

**Children's Boarding School in Indonesia:  
 Examining Psychological and Social Dynamics  
 in the Perspective of Gender-Friendly Islamic Boarding Schools**

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*The purpose of this research is to find out the psychological dynamics in children's boarding schools, which focus on the problems of the psychological well-being of young students who are felt to be in the boarding school environment as well as the challenges of boarding schools in fulfilling the psychological well-being of students in the perspective of gender-friendly boarding schools. This research is qualitative research with the type of Field Research and uses a phenomenological paradigm. The research subjects were students of school age, namely 6-12 years. Through interviews, observation, and documentation, data was collected for both the santri and the caretakers of the boarding schools (kiai or nyai). Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model, through four steps, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The results showed that there were still some conditions for students who experienced psychological turmoil during the adjustment period, such as homesickness, self-acceptance, difficulties in establishing social relations with other friends problems of independence, especially for low-class students and at the beginning of the boarding year. A gender-biased perspective was found in fulfilling children's rights in Islamic boarding schools, such as the assumption that looking after women is more difficult than men, women have to take extra care of themselves and their morals while men are labeled as difficult to manage, and tend to be naughty. Besides that, the fulfillment of nutrition and balanced nutrition is not found in Islamic boarding schools with the reason for developing the principle of zuhud (simplicity). This is what makes it a particular challenge for Islamic boarding schools to help the growth and personal development of students so that they feel comfortable and happy in the boarding school with all the activities and activities that bind students, both male and female students. This challenge is very important to be captured by pesantren managers such as forming child-friendly pesantren.*

**Keywords:** *children's boarding school, psychological well-being, child-friendly Islamic boarding school*

**INTRODUCTION**

Living in Islamic boarding schools at the age of children is very possible for psychological and social problems to occur (Fine & Sirin, 2007). Psychological problems arise

in children who live in Islamic boarding schools due to the adjustment of students who, at a young age, need physical and emotional closeness with their parents. Children who are sent to boarding schools at too early an age show a loss of primary attachments with their parents and have the potential to experience psychological trauma related to events while living in the boarding school (Scaverian, 2011: 138). Apart from that, in supporting the growth and development of children, there is a close relationship between parenting style and family functioning in early childhood cognitive development (Davies & Cummings: 1990). We can understand that family roles, parenting styles, and the closeness of parents to children greatly impact children's development, both cognitive and other psychological development, as confirmed by Laursen, B., Coy, K. C., & Collins, W. A. (2017). In reality, children who are kept away from their parents from an early age need to consider carefully the various possible psychological and social aspects of the child, because the child's age is very vulnerable to stress and depression when the environment pays less attention to his psychological needs.

Other problems are also regarding the social welfare of children related to the protection of children in Islamic boarding schools. This must be of particular concern through the active role of the pesantren caretakers, both the *kiai* and the *nyai*, and the community around the pesantren must also support the social welfare of the students because young students still need psychological assistance to avoid the dangers of violence, discrimination and exploitation so that it can grow and develop optimally in accordance with developmental tasks that should be (Jeti, L. (2022). In Law No. 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection Article 1 Paragraph (2) it is explained that "Child protection is all activities to guarantee and protect children and their rights so that they can live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in accordance with human dignity and values, and receive protection from violence and discrimination"

In the concept of the science of psychological development, children aged 6-12 years are a very important age in forming the basis of personality, requiring support and intimate closeness with their parents so that their psychological needs are fulfilled, feeling full of comfort and affection and a sense of security (Ellen, 2010:195), because at this age it is also the longest in the life span (Jannah et al., 2017). Parents need to pay attention to their child's development because childhood experiences have a great impact on further development (Suteja, J., & Yusriah, Y., 2017: 1). Shiner, R. L., Masten, A. S., & Tellegen, A. (2002:1165)

explains that the achievement of developmental tasks can run optimally so that children do not experience difficulties in achieving further developmental tasks. Cooper's research results (2009:3) state that life in the first five years of a child will have a tremendous impact on his social-emotional development. Negative experiences in these early years will interfere with mental health and affect children's cognitive, behavior, and social-emotional development (Cooper, 2009: 3). Therefore, parents have a great responsibility for the growth and development of their children.

