

PESANTREN AND ISLAMIC TRANSMISSION (SANAD) OF SCIENCE

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan betapa pentingnya memiliki sanad keilmuan antara guru dan murid secara langsung. Hal ini dikarenakan kemajuan teknologi yang semakin canggih, sumber internet yang tanpa batas, dan semua bisa mengakses informasi keagamaan secara luas. Literasi media yang semakin susah untuk diukur kebenarannya akan menjadi berbahaya jika dikonsumsi publik terlebih mengenai informasi keagamaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode diskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologi. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah tradisi dan budaya baik yang diajarkan pondok pesantren yang harus tetap dijaga diantaranya adalah sanad keilmuan. Seorang yang belajar agama, harus memiliki guru yang sanadnya juga jelas. Dengan melestarikan tradisi ini diharapkan sumber informasi keagamaan selalu terjaga sebagaimana informasi itu didapatkan dari sumbernya (Rasulullah). Dengan adanya tulisan ini diharapkan dapat memfilter berita simpang siur, hoaks, dan informasi keagamaan yang tidak sesuai dengan nilai-nilai Islam yang terkandung dalam Al-Qur'an dan hadits.

Kata Kunci: Pesantren, sanad keilmuan, guru, dan murid

ABSTRACT

This study aims to show how important it is to have a scientific chain (the sanad of science) between teachers and students directly. It is due to increasingly sophisticated technological advances, unlimited internet resources, and all information that can be widely accessed, including religious information. In this case, media literacy, which is increasingly difficult to measure the truth, will be dangerous if consumed by the public, especially regarding religious information. This study used a qualitative descriptive analysis through a phenomenological approach. This research's results revealed the good traditions and culture taught by Pesantren that must be maintained, including the sanad of science. Likewise, a person who studies religion must have a teacher whose sanad is also evident. By preserving this tradition, it is hoped that the source of religious information will always be maintained as the information was obtained from the source (Rasulullah). It is also expected that with this paper, the community can filter confusing news, hoaxes, and religious information, which is not in accordance with Islamic values contained in the Quran and hadith.

Keywords: Pesantren, the sanad of science, teachers, and students

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, all information can be obtained easily. The communities can access and determine the best choice to obtain the information they want to seek from the social, economic, political, cultural, and legal fields without having to study for a long time. Sources on the internet provide data at high speed compared to traditional and manual literature searches, although it is possible that the internet also has many weaknesses and imperfect knowledge. Several studies mention the low level of knowledge obtained from internet sources and the negative impact of relying on information that cannot be sourced. It is due to the users' habit who mostly skim and only focus on their needs without reading the knowledge in full (Rowlands et al., 2008).

More specifically, learning related to religious sources certainly has a different approach compared to other learning. Here, the study's validity is needed because Islamic information sources must have solid and correct references. Besides,

studying knowledge thoroughly and clearly is also necessary so that there is no misunderstanding in determining a particular law. Therefore, searching for literature with instant and not comprehensive technology eventually becomes an inappropriate solution, especially in searching for religious knowledge.

In the Islamic tradition, a chain of knowledge (*sanad*) needs to be upheld. For example, it has been taught by the *muhaddisin* that when looking for data validity, information must go through a strong *sanad, mutassil*, and be delivered by trusted people both in terms of personal quality and qualified scientific side. Thus, the information obtained can be accounted for in terms of content to be conveyed to others. (Suhendra, 2019).

Among these Islamic *sanad* buildings, it can also be obtained from the world of Pesantren. Although, in reality now, not all Pesantren have and are owned by a *kyai*, the existence of the *sanad of science* in studying Islam is still sustainable. At least, there is a process for a santri to

gain knowledge within a certain period. Pesantrens are one of the solutions to maintain the *sanad of the science of kyai-santri* and maintain religious information, which will later be conveyed to the broader community.

Therefore, this study aims to obtain information on the extent to which the *sanad of science* in Pesantrens plays a role in stemming the truth of the flow of religious information amid technological advances that cause information bias among the public.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative descriptive analysis through a phenomenological approach. This approach seeks to obtain comprehensive information to understand and interpret each event. Qualitative analysis was employed because, in qualitative research, a comprehensive picture of the study on rapid technological advances would be obtained, in this case, using the internet, which is difficult to sort out regarding the truth of religious information.

In this study, the phenomenological study utilized Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (AFI) or Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Based on Smith's (2009) view, IPA aims to reveal in detail how participants interpret their personal and social world. The main goal is to find the meaning of various experiences, events, and statuses held by participants. In this study, the phenomenon that emerged in the community regarding the ambiguity of religious sources could be dammed by the role of Pesantrens related to the scientific tradition by maintaining the chain of transmission (*sanad*) between teachers and students.

