is the curriculum. The process carried out by the *Kiai* in educational institutions, cannot be separated from the ideology they hold. The role of the *Kiai* is crucial for the progress and sustainability of the *pesantren*.<sup>20</sup> KH. Mulyadi, in observing the increasingly advanced state of the world, especially in the economic sector, has made innovations in his *pesantren*. The main point is to produce alumni who have expertise in both religious and entrepreneurial fields. One of his efforts is to provide entrepreneurial education to the students through lectures after the Maghrib prayer and direct teaching in the classrooms.

Based on the statements above, the strategy implemented by Darul Ihsan Pesantren in Menganti, Gresik, involves conducting learning processes and lectures within the classrooms for the students. In the teaching process, there are important stages to build the students' insights into thinking, behaving, and conducting themselves. The presence of these programs can influence the students' interest in entrepreneurship, ultimately leading to the development of independent lives among the students, which is a determining factor in becoming an entrepreneur. It requires a strong determination to achieve self-reliance.

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<sup>16</sup> Ubaid Ridlo, *Metode Penelitian Studi Kasus: Teori dan Praktik*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Jakarta: Publica Indonesia Utama, 2023).

<sup>17</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*, (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2018).

<sup>18</sup> Ayu Rena Fitriana, "Sejarah Yayasan Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan Menganti Gresik Tahun 1996-2022" (Surabaya, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2023).

<sup>19</sup> Muhamad Arif, "Revitalisasi Pendidikan Cinta Tanah Air di Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan Menganti Gresik," *Jurnal Iqra': Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2018)

<sup>20</sup> Sitti Chadidjah, et. al., "Inovasi Kurikulum Entrepreneurship Sebagai Upaya Memandirikan Santri Secara Ekonomi (Santripreneur) di Pesantren Al-Ittifaq Bandung," *Ijtima'iyya: Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat* Vol. 13, No. 01 (2020).

During the interview stage with the *Kiai*, the researcher found that one of the *Kiai*'s roles in developing and preparing *santripreneurs* is aligning their development with the student's areas of expertise, particularly their interests, and talents. This process represents a form of human resource empowerment that enhances excellence without neglecting the individual abilities, character, and personality of each student. The *Kiai* directs students' interests through the management of dormitories by senior students who have studied at the boarding school for more than three years. This approach is considered effective as it fosters a more relatable mentorship dynamic between senior and junior students.

This model serves as a form of planning system aimed at nurturing leadership skills among senior students. Eventually, these seniors help guide teachers in organizing the broader organizational system within the boarding school.<sup>21</sup> The *Kiai* also oversees senior elements of the *pesantren*, including the directors and leadership team. Subsequently, the council of *asatidz* conducts a final instructional selection process for students who have been shortlisted at lower levels. The final selection focuses on identifying students' abilities to develop economic initiatives aligned with their interests and talents.<sup>22</sup>

To convey the students' interests effectively, a platform is necessary, integrated with the economic development program at the *pesantren*. The purpose of this is to provide life skills training and start-up capital simultaneously, and the profits gained will be directly contributed to the *pesantren*.<sup>23</sup>

**Table 1. Economic Business Programs and Business Development at Darul Ihsan Pesantren, Menganti**

No	Bussiness Type	Participant	Results/Output
1	Household Appliance Repair	Student	Students are able to repair household appliances.
2	Motorcycle and Car Repair Services	Student	Students are able to repair motorcycles and cars that are damaged
3	Computer and Network Services	Student	Students are able to repair computers and set up networks.
4	Bottled Drinking Water Business	Student	Students are able to design, produce, and market bottled drinking water.
5	Clothing Business	Student	Students are able to design, produce, and market clothing
6	Snack Food Business	Student	Students are able to produce a variety of snacks and market them.

<sup>21</sup> Ibrahim Fatih Ali, "Pemaknaan Senioritas dan Pengaruhnya terhadap Interaksi Sosial para Santri di Pesantren Madrasah Huff 1 Al Munawwir, Krapyak, Yogyakarta" (Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Kaljaga Yogyakarta, 2022).

<sup>22</sup> Shofiyuddin, *et. al.*, "Strategi Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren dalam Pengembangan Ekonomi Mandiri Santripreneur."

<sup>23</sup> Indah Puspitasari and Amin Wahyudi, "Asset Management in Islamic Inheritance: A Solution for Economic Empowerment Obstacles," *Islamic Economics Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2024)

No	Bussiness Type	Participant	Results/Output
7	Office Supplies Business	Student	Students can manage inventory and sales of office supplies, and market these products to the general public.
8	Bouquet Creation Business	Student	Students are skilled in creative design for bouquets and able to market them to the general public.
9	Transportation Service Provider	Student	Students can manage travel services and market them.
10	Perfume Store	Student	Students can produce and market alcohol-based perfumes.
11	KBIHU (Hajj and Umrah Guidance Group)	Student	Students gain better knowledge of event management, such as Hajj and Umrah, and can market these services to the public.
12	KSPPS BMT Khoiru Ummah East Java	Student	Students gain better insight into savings and financing systems and can market them to the public and recruit members.