In the context of child care and protection, family parents have a central role, because in this case, children are very dependent on adults (Siswadi, I., 2011: 42531). However, the current phenomenon is that many parents feel that when children enter elementary school, they rely more on schools with a full-day school or boarding school system. Many parents assume that schools with a full-day school or boarding school system already provide complete learning from cognitive, affective, and religious moral knowledge to skills/psychomotor (Taufiq, T., 2016). One of them is the choice of parents in a boarding school. The phenomenon of children living in Islamic boarding schools is currently very rapid (Nilan, 2009:219-232). Shows that there is a shift in the interest of parents at this time, where in the past many of their children entered Islamic boarding schools at a young age, now many parents have started sending their children to Islamic boarding schools themselves so that there are many and developing children's Islamic boarding schools (Harahap, 2011).

Some research on the psychological and social welfare of students living in Islamic boarding schools includes Hasanah, M., (2019: 84-94), (Indriana, Y., Sawitri, D. R., Al Karim, C. H., & Hanifah, M. I., 2021: 44 -52 states that living in Islamic boarding schools at a young age is very likely to cause psychological problems. This is supported by the results of research by Granqvist, P., & Dickie, J. R. (2006:197-210) which is further strengthened by Scaverian (2011:138) which shows that children who are sent to boarding schools at a too early age show a loss of primary attachments and some experience psychological trauma related to events while living in dormitories. Other research on child growth and development is in the study by Davies & Cummings (1990) on the link between parents' marital conflict with children's adjustment, research by Andriann Yunarko (2015) also found that there is a relationship between parenting style and family functioning d with early childhood cognitive development. From this research, we can understand that the role of the family, the parenting

style of the Islamic boarding school and the closeness of parents and caregivers to the boarding school are important and greatly impact the development of children, both cognitive and other psychological developments.

It is found that many children experience a psychological burden when they have to attend school at an early age or children's age, especially in the first 1 year to 2 years, as it is found that not a few children cry to see their mothers, cry at school, have a gloomy and unresponsive expression. can express what he wants, feels, and complains about as the result of observations of young students. This aspect is important for parents and pesantren caregivers to pay attention to. If parents are actively involved in the process of raising and educating their children, they will show an increase in learning achievement which is then followed by improved attitudes, socio-emotional stability, and discipline (Roy, M., & Giraldo-García, R., 2018). Because ideally, the early years of childhood are with their families (Valorose, J., & Chase, R., 2020). However, due to several reasons, there are good children who voluntarily or are forced to live with other people and do not get special care, such as having to live in dormitories or Islamic boarding schools. This is what makes it a special challenge for Islamic boarding schools to help the growth and psychological and social development of students so that they feel comfortable and happy in the boarding school with all the activities and activities that bind students, both male and female students. This challenge is very important to be captured by pesantren managers such as forming gender and child-friendly pesantren.

This type of research is field research (Field Research) with a qualitative approach (Lexy J. Moleong, 2006: 4). Through qualitative research, researchers describe the social nature of research and reveal a complete picture of what happened (Fraenkel, 2007). So that researchers can interpret the abstract concepts found in field data (Mc. Millan & Schumacher, 2006). The phenomenological paradigm was developed in this study which researchers understood as Polking Horne's view (Creswell, 1998) where this research tried to capture as closely as possible one's psychic phenomena (Jonathan A. Smith, 2009). Data analysis in this study uses interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). In the context of this research, phenomenology aims to reveal the psychological dynamics of children in a boarding school environment where the actual age of children is the age that should be under the care of their parents and requires closeness and direct attention from their parents, but these children

must live independently under the care of their parents. *Kiai* of the boarding school with all the rules attached to it. Besides that, the challenges of Islamic boarding schools are in fulfilling the psychological well-being of students in Islamic boarding schools.

The research was conducted at the Minhajul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School which was cared for by Mrs. Nyai Hj. Misbakhuzzuhriyah and Mr. Ustad Maftuh Mubarak, M.Pd., with the majority of the students coming from children ranging from toddlers to 12-year-olds or SD/MI-aged children. Respondents in this study amounted to 6 children aged 7 years to 12 years, the researchers determined the respondents by paying attention to several criteria including; (1) Children of SD/MI age and evenly represented from the lower class and the upper class. Respondent heterogeneity (representation between male and female respondents).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Parent and Child Relations: Basic Formation of Psychological Well-Being in Children**

The closeness of parents and children is very important especially at the golden age or the first 5 years which will continue at elementary school age or 6-12 years. It is stated in Ellen (2010: 195) that children aged 6-12 years are a very important age in forming the basis of personality. Children at this age need support and intimate closeness with their parents so that their psychological needs are met, they feel full of comfort and affection and a sense of security. This psychological comfort becomes the basis for growth and development in the following ages. Many studies say that if parents are actively involved in the process of raising and educating their children, they will show an increase in learning achievement which is then followed by attitudes, social-emotional stability and discipline (Roy, M., & Giraldo-García, R., 2018). However, there are several conditions so that children must grow and develop away from their parents, such as the phenomenon of boarding children since childhood.

