



Implementation and Obstacle of Reward and Punishment at Pesantren Al-Azhar-Gresik

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Abstract. This paper is a case study that aims to take a closer look at how punishments and rewards are implemented at the Al-Azhar Islamic Boarding School and what the obstacles are in both male and female dormitories. The data obtained through observation and in-depth interviews. This study found that the Islamic boarding schools have four categories of rules that if violated, the perpetrators will be sanctioned, namely ritual, cleanliness, behavior, and security. The form of punishment is graded ranging from verbal reprimand to being fired from the *pesantren* or even the formal school. Meanwhile, there are a number of obstacles in the application of rewards and punishment, namely: inconsistency, unilateral rules, lack of knowledge of child psychology, minimal facilities and infrastructure, and imbalance between rewards and punishments.

Keywords: *reward; punishment; al-Azhar boarding school; discipline; violation*

INTRODUCTION

Discipline is one of the basic needs of children in the context of the formation and development of a healthy character. The goal is that children can be creative and dynamic in developing their lives in the future. Discipline, which is the basic tool in solving any problem, has a number of basic components: delaying pleasure, responsibility, awareness of reality, and balance (M. Scott Peck, 1979: 230). If anyone claims to educate but without these four basic components, it is not education. Education without discipline will end up exactly the same as work without discipline, only producing a mess (Hadiyansyah, 2021).

Education is an institution that can carry out three functions at once: first, to prepare the younger generation to play certain roles in society; second, transferring (transferring) knowledge according to the expected role; third, transferring values in order to maintain the integrity and unity of society as a prerequisite for community survival (see Rusli Karim, 1991: 27).

This shows that education in general and Islamic religious education in particular, aiming not only as the process of cultural transfer or knowledge transfer, but also as a process of transferring Islamic values. The education that is expected to carry out this mission, one of which, is *pesantren* or Islamic boarding school.

According to the data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia was 26.975 units as of April 2022, spread across all provinces in Indonesia.

The entire *pesantren* educates some 2.65 million students. Based on the province, West Java has the highest number of Islamic boarding schools, with 8,343 units, followed by Banten with 4,579 Islamic boarding schools, then East Java with 4,452 Islamic boarding schools, while Maluku with 16 units is at the least.

The large number indicates the amount of public trust in the *pesantren*. With such a large number, Islamic boarding schools carry out the mission of successful education of the Muslim generation. Because education cannot be separated from discipline, so does *pesantren*. Every *pesantren* must have a concept, understanding, and application of disciplinary rules.

According to Hurlock (1978: 393), the general concept of discipline is similar to punishment. Discipline is only used if the child violates the rules and regulations set by parents, teachers or adults in connection with the demands of the society in which the child lives. Thus, discipline is the process or result of directing individuals to act according to ideal rules, desires or interests or to achieve more effective goals, or direct authoritarian control of children's behavior by using punishments and rewards.

The purpose of discipline is to shape behavior so that everyone is in accordance with the established rules. In disciplining students, educational institutions need to make agreed rules by considering a number of orders, such as: a) statements that the children/students understand about what is expected of them; b) information that allows them to determine how and when something should be done; c) definitions that give children the opportunity to distinguish between right and wrong, proper and improper, or appropriate and inappropriate; d) communication that allows children to know what is expected of them (compare with Haris Clemes and Reynoll Bean, 1995:48-49). After that, children need to be given the consequences of punishment and rewards for those who violate or follow the rules.

Education without discipline will produce someone who does not value his existence. Discipline and education are one package, cannot be separated. Every educator, parent or teacher, must always think of the right way to apply discipline.

Discipline and forms of punishment and reward have theological backing in a number of sacred texts (Qur'an and Hadith), the most obvious of which is the concept of reward and sin as a measure of the extent to which a Muslim practices his religion. So it's no wonder that almost every Islamic boarding school has this concept, including the Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School in Banyutengah, Gresik Regency, East Java, which becomes the focus of this article.

Punishment in the context of education is an unpleasant action directed at those who violate the rules. In this context, the object of punishment is the student or *santri* and the executor is the caregiver, teacher/*ustaz*, or administrator appointed by the *pesantren* organization (compare this definition with Purwanto 2006: 186).