DISCUSSION

Filtering Religious Information

The internet, especially social media, today is a means for surfing hard-line Islamic groups who deliberately mobilize the masses. Through these social media platforms, acts of terror are planned, communicated, implemented, and disseminated. An academic in the field of data and information who specializes in social media in her

book *Social Networks as the New Frontier of Terrorism* (2018), Laura Scaife stated that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and telegram are social media channels used by terrorists to build propaganda narratives, fear, and expand terrorism networks (cyberterrorism) (Zamzamy, 2019).

This condition is exacerbated by the inner side of Indonesian society, which is still low in literacy rates. Indonesia has 63 million millennials (aged 20-35 years), with 94.4 percent of millennials connected to the internet as their primary need (IDN Research Institute, 2019). Dependence on the internet as a primary need of society faced with low literacy about religion makes this problem even more prominent. As a result, unfiltered religious information continues to grow and is easily accepted by the public without knowing the truth.

On the other hand, it is undeniable that technological advances can provide significant benefits to society. The public, in general, can access and disseminate information freely, in this case, religious studies.

Moreover, religious texts are sometimes interpreted freely and sometimes contrary to the true values of Islam, *Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin*. Differences of opinion between people will not be a problem if no groups blame and vilify each other. After researching, errors in the meaning of Islamic teachings turned out to be primarily sourced from vague references, or sometimes, it was not from experts who spoke. It is because, in the sophisticated technology era, everyone is free to have an opinion. However, if it continues, the next generation will be the victims.

Pesantren and Culture

The dynamics of the increasingly rapid development of Pesantrens still make education their leading spirit. Further, in addition to the unique characteristics possessed by Pesantrens, several cultures are robust with these institutions. Therefore, the cultural aspect becomes vital without reducing the pattern and role of Pesantrens in its dimensions (Badi'ati, 2020a).

The most critical Pesantren culture is modeling. Islam's character education is often called *uswatun*

hasanah, or ideal model, which the community members should follow. Prophet Muhammad is a central role model. If there is no perfect person in this world, then he is the one who is close to perfect. By following the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, the values of the teachings will be quickly absorbed (Hasibuan, 2018). In the Quran Surah Al-Fatir: 32, it is explained:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا
الَّذِينَ آمَنَّا
مِنْ عِبَادِنَا

Meaning: Then We granted the Book to those We have chosen from Our servants.

This verse reinforces the hadith, which states that the ulama' are the heirs of the prophets. Muhammad is the first source used as the best example through the hadith of the prophet, which was later conveyed by companions, *tabi'in*, to today's scholars. What needs to be emphasized in this case is that according to Javanese philosophy, following specific leaders is a virtue. In this case, Walisongo has a central role as a model mecca for the *santri* in Java, and of course, the scientific chain (*sanad*) is continued to

Muhammad. Walisongo's approach and wisdom have been institutionalized through the essence of leadership in Pesantren (Bafadhol, 2017).

Pesantren unites all students from all walks of life; then, they live together in the cottage, a place to live in the Pesantren. There is no difference between the treatment of the regent's son and the *kyai's* son here. All are the same because the teachings of Islam are egalitarian and do not distinguish one another (Badi'ati, 2020b).

Furthermore, placing importance on the substantive and not paying too much attention to the outer skin is also one of the cultures upheld in the Pesantren world. It can be seen from the physical appearance of the students who seem untidy and careless. However, if the students have *batsul masail*, a discussion to solve specific problems by presenting their respective sources of reference, it will be seen how students master Islamic knowledge in depth.

Sanad Theory and Its History

Hadith studies involve a series of authorities called *isnads*, which in popular terminology of Islam in

Indonesia are called *sanad*. Sheikh Nurudin 'Itr (1988: 344) defines *as-sanadu huwa silsilatu ar-ruwati al-ladzina naqalu al-haditsa Wahidan 'an al-akhari hatta yablugu ila qa'ilihi*. It means that the *sanad* is a chain of narrators who narrate the hadith, from narrators to other narrators until they reach the source. Thus, the *sanad* in the hadith is a complex network. It is because it relates to the giving and receiving of a hadith from the teacher to the student (*at-tahammul wa al-ada'*) (Asaad, 2019).

Sanad tradition in Pesantrens has differences from the *sanad* tradition in hadith. However, if simplified, the pattern of these relationships can generally be categorized into three forms. The first is a formal relationship, such as the scientific relationship between the ulama who function as teachers and students and the relationship between the ulama who function as *sheikh* or *murshid* of the *tarekat*. The second is informal relationships, such as the relationship between an ulama' and another ulama' and the relationship between an ulama' who functions as a teacher and students who meet him in

a relatively short time, or not even meet him; however, the teacher gives authority in particular Islamic sciences (Karyadi, 2016). The third is in the form of a hereditary chain. This model is usually owned by the *habaib*.