Most parents want their children to have good morals and be academically smart. Parents are willing to do various ways and efforts to provide the best education for their children, even though they have to be separated from their children. Letting go of a child to be taken care of by someone else, not directly as a parent. There are also certain conditions that force parents to be away from their children, such as due to economic factors, work out of town, divorce and so on. This condition also occurs a lot at the Minhajul Muta'allimin

Proto Islamic boarding school, Pekalongan Regency, as stated by Mrs. SP, she comes from Kesesi and has housed her child since she was in grade 2 MI, she explained:

*“...I work to migrate to Jakarta with my husband. So everyday I'm in Jakarta so it's a hassle to take care of my children at home. Even if I took it to Jakarta, it would cost a lot to go to school there... rather than I was confused about where to leave it, I finally took my child to the boarding school. Here I am calmer, children are awake, cared for and educated in true religious knowledge and can go to school.”*

This information was also reinforced by the caretaker of the Islamic boarding school, Mrs. Nyai Hj. MZ, he said:

*“The students who study here vary, some parents really want to put their children in, some work and are busy, migrate, some even have mothers who work as migrant workers in Saudi Arabia, there are also those whose parents and mothers are divorced, so their mothers have to work and it is difficult if you have to take care of their children, so they are put in a boarding house. If you come from an average family economy, the average family who lives here is from an ordinary family. But most of them are private workers, Sis.”*

Parents have diverse backgrounds, ranging from parents working outside the city, or TKI abroad because of the demands of the family's economic needs, there are also because the parents are divorced, as a single parent then the mother works and the child is forced to be placed in a boarding school. . Children with this condition are forced to be away from their parents since childhood, which will automatically have an impact on the emotional attachment between parents and children, which can have the potential for many things related to children's development including the child's psychological well-being. As Shomaker & Furman (2009) states that attachment in childhood to parents will produce an internal working model. This internal work model will help children and adolescents to develop psychological well-being and social relations, especially with their peers.

Meanwhile, there are also parents who really want to make their children independent and learn to recite religious knowledge at Islamic boarding schools since they were young, afraid of today's IT developments. As stated by Mrs. UC, one of the student guardians who came from Comal, she said that:

*“I put my child in the boarding school since he entered grade 1, because of this, sis. If at the boarding school, the children are more focused, they can study religion, they can also go to school. So yes...in my opinion it is better at the boarding school than at home, children are also trained in discipline. So I am more calm leaving the child in the Islamic boarding school.”*

Reviewing the phenomenon of the purpose of Islamic boarding schools, parents are currently experiencing disorientation in the meaning of Islamic boarding schools, parents now interpret Islamic boarding schools more as a safe place to leave their children, who can

take care of all their children's needs, can replace their role as parents. Even though Islamic boarding schools are educational institutions like other educational institutions that have a curriculum, not only as a place to entrust children. And responsibility for establishing close relationships with children remains the responsibility of parents which cannot be replaced by the role of the teacher in any school or boarding school (Fadhilah, N., 2021).

The child's relationship in the early days can be a model in subsequent relationships. This initial relationship begins when the child is born into the world, in fact it has started since the fetus was in the womb (Sutcliffe, 2002). Relationships that are affective between one individual and another individual and have special meanings such as motivation, attention, and affection are an emotional relationship called attachment (Me Cartney and Dealing 2002). According to Ainsworth (in Santrock, 2002) attachment is an emotional bond that is formed by an individual with other people who are specific, binding them in a closeness that is eternal all the time. Affective needs which are closely related to the child's attachment to the family greatly support the child's development both emotionally and socially. As Ryff (1989: 1.071), explained that the foundation for obtaining psychological well-being is an individual who is psychologically able to function positively (positive psychological functioning). Individual components that have a positive psychological function.

John Bowlby (1969-1973) that according to Bowlby attachment needs are like vitamins and proteins which are very important for healthy physical and psychological development, because attachment to mother's love is essential. And attachment will be formed when there is harmonious communication and contact between parents and children. Then will the attachment be maximally formed when the child is already in the boarding school environment from an early age and away from parents? This question intrigues and becomes the focus of this research.