A successful teacher is not justified in giving physical sanctions. Even if it has to be done, it should not be too hard and should only be done if it is really necessary (Choiroh, 2021). He is also

expected to always prioritize giving gifts over sanctions. This is important to motivate students to learn. On the other hand, sanctions always have a bad influence on the soul of students. This can also kill the spirit of achievement and progress in the soul of students.

Some students finally leave the boarding school because they see the stubbornness and arbitrariness of some of their teachers. Students have become accustomed to labeling a stubborn teacher as an authoritarian person. A wise teacher should avoid giving a lot of sanctions or punishments, especially in the form of physical sanctions. There are several risks that a teacher might get when he gives sanctions to his students. Among these risks are the following:

- a) the teaching and learning process encountered obstacles, not only for the concerned students, but also for other students.
- b) the relationship between the teacher and the student who gets punished will definitely have a bad impact on all
- c) understanding of the lesson in class cannot be fully accepted by students who are sanctioned
- d) the teacher's creative thinking will not develop when carrying out the sanctions
- e) this also affects other students when receiving lessons
- f) the teacher already looks dishonorable and unappreciated in front of his students.

One rule or order may be violated by the child, and the violation causes a punishment which is the result or consequence of a mistake. But we should keep in mind that punishment must be educational and we need to tell what is the mistake as well as awaken and train children to submit and obey the rules that have been set. Punishment is given with the intention of correcting and educating in a good direction. In the context of punishment, children need to be given the opportunity to: 1) repent of what they have done; 2) evoke self-reflection; 3) directing the child to be able to control and realize that every act that causes him to be punished is not good (Ulwan, 1999: 326).

Meanwhile, reward is an appreciation for a pleasant deed. In the context of education, appreciation means giving something fun to students because of certain agreed achievements. The purpose of the award is to arouse or encourage children to do something better, both to those who have received awards and other students who have not.

According to Wens Tanlain, reward is an educator's action that serves to strengthen the mastery of certain educational goals that have been achieved by students. This action is an acknowledgment of what has been done and achieved by students (1989:55).

In many sources, awards have been proven to motivate students to act in accordance with applicable regulations, as well as to children in the family sphere (Fuad et.al, 2021). They tend to

feel warm, valued and confident when they receive an award. So that in carrying out the rules or tasks given, they do not feel burdened.

Meanwhile, various forms of appreciation that are commonly found in education include: scholarships, praise, honors, gifts, tokens of appreciation, recommendations, prayers, or sending letters to parents. Apart from that, no matter how simple rewards are, it is actually very meaningful for students to increase their motivation and enthusiasm for learning and achievements. Actually the reward can only be in the form of a nod of the head, a sweet smile and a thumbs up, or applause. However, what is significant is that the reward is given with the following conditions: a) only given to children who have received good achievements, b) do not promise rewards/prizes before the child excels. c) given carefully so that children do not think of it as a reward, d) do not cause jealousy for other children, but should generate enthusiasm and motivation for other students, e) rewards should be changed creatively (Zeeno, 1995: 48).

In Islamic education, the terms reward and punishment are often found in the holy Qur'an, for example the words *ajr* and *tsawab* or *iqab* and *azab*, which when translated into English is equivalent to reward and punishment. In Surah Hud verse 11, Allah SWT says: "Except for those who are patient and do good deeds; they will receive forgiveness and a great reward (*ajr*).

If we examine, the purpose of rewards and punishments in the context of the Qur'an is so that every believer is disciplined and committed in acting and speaking according to religious guidance. Discipline, it must be admitted, is indeed a complex matter and has many links, namely related to knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and behavior. However, a fundamental component of discipline is delaying pleasure for a while to get something better (see Hadiyansyah, 2019).

The cultivation of a disciplined attitude is based on the awareness that Allah SWT is All-Knowing and that every individual will be held accountable later in God's Court, so that within us the personal control and awareness will emerge, not awareness that is forced from outside for fear of punishment.

In this context, the application of reward and punishment by Allah SWT is based on the principles of Justice and Mercy. Therefore, the description above is actually in accordance with the principles in Islam. In fact, this form of punishment and reward is characteristic of all religions.

Based on the facts above, this paper aims to take a closer look at how punishment and rewards are implemented at the Al-Azhar Islamic Boarding School and what are the obstacles in both male and female dormitory.