The Importance of *Sanad* in Keeping the Truth of Knowledge

The term *sanad* is usually better known in the prophet's hadith study, a study to examine the validity and reliability of the information that comes from the prophet. *Sanad* is a transmission line that connects the narrators with the *matan* or the content of the hadith (Ghozali, 2015).

In the world of Pesantrens, the *sanad* of science is one of the main elements that must be upheld. *Sanad* is a transmission where the scientific paths of teachers and students meet. As is learned in the science of hadith, the conditions for the *sanad* path must lead to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, as well as for other sciences, such as Sufism, the science of the Qur'an, *tafsir* (interpretation), *tauhid* (monotheism), and so on. The *sanad* of science is a scholar's background in studying religious knowledge, which is continued in each generation of scholars above him (Jakfar, 2020).

The other side seen in the community's acknowledgment of a *kyai* or *ustad* is also determined by the *sanad* path. Although not a written acknowledgment, the Pesantren tradition is accustomed to steadying the heart of the santri, one of which is the *sanad* path from the *kyai* who teaches education during the Pesantren. It is because the student's acceptance of the teachings of the *kyai* is not only based on its authenticity but also the originality of the knowledge being taught. Although not verbalized, this tradition is necessary to ensure that the knowledge taught by the *kyai* is indeed from the right source, namely the prophet (Sanusi, 2013; Suhendra, 2019).

In the scientific history of Pesantrens, it is certainly no stranger to the poetry of Sayyidina 'Ali bin Abi Talib Radiyallahuanhu, which Shaykh Az-Zarnuzi conveyed in his book.

أَلَا لَا تَنَالُ الْعِلْمَ إِلَّا بِسِنَّةٍ # سَأُنْبِيكَ عَنْ
مَجْمُوعِهَا بِبَيَانٍ
ذِكَاةٍ وَجِرْصٍ وَاصْطِبَارٍ وَبُلْغَةٍ # وَإِرْشَادٍ
أُسْتَنَادٍ وَطُولِ زَمَانٍ

Meaning: Remember (my student), you will not find knowledge (which is useful) without fulfilling the following

six conditions. I will tell the six of them in detail. Among these six are intelligence, willpower, patience, cost, guidance from the teacher, and a long time.

In that poetry, one of the ethics to learn science is to have instructions from the previous teacher. The ideal scientific reference for the world of Pesantrens has been exemplified from the primary references of Islamic science, namely the Quran and hadith. Both sources have high authority regarding the *sanad*, namely the *sanad mutawattir*, which is connected from many sources between teacher-students. (Karyadi, 2016).

Studying religion is different from studying general science. If the wrong teacher is chosen, religious understanding and practice can be wrong. Besides, studying religion involves understanding sacred texts and their interpretations. Therefore, Pesantrens emphasize *sanad* because religious learning must be sourced from trusted teachers. The process of the *sanad* of science transfer through the chain of knowledge clearly has implications for the view of life, culture, and religious practices that tend to be homogeneous.

Usually, the process of the *sanad* of science in Pesantrens is in the form of giving a *sanad* book certificate. Students, who have completed a book and are considered capable of teaching it to others, are given a certificate of the *sanad* of the book. The transmission of knowledge continues to the author of the book (*mualif*). In addition, *santri* are given a leaflet such as a certificate containing information about obtaining a specific scientific chain of books. However, few carried out the process of the *sanad* of science in writing; many Pesantrens or a *kyai* give an acknowledgment orally (Jakfar, 2020; Sanusi, 2013).

In general, a *kyai* who leads an Pesantren has a primary scientific specialization mastered. Although, in fact, the average *kyai* masters many Islamic sciences, they prefer specific fields, which are formally and scientifically certified the *sanad* by their teachers. Because if they get a special acknowledgment from the teacher, the *sanad* can usually be connected to the prophet. Therefore, when taught to the students, the knowledge is expected to contain the blessings of the previous teachers. By

maintaining the chain between teacher-students, it is hoped that it can stem the bias of religious information.

CONCLUSION

Rapid technological advances make information increasingly unstoppable. However, supported by the low literacy level, it makes people increasingly stuttering about the truth of religious sources. Pesantren as a solution for seeking religious knowledge offers valid information or religious knowledge because of the guarantee of the connection (*sanad*) between the teacher and students. The connection of the *sanad* is proof of scientific authenticity and originality from its original source, namely the Prophet Muhammad.

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