### **Student Self-Acceptance: Examining Sincerity and Compulsion**

In elementary school-aged students, who are experiencing for the first time living away from their parents, of course they feel anxiety and adjustment in their way to achieve self-acceptance of what they face as students in Islamic boarding schools. Some of the students felt sad, anxious, and did not feel at home in their first years, according to the KK of one of the 8-year-old students, who revealed that: *"I prefer to be at home with my mother.... Snack with*

*mom, then sleep with mom too. I wasn't happy at the boarding school....everyone had to be alone, they weren't allowed to go out and play freely, they weren't allowed to eat a lot, and sometimes my friends were naughty.”*

Likewise, a 7-year-old SF student who is still in grade 1 and is attending school for the first time, stated that he was often sad and cried at school or the boarding school because he was far from his mother, and felt it was difficult to sleep at night because he was afraid of the new environment, and not yet close to his new friends.

The process of adjustment is felt quite hard by the students who have just entered the pesantren environment. They have to fight sadness, fear, and dependency on their parents. At the same time, there is a subtle difference in meaning between accepting reality sincerely or part of an attitude of compulsion but there is no other choice but to survive and accept being away from their parents. Self-acceptance is not an attitude that can happen naturally and quickly (Rosida, I., & Saputri, D. Y., 2019). There are a series of processes that must be passed to form an attitude of self-acceptance. In situations like this, children need social support, especially from the boarding environment, in this case, the role of the boarding school caretaker is very important, as well as peers. According to Cohen, S., & McKay, G. (2020) social support is an important factor in self-acceptance where individuals who receive social support will receive good and pleasant treatment so that it will create feelings, have trust and feel safe within themselves. if a person can be accepted in his environment.

It's different from the condition of the students who are old enough and have been studying for more than 3 years, as with SM, one of the students who are 11 years old and has been studying for 4 years, according to him: *“There are happy and sad in my schools, Ma’am....it's nice when there are lots of friends here. What do you want with friends, recite the Koran, go to school, study together. It's sad that if you have a naughty friend, sometimes you make fun of friends and when you want to meet your mother and father, you become sad. But I already feel at cozy in the boarding school, rather than at home, Ma’am.....my parent in Jakarta, so I feel lonely.”*

Good self-acceptance is characterized by the ability to accept yourself as you are even in a new environment. This ability allows a person to have a positive attitude toward himself and the life he lives. This is in accordance with the opinion of Ryff (1989: 1.071) that psychological well-being will be formed when children have a good level of self-acceptance. Individuals who have a good level of self-acceptance are characterized by a positive attitude towards themselves, acknowledging and accepting various aspects of themselves, both



positive and negative, and having a positive view of the past (Marino, V. R., Haley, W. E., & Roth, D. L. , 2017).

Children who stay longer have a more orderly heart, emotional stability and have better adaptability. Religious factors also influence the way children think in dealing with problems. As Ellison's research, (in Taylor, 1995) stated that individuals who have strong religious beliefs tend to have higher life satisfaction, higher personal happiness, and experience a lower negative impact of traumatic events when compared to individuals who do not have a strong religious belief. The results of other studies conducted by Freidman et al; in Taylor (1995), reported that religiosity helps individuals when they have to overcome unpleasant events.

Based on the quality of the child's relationship with the caregiver, the child will develop a mental construction or internal working model regarding self and others which will become an assessment mechanism for environmental acceptance (Bowlby in Pramana 1996). Several studies have shown that children who have secure attachment will show good social competence in childhood (Both et al in Parker, Rubin, Price and DeRosier, 1995) and are more popular among their peers in preschool (La Freniere and Sroufe in Parker et al., 1995). These children are also better able to build friendly relationships intense strength, harmonious interaction, more responsiveness, and not dominating (Parke and Waters in Parker et al, 1995). Meanwhile, Grosman and Grosman (in Sutcliffe, 2002) found that children with secure attachment qualities were better able to handle difficult tasks and did not give up easily. Psychological well-being is a condition in which individuals can accept their circumstances as they are, can establish and form warm relationships with others, have independence in resisting social pressures from the surrounding environment, have goals and meaning in life, and always feel become an individual who develops regardless of various good and even bad life experiences.