METHOD

Judging from the object of research, both the place and source of the data, this research is a case study. Robert K. Yin (2002: 1) states that the case study is one of the social science research methods that emphasizes the *how* and *why* questions on the focus of research related to contemporary phenomena in real life. Among the three types of case studies proposed by Yin are explanatory, exploratory and descriptive research. This research uses the first type, which is

explanatory, because it is intended to explain the casuistic phenomena that exist in Islamic boarding school al-Azhar Banyutengah-Gresik (see Arikunto, 1998:245).

The case study in social research is unique, which is able to provide broad access to researchers to examine in depth, detail, intensively, and thoroughly to the social unit under study. In more detail, case studies suggest the following advantages:

1. Case studies can provide important information about the relationships between variables and processes that require greater explanation and understanding.
2. Case studies provide an opportunity to gain insight into the basic concepts of human behavior. Through intensive investigation, researchers can find characteristics and relationships that are (perhaps) previously not expected or unanticipated.
3. Case studies can present data and findings that are very useful as a basis for building a background of research problem for planning larger and in-depth research in the context of developing social sciences (Bungin, 2003: 22-23).

Case studies are attached to a qualitative approach, namely research that produces descriptive data, in the form of written or spoken words (Moleong, 2001:14). The qualitative advantage is that the study is holistic, dialectical, and essential to develop theory and search for meaning through word narration and interpretation (Danim, 2002:34-37). The uniqueness of a case study is that it can provide information about the relationship between variables and the explanation process, gain new insights, and can present data, evidence, and findings that are useful for subsequent development (Bungin, 2003: 22-23).

Meanwhile, the data sources that the author uses are:

- a. Library data, namely data sources obtained from a number of sources related to the object of research in the form of books, articles, magazines, research results, and reports related to the object of research. The author uses this data source as a theoretical basis or literature study.
- b. Field data, namely those obtained through in-depth interviews, which are open but still focused on the issues of the subject and object under study. Interviews were conducted with informants who are educators or *ustaz/ustazah* at Ponpes al-Azhar Banyutengah-Gresik. Interviews were conducted using the guided interview method, which was carried out using guidelines that had been prepared by the researcher in advance, and unguided interviews, namely interviews conducted freely that were conducted by means of the author having a free dialogue without any guidance.

Furthermore, because this research aims to study and describe certain conditions or phenomena status, this research is included in "exploratory descriptive" research. Thus, the analytical technique used is data that has been collected is described in words or sentences to produce conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the interviews with the informants, both *ustaz* and *ustazah*, a number of explanations were found which can be summarized as follows:

1. Implementation of Punishments and Rewards

Life in any Islamic boarding schools is closely related to rules and punishments. Every student activity has rules: congregational prayers, *qabliyah* and *ba'diyah sunnah* prayers, *diniyah* (religious) activities, compulsory learning activities, memorization of Qur'an, daily picket, the obligation to wear certain clothes for female students and others. Regulations at this Boarding School can be categorized into four groups: *ubudiyah* (rituals), cleanliness, behavior, and security. If they are not done according to the rules, the student will receive a punishment.

The density of students' activities and the strict rules that must be obeyed make some students who are not used to being depressed and sometimes even make them violate the rules and regulations. However, the board of the *pesantren* still tries to implement the rules that have been socialized and avoids physical punishment. This is in line with Mo'tasim's research (2015) which concluded that sanctions should be applied as a punishment for offenders, so they do not repeat the offense by avoiding physical violence.

Based on information from the informants, as many as 70% of female students of Al-Azhar Islamic Boarding School have violated regulations. The most frequent violation is missing the *qabliyah* (the optional prayer before the mandatory prayer) of *maghrib*/sunset time prayer. The *pesantren* requires its students to do it in order to get used to doing *sunnah* prayers when they return to their private lives outside the boarding.

As a punishment for the perpetrators of this violation, they will stand when the Qur'an recitation is carried out at *maghrib*. At this time, six days a week, the students are required to memorize the Qur'an. Throughout this session, which usually lasts about 40 minutes, they remain standing, including when they made their memorization.

The next most frequent violation is about mandatory clothing. The location of the girls' dormitory is in the surrounding community. Any students' activities on the 2nd floor or roof top can be seen by the neighbor community. On this basis, the *pesantren* applies the rules of wearing the hijab when leaving the room. However, sometimes the students do not wear it. Sometimes they forget or are intentional, especially at night. The punishment for this violation is in the form of a direct reprimand, both by the *ustazah* who lives in the dormitory and senior female students in the security section.