Source: Data Processed

The role of the *Kiai* at Darul Ihsan Pesantren in managing *santripreneur* activities as extracurricular programs include initiatives such as household appliance repair businesses, motorcycle repair services, computer and network repair services, and gallon mineral water businesses, among others mentioned above. These various business ventures are efforts to establish an independent entrepreneurial education within the *pesantren*. Specific schedules are set to involve students in maintaining the *pesantren's* economic assets and business units. Additionally, skilled facilitators, consisting of the *pesantren's* *asatidz* and *asatidzah*, are specially trained to mentor and assist the students. This strategy, implemented by the *pesantren's* leader, aims to achieve economic independence not only for the *pesantren* itself but also for its students and teaching staff.

The findings in the aforementioned statement highlight that economic independence in *pesantren*, through various business activities, serves as a strategic and sustainable support system. It provides a platform for students to gain entrepreneurial skills before completing their education. The economic independence model applied at Darul Ihsan Islamic Boarding School aligns with that of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, which is recognized as a pioneering example of a *pesantren*-based educational institution that operates with an independent economic system in Indonesia.<sup>24</sup> Gontor's economic independence model encompasses various business units such as cooperatives, printing services, shops, agriculture, and livestock. These business units not only ensure the financial independence of the *pesantren* but also equip students with entrepreneurial skills and mindsets that will benefit them after graduation.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Mardiyah Mardiyah, "Total Quality Management for High Quality Education Strategy at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo," *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, dan Agama*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (August 31, 2023).

<sup>25</sup> Jusubaidi Jusubaidi, *et. al.*, "A Model of Transformative Religious Education: Teaching and

Another finding pertains to planning, which is a critical element in management, as organizing, actuating, and controlling must first be planned. Planning is defined as the activity of selecting and connecting facts while making and utilizing assumptions about the future to visualize and formulate proposals necessary to achieve desired goals.<sup>26</sup> In summary, planning involves creating a sequence of tasks to be carried out to achieve specific objectives. Meanwhile, organizing refers to the process of arranging activities involving multiple individuals to achieve a particular goal.

On the other hand, the entrepreneurship learning outcomes applied at Darul Ihsan not only equip the *santri* to learn about entrepreneurship, but also aim to have a positive impact on their economic standing when they become part of the community. The following data presents some alumni who have successfully implemented the Kiai program.

**Table 2. Outputs of Darul Ihsan Pesantren Alumni Businesses**

No	Owner's Name Business	Type Business	Location
1	Novanda	Novanda Print	Gresik
2	Rohma	Nafaf Collection	Gresik
3	Novita	Abizhar Canon Fotocopy	Gresik
4	Jesika	Mie Ayam Podo Mampir	Surabaya
5	Kurdi	Ayam Geprek Yoiku	Gresik
6	Nur Lailatul Fitria	GTS (Grosir Tas Surabaya)	Gresik
7	Roudho	Roti Al Hikmah	Gresik
8	Rahardian Arif	ST (Sahabat Teknik)	Gresik
9	Iswanto	One Laptop	Gresik
10	Dian	57 Cell	Gresik

Source; Data Processed

The next finding explains that *Kiai* is striving to develop an independent *santripreneur* economy among the students. This effort includes providing incentives in the form of educational scholarships to motivate students to learn. This policy is implemented with the hope of encouraging more students to participate and benefit from the program. The scholarships or facilities provided include:

**Table 3. Benefits of Studying at Darul Ihsan Pesantren**

No	Benefits of <i>Santripreneur</i> at Darul Ihsan Pesantren
1	50% Educational Scholarship
2	Room Facilities
3	Free Meals and Drinks
4	Spiritual Guidance
5	Direct Learning from the <i>Kiai</i> and <i>Bu Nyai</i>

Source: Data Processed

The *Kiai* also employs a strategy through the management of BMT (*Baitul Maal wa Tamwil*) to restore the *pesantren's* function as community empowerment

Learning Islam in Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Indonesia," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, (February 29, 2024).

<sup>26</sup> Yanti Aneta and Juriko Abdussamad, "Analisis Fungsi Perencanaan pada Pengembangan Sistem Transportasi Publik di Provinsi Gorontalo," *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen dan Bisnis*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2018).

and economic development. The BMT becomes a driving force for capital and skill development in work. Ultimately, the *pesantren* is not only a center for the study of Islamic religious knowledge and practices but also a center for community and people's economic development.

One of *Kiai* Mulyadi's policies to encourage the interest of students at Pesantren Darul Ihsan in saving is by requiring them to have savings accounts at a BMT as preparation for future entrepreneurship. This effort aims to instill financial independence in the students, teaching them to avoid wastefulness and use their savings as capital for entrepreneurship.<sup>27</sup> This policy is part of the *Kiai's* initiative to provide education, raise awareness, and cultivate ethical entrepreneurial habits. This statement is not without basis, as it is supported by the former 7<sup>th</sup> Vice President of Indonesia, K.H. Ma'ruf Amin, who emphasized the importance of introducing financial education early on. One of the key methods he recommended is saving, as it fosters the habit of frugality, which serves as a foundational step toward economic independence.<sup>28</sup>

Another important role of the *Kiai* is to advance human resources and develop the *pesantren* through the optimization of networking and lobbying, along with its extensive connections, to obtain partnership capital with the government through KEMENAKER (Ministry of Manpower), the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs of Indonesia, HPNU (Nahdlatul Ulama Entrepreneurs Association), and other institutions. With the presence of these institutions, they provide financial support to the *pesantren* to carry out teaching, skills training, and entrepreneurship activities for the students. However, this does not mean neglecting the students' religious activities, such as studying *salaf* books and performing religious practices like congregational prayers, *tahajjud* prayer, Qur'an recitation, prayers, and other religious activities typically found in the *pesantren*.