### **Between Independence, Happiness, and Ability to Adapt of Santri to the New Social Environment in Islamic Boarding Schools**

The condition of children who are in a boarding school environment at an early age is slightly different from those who are full-time with their parents. Life in Islamic boarding schools requires students to follow a predetermined schedule and activities so that students become independent. According to a presentation from CJ, a 12-year-old student who has been studying for 2 years, said: *“Every day I get up early and pray the dawn prayer in congregation,*

*then continue to recite the Koran. After reciting the Koran and taking a shower to get ready for school. My school is at MISS Proto 1, it's very close to the boarding school so yeah..... I went for a walk. After school, I take a short break for lunch and pray zuhur, then pray and recite the Koran again. After finishing the afternoon prayer. We usually play outside and have snacks... I pray Maghrib and recite the Koran again until evening, followed by evening prayer, then study together until 21.00 then sleep. There are lots of activities at the boarding school all day, so there is very little time to play. I mostly play with my friends when I'm at school and in the evening before maghrib, that's all, sis. But yeah.... I'm just happy. It's just that sometimes I get bored wanting to meet mom. In the beginning, I didn't feel at home, I wanted to go home, but now it's pretty good.”* Children's independence or autonomy is emphasized in the boarding school. The attitude of independence of the santri is shown by obeying the rules, always carrying out their duties, the santri are disciplined or on time. An independent attitude is also shown by not having many permits to leave the boarding school, or get visits, and most importantly the independence of the students is shown by the maturity in each of them.

Islamic Boarding School Regulations have consequences for students' self-adjustment to all existing rules. In terms of adjustment and mastery of the environment, the santri children show varying environmental adjustments, meaning that some have developed optimally and some have not developed optimally. MA, one of the students who is 7 years old and is still in his first year at the Islamic boarding school, while showing a sullen and innocent face, MA said that: *“It's not fun at the boarding school, it's more fun to be at home with mom. Here, reciting the Koran keeps getting bored and tired....occasionally the eyes look blank...and stammeringly conveys: at home, you go to bed accompanied by your mother, you want to buy anything accompanied, if you are here you have to be alone if not with friends. Get up early, have breakfast alone, and take a shower alone. Anyway, everyone is alone.....so sad because I miss my mother”*. The same thing was shown by LE and KK, including children who were super quiet and whose emotional control had not yet developed optimally. its adaptability is still very minimal. Mrs. FT as her homeroom teacher at school said *“when she first entered school, this child was difficult to control, this child was crying loudly and was hard to calm down, screaming that she wanted to go home, didn't want to go to school. to the extent that the teacher accompanies him to school. He is quiet, so when asked what he wants, what he wants, it's difficult, but when he gets angry and cries, he screams, and all his legs and arms play. But now it's cooled down.”*

The explanation above shows that the process of adaptation and understanding a new environment for children is not an instant and fast thing, it requires process and social support. Santri aged 10, 11, and 12 years tend to have a better mastery of their environment than students aged 6, 7, 8 & 9 years and students who are in their first year of enrollment. Santri in the lower class category (SD/MI grades 1, 2, and 3) have a tendency not to be able to control their emotions well, environmental conditions that are not conducive in Islamic boarding schools with all the strict regulations and mood control that is not yet stable at the age of the children often raise new problems in aspects of environmental mastery such as often feeling tired, bored, lazy, tired of the monotonous boarding school routine. This condition can cause deeper sadness, anxiety, and psychological turmoil. (Thompson, R. A., Laible, D., Padilla-Walker, L. M., & Carlo, G., 2019). When we understand children's emotions we can guide their behavior in social situations and talk about feelings. This understanding allows them to control how they show their feelings and to be sensitive to the feelings of others (Papalia, 2008:355). As with children who feel sad because they are away from their parents, it is easier for adults to express feelings of sadness, anger, disappointment, and happiness, this is different from the age of children's development.

The process of adjusting to the environment or mastering the environment begins to appear in students who are older on average at the age of 10, 11, and 12 or in upper-class positions (SD/MI grade 4, 5). and 6) or have been studying for more than 2 years. Psychologically, these children are well-established and able to understand their boarding school environment better and their social-emotional development is more stable, as stated by CJ, that: *"I feel at home in the boarding house, I am used to living away from my parents. Every day it's even nice to be able to gather with friends, recite the Koran together, go to school together, pray in congregation together too. The boarding school is never empty...there are always lots of people, so it's entertaining and just more enthusiastic because there is Ms. Lya who always accompanies me when I recite the Koran and study. If there are difficulties with school work, Ms. Lya is also assisted. It's just sad when there are friends who are naughty and ignorant. Then if my mother doesn't visit for a long time, I'm also sad."* Emotional aspects and adaptation to the environment in children develop with age and experience. Children become increasingly aware of their feelings and those of others. Children are also increasingly able to regulate emotional expression in social situations and can react to the stress experienced by themselves and others. According to Papalia et. Al

(2004) at the age of 7, 8, and 9 years, a sense of shame and pride, and the environment and awareness of the consequences of their actions will become a learning experience and influence their opinion of themselves in late childhood period of 10, 11 and 12 years the child will be more empathy, and helping behavior is growing. Children also begin to learn to control negative emotions (Lusi Muryani, 2008).