Findings by Shofiyuddin,<sup>29</sup> and Afidah,<sup>30</sup> who examined the role of the caretakers of Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Ploso, highlight three main challenges faced by the *Kiai* in developing the *santripreneurship* program. *First*, challenges related to human resources as the managerial element. *Second*, issues concerning infrastructure, particularly the utilization of new technologies and the internet. *Third*, the distribution and marketing of entrepreneurial products. These challenges must be addressed by the *Kiai* of Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan to enhance the quality of entrepreneurial education programs, especially in fostering economic independence. If these challenges are not properly addressed or resolved, the *pesantren* institution risks falling behind, both in terms of adapting to global developments and maintaining stability in fluctuating markets.

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<sup>27</sup> Bayu Sudrajat, "Pengembangan Keahlian Wirausaha untuk Santri pada Pondok Pesantren", Vol. 5, No. 1 (2022).

<sup>28</sup> Opopjatim, "Wapres: Pesantren Harus Terbuka Kolaborasi di Sektor Ekonomi," <https://opop.jatimprov.go.id/>, 2020

<sup>29</sup> Shofiyuddin, *et. al.*, "Strategi Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren dalam Pengembangan Ekonomi Mandiri Santripreneur."

<sup>30</sup> Siti Afidah, "Entrepreneurship Kaum Santri (Studi pada Pesantren Entrepreneur Tegalrejo Magelang)" (Semarang, UIN Walisongo, 2018), [https://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/id/eprint/8401/1/1500108011\\_Tesis.pdf](https://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/id/eprint/8401/1/1500108011_Tesis.pdf).



Consequently, concepts of the *santripreneur* movement are found in Darul Ihsan Menganti, such as *santripreneur* Capacity Building (training and improving the abilities and skills of the *pesantren*'s students), Training and Education *Santripreneur* (learning while practicing), and Product Auction (presenting entrepreneurship products for auction and sale). All of these are forms of implementing the *pesantren* leader's strategy to cultivate entrepreneurial students who will eventually become financially and economically independent individuals.

### **Obstacles of *Kiai* Pondok Pesantren Darul Ihsan in Preparing *Santripreneur***

The efforts made by the *Kiai* to prepare prospective *Santripreneurs* are not without challenges. As identified in this study, there are four main obstacles in implementing the *santripreneur* program at Darul Ihsan Pesantren, Menganti, Gresik. First, a lack of motivation among students to learn entrepreneurship, stemming from within the students themselves. Second, time constraints are faced by both the students and their instructors. Third, issues related to entrepreneurial capital. Fourth, a shortage of human resources within the *pesantren*. These challenges continue to be addressed by the *Kiai* of Darul Ihsan Islamic Boarding School, Menganti, Gresik, East Java, to find effective solutions.

The challenges faced by Darul Ihsan Pesantren are similar to the findings of Afidah<sup>31</sup> and Shofiyuddin,<sup>32</sup> who studied the role of the caretakers of Al Falah Ploso Pesantren. Their research identified three main challenges faced by *Kiai* in developing the *santripreneur* program. First, issues related to human resources as a managerial component. Second, infrastructure issues, particularly in the utilization of new technology and the internet. Third, the distribution and marketing of entrepreneurial products.

As explained above, there are still additional issues that pose challenges to the *santripreneur* program. These challenges must be addressed by the *Kiai* implementing the program to improve the quality of entrepreneurial education development, particularly in achieving economic independence. If these issues are not effectively resolved, the *pesantren* institutions risk losing competitiveness, whether due to global developments or the fluctuations of market stability.

### **Conclusion**

The Role of the *Kiai* at Darul Ihsan Pesantren, Menganti, in preparing *santripreneurs* includes: a) Doctrination of students through stages of learning, b) Aligning students' areas of expertise with their interests and talents, c) Establishing partnerships and collaborations with third parties, d) Incorporating entrepreneurship education to support extracurricular activities at the *pesantren*, e) Providing educational scholarships for students, and f) Requiring students to have savings in the *pesantren* through BMT (*Baitul Maal wat Tamwil*). However, there are challenges in the implementation of *Kiai*'s strategies at Darul Ihsan Pesantren, Menganti, including:

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Shofiyuddin, *et. al.*, "Strategi Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren dalam Pengembangan Ekonomi Mandiri *Santripreneur*."

- a) A lack of motivation among students to learn entrepreneurship independently,
- b) Limited time, c) Insufficient entrepreneurial capital, and d) A shortage of human resources within the *pesantren*.

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