Entering school age, according to Syamsu Yusuf (2009: 178) that children begin to learn to control and control their emotional expressions. The ability to control emotions is obtained from imitation and practice (habitation). At elementary school age, children can follow the rules and demands of their parents or their social environment. At the end of this age, children can understand the reasons underlying a rule. Besides that, children can associate every form of behavior with the concept of right and wrong or good and bad. For example, he looks at or judges naughty deeds. Lying and disrespect for parents is an act that is wrong or bad. Meanwhile, honest, fair, respectful actions towards parents and teachers are good/true actions (Syamsu Yusuf, 2009: 178).

This is also reinforced by Dodge, Colker, and Heroman (2002) in Hildayani (2009: 10.3), that in childhood social emotional development has developed a process of socialization, from egocentric to sociocentric. Where children learn about the values and behavior they receive from society. At this time, there are three goals of social-emotional development. First, achieve self-understanding (sense of self) and relate to others. Second, self-responsibility includes the ability to follow rules and routines, respect others, and take initiative. Third, displaying social behavior such as empathy, sharing, and queuing in an orderly manner. Social support also influences this in line with research conducted by Sari (2002) which states that there is a significant relationship between social support and psychological well-being.

The more children show their independence, means that psychologically these children have good self-adjustment and psychological stability in carrying out their activities. This psychological capital is very important for fostering psychological well-being, as in the research of Avey, J.B., et al. (2010), Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. & Avolio, B.J. (2007) that psychological capital can increase psychological well-being, research from Li, Ma, Guo, Xu, Yu and Zhou (2014) also found that psychological capital has a positive influence on psychological well-being in particular. Where self-reliance in carrying out activities, and

independence in solving self-problems have a significant influence on psychological well-being. Individuals with good psychological well-being can choose and create an environment that suits their physical condition. In other words, he can deal with events outside of himself (Ryff, 1989: 1.071).

### **Children's Boarding School Environment in Gender Perspective: Critical Study of Fulfillment of Santri's Psychological and Social Rights**

Efforts to fulfill the psychological and social welfare of students through efforts to protect children's rights at Islamic boarding schools in Pekalongan Regency can be realized through various programs and routines in their daily life. Programs and routines in daily life are also included in efforts to develop the psychological and social well-being of students. Islamic boarding schools can be said to have paid attention to the social welfare of students if the pesantren have provided an environment that can meet the needs of child affection, attachment, and permanence through a substitute environment. The role of the caretaker of the boarding school is not just caring for and fulfilling the basic needs of children, but guaranteeing the need for all children's rights including preventing and responding to all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children which in this case includes children's rights from the aspect of non-discrimination, obtaining different interests. the best for children, the right to life, survival, and development as well as respect for children's opinions as stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Article 2 of Law no. 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection.

In Article 1 Paragraph (2) of the Child Protection Act it is explained that "Child protection is all activities to guarantee and protect children and their rights so that they can live, grow, develop and participate optimally in accordance with human dignity and receive protection from violence and discrimination". Islamic boarding schools have a very strategic role as the largest and oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, where pesantren play an active role as an educational model that seeks to prevent acts of violence against children in educational environments (Muqoyyidin, A. W. (2013), Fadhilah, N., 2020).

There are several indicators of Islamic boarding schools fulfilling children's rights including non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, continuity and development, and respect for children's opinions. From the results of field findings at the Minhajul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School, efforts have been made to meet the welfare

needs of children/students, but there are still perceptions of gender bias found in the mindset of the Pondok Management, in this case, Mrs. Nyai and Mr. Kiai. The caretaker of the boarding school still has a patriarchal perspective in viewing male and female students. Pak Ustad MM, one of her caregivers said: *“Looking after women is more difficult than men, we have a big responsibility so that women here are better able to take care of themselves, able to have good morals... there are lots of examples out there, ladies. teenagers whose dating goes too far, to get pregnant out of wedlock. That's what we take care of so women have to be good at maintaining their honor. If the attitude of women is more obedient, it is a concern that between men and women, the men are more extra, more difficult to manage and there are also disobedient traits that are possessed. If a woman is advised once, she can not repeat it, if it's a man, it's usually repeated once, then repeat it again... that often happens in our boarding school.”*

The stereotype that women are moral guardians is very strong, so women must have more morals than men. And naughty and unruly men are considered normal and normal. Caregivers also support the community's stigma that women are seen as vulnerable and weak, so access to the association, going out and so on must be limited as an effort to protect the woman herself. This is as expressed by Deaux and Kite in Partini (2013: 18) that gender is supported by a gender belief system. In her book *Gender Bias and Bureaucracy*, Partini also mentions the opinion of Deaux and Kite, that the gender belief system includes descriptive elements, namely beliefs about how men and women are, and how men and women should behave. MM's statement shows that there is a gender belief system built in the Minhajul Muta'allimin Islamic boarding school, as a manifestation of this gender belief system, rules emerge regarding how male and female students must behave and behave. Female students, especially those who are already large in grades 5 and 6 approaching adolescence, are always monitored more closely, both in terms of their interactions at school where men and women mingle there, to access to recitation, for example visiting recitations where they have to leave the boarding school because they are considered weak, must be guarded by those who are stronger while santri supervision is looser. Boys are often considered stubborn children, unruly, have greater physical, and psychological strength than women, and access to outside, to play to gain more trust because they are seen as strong and able to protect themselves. (Patrilla, R., 2021).

As for the communication that has been built at the Minhajul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School so far, according to the observations of researchers, it is still limited to

formal communication related to recitation activities, schooling, pocket money or other matters concerning the needs of students, while specific communication regarding psychological problems has not been well established with embarrassment reason. Psychosocial development in children aged 7-12 years according to Eric Erikson's theory is at the stage of industry vs inferiority (Learning, L. (2020). At this stage children have started to enter school age, their academic abilities and social skills have begun to develop (Rathus, S. A., 2021). Children begin to learn to develop peer groups and interact with friends or teachers at school. If this interaction is successful, the child is diligent then he will acquire good social skills and be able to become an open and confident person. If fail it will cause feelings of inferiority, lock yourself up and become introvert person (Santrock, 2007: 46)

Parents or caregivers can help this process by softening the authority and allowing children to participate as equals in facing interesting life projects (Crain, 2007: 438). The boarding school environment is very influential in being able to shape the character of students with introverted personalities so that they feel comfortable in the boarding school and believe in themselves and their environment. Because this trust is the beginning of an open process with other people, from this belief the child feels that he or others are part of his social life (Supratiknya, A. 2009). Trust will appear in children when children have started to feel close to other people (Fadhilah, N. 2016). A close relationship will make the individual able to express his ideas to others and the final depth level of self-disclosure is feelings. Self-disclosure at this level is not only limited to what is on a person's mind but also involves what he feels (Adler and Rodman in Angelia, 2014).

Depth in openness depends on the situation and the person invited to interact. Enjoyable situations and feelings of security can awaken someone more easily open up. Apart from that there is trust and reciprocity from the other person makes someone inclined to give a commensurate reaction (Raven and Rubin in Dayakisni, 2001: 48) The feeling factor according to Derlega (in Devito, 2011) is also very influential where a person will tend to open up to people we like or love, and we will not open up ourselves to people we don't like.

Efforts to fulfill the rights and protect children of male and female students according to their age, needs and portion have been made in various ways. The Minhajul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School is considered quite good, especially in paying attention to students based on their small and large ages. As conveyed by Mrs. Nyai MZ, she said that:

*“Here we distinguish the attention between the small and the big sis....because of what? We see that this little one still needs more attention. In this boarding school, the ages of the children vary, sis.... starting from grade 1, grade 2, grade 3 to grade 1V and some even have MTs too, from there we pay more attention to the children who are still small. If those who are small cannot take a bath by themselves, prepare their clothes and someone will accompany them here. The problem is that the small clothes are washed and laundered if the ones who are a bit older learn to wash, but there is no iron here so if you want to tidy up, usually the iron will be laundered, but wash it yourself. But some wash and iron in the laundry, we leave it free depending on the child and their parents.”*

From Mrs. MZ's presentation, it can be seen that the principles of justice and child-friendliness have been pursued by looking at the needs of children, for example, for small children because their independence has not been fully formed, the Islamic boarding school does not just let them go, but is accompanied by a small portion more than the large ones. And this aspect of attention is also a way to provide psychological support to young students so they feel safe, comfortable, at home, and easy to adapt to the habits of the boarding school. When small children do not get good psychological attention and closeness to their caregivers, children will easily become stressed and hopeless (Fadhilah, N. 2017). In this case, the caretaker of the boarding school tries to position himself to play the role of his biological parents in serving and providing assistance to the students, so that attachment arises between the students and the caregivers. As Grosman and Grosman (in Sutcliffe, 2002) found that children with a high quality of secure attachment is more capable of handling difficult tasks and not giving up easily. Children with this secure attachment style tend to have very good, caring, sensitive, and accepting relationships with caregivers.

The right to life, survival and development is a right that must be guaranteed. This right includes the fulfillment of health and nutrition, affection, recreation, and religion. The results of research at the Minhajul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School, that fulfillment of nutrition in the boarding school still tends to be straightforward and simple. This means that children are provided with food, but for side dishes and so on, they do not pay attention to nutrition or balanced nutrition for children. Fulfillment of recreation is also still limited, meaning that children play on the sidelines during the afternoon break, with free play with their friends. There is no play corner or reading corner provided by the pods to support students' literacy or to support child-friendly Islamic boarding schools, as Ustad MM said: *“When it comes to food menus, we do provide what is simple village style. They live here for the purpose of being concerned and seeking knowledge, so the problem of food doesn't always have to be nutritionally balanced.”*



*Recreation is the same way, if too much recreation is for children, they end up being lazy to learn, wanting to keep playing. So learn to accept what is, and be simple in life. That's the principle he taught. There is playing time but it is limited, namely after the Koran in the evening until before maghrib or while playing at school. There are also children who sleep in the afternoon but instead play with their friends.”* So far what the boarding school has done in meeting the needs of children physically and psychologically has been done even though it is still as it is and not optimal. Because there are several principles that are believed by the pesantren as part of the endeavor to concern themselves with studying, and the need for recreation in the pesantren is not emphasized because they believe that the pesantren is not for playing but for getting knowledge or in this case the pesantren upholds the principle of asceticism in studying. If analyzed, meeting the calorie needs of students is relatively low, especially for male students. This is because male students do a lot of physical activity outside in the afternoon, such as playing football in the afternoon, running around with their peers, and other activities that are draining, while the portion of food is just the same as female students without any additional food.

One of the teachings and activities that are synonymous with life in Islamic boarding schools and considered "away from" worldly teachings is the existence of the cultural teachings of *zuhud* (simplicity). Abu al-Wafa al-Taftazani in Abdul Muhayya (2001) succeeded in formulating the characteristics of *zuhud* as follows "having the mindset of turning away from the world to Allah and loving Him". All worldly luxuries and pleasures are believed to make humans tend to be out of control which results in easily falling into acts of *riya* (showing off), arrogant (boasting), laziness, impatient and not being humble (bad moral), which in the end will become easily trapped in immoral and evil deeds (Imam Al Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, 2003). Islamic boarding schools which are synonymous with *zuhud* and *sufiyah* life are very likely also affected by currents of progress which then impact changes in lifestyle and the level of fulfillment of life's needs. It is also believed by traditional Islamic boarding school caregivers to this day, that *zuhud* is practicing Islamic teachings, which are contained in QS 57:20, QS 10: 7-8, QS 79: 37-41. The typology of *zuhud* in traditional Islamic boarding schools is still conservative, and tends to ignore all worldly matters, and this typology also influences the implementation of meeting the necessities of life (Maknin, K., & Afifah, N., 2011).

## **CONCLUSION**

Children's students still really need more attention, but providing this is certainly not an easy thing for Islamic boarding school caregivers, where caregivers have to share time and share attention and it takes high willingness and patience with all students in the boarding school. Boarding school caretakers must be able to play a role, assist and serve the needs of their students starting from physical, psychological to spiritual needs, especially in growing the students' psychological well-being and social life to the fullest. Because if not, what will happen to the child is a condition of unhappiness and anxiety. It was found that there were still some conditions for students who experienced psychological turmoil during the adjustment period, such as homesickness, self-acceptance, difficulty establishing social relations with other friends problems of independence, especially for low-grade children, namely grades 1, 2, and 3 and at the beginning. boarding year. A gender-biased perspective was found in fulfilling children's rights in Islamic boarding schools, such as the assumption that looking after women is more difficult than men, women have to take extra care of themselves and their morals while men are labeled as difficult to manage and tend to be naughty. Besides that, the fulfillment of balanced nutrition and nutrition is not found in Islamic boarding schools with the reason for developing the principle of *zuhud* (simplicity) and this principle is needed to facilitate studying in Islamic boarding schools.

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