In addition to violations of *ubudiyah*, some students also sometimes violate the daily picket rules. The *pesantren*, which is located in Banyutengah village, Panceng sub-district, does not provide assistants to take care of environmental cleanliness, so the students themselves need to do it with a picket system. Usually, if someone doesn't do it, the violator is obliged to join the picket group the next day. The violation of discipline in worship is one of the typical violations in Islamic boarding schools. Murtosiah (2019) also found similar data when researching a boarding school in South Sumatra.

Furthermore, the security is also a category of rules that are sometimes violated. For example, students leave the location of the dormitory without permission, usually because they are buying food or visiting a friend's house nearby. Sanctions for this violation are usually in the form of memorizing certain verses determined by the *ustazah*.

Sometimes students also violate the rules of behavior. The boarding school prohibits students from being alone with the opposite sex or dating, including other acts that fall into the category of decency. Recently, some of the al-Azhar students were caught watching people dating on the village's football field. They were allowed to go out to buy dinner. When they returned home, they did not return to the dormitory immediately, but sat on the edge of the football field watching young people sitting together. They are then called by the *ustazah* to be reprimanded or given verbal sanctions.

For immoral cases such as adultery, the *pesantren* admits that this has never happened among students, although it has happened several times to students in its formal schools. Prohibited courtship is in the form of sitting together, let alone committing fornication or adultery. This kind of conduct sometimes happens at school—compare this information with the findings of Nurish (2010) who found a number of cases of same-sex relations among female students in *pesantren*. Sometimes the teacher knows that there are students who send love letters. For something like this, the *santri* is not punished for it, but she will be supervised.

The types of violations in male students are also similar. However, the frequency of violations is more frequent in male students. For example, there are students who do not participate in activities several times. He was eventually suspended from participating in all activities until the end of the semester. However, the punishment was not carried out in full, because then the parents of the *santri* went to the Head of the *pesantren* or *kyai* and asked for leniency. Finally, the student was immediately allowed to participate in the activity again, and it turned out that after that he became more disciplined than before.

The heaviest sanction for all violations is expulsion from the *pesantren* and/or school, namely violations that are categorized as criminality and involve law enforcement officers. However, so far no students have been expelled. The most serious case is theft. There are cases of theft, but they are limited to items or money belonging to other students. Communities outside the *pesantren* never become the victims of the student delinquency. Some time ago, there was a theft case at the men's dormitory. He was proven to have stolen some of his friend's money, and this case was settled internally at the *pesantren*. Perpetrators were taken an oath not to steal again in front of several teachers, victims and student administrators. The phenomenon that is more common in *pesantren* which is similar to theft is *ghasab* (taking advantage of one's stuff without permission). Wijayanti (2022), for example, found that a number of *stantris* avoided the risk of being accused of stealing by committing *ghasab*.

F. Obstacles in Giving Punishment and Rewards

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with the informants, there are a number of factors that can be concluded as obstacles to the application of punishment and rewards to students:

a. Inconsistency

The informants admitted that the regulations often change and are not written in detail. The form of punishment often changes from one *uztaz* to another. At Al-Azhar Islamic Boarding School there are head *ustaz*/managers and daily *ustaz/ustazah*. The form of punishment and reward is highly dependent on the daily *ustaz/ustazah*. Due to a number of factors they must stop working, usually due to marriage or getting a job elsewhere, then they are replaced by new *ustaz/ustazah*, and the rules start to change. Amhar (2020) also highlighted this kind of inconsistency from teachers. He said that agreement and cooperation among *ustaz* becomes one of the obstacles to upholding the discipline for students in *pesantren*.

b. One-sided rule

So far, the order, which involves punishment, comes from the *ustaz/ustazah*. In making regulations, students are not involved. They are only given socialization about the rules and sanctions for violators. Dignum (2021) emphasizes that in the context of education, students need to be involved in making rules, so that they become more responsible.

c. Minimal knowledge of psychology

The informant admitted that the daily *ustaz* were always those from a religious-based educational background. *Pesantren* realizes that fostering a dorm like this requires expertise in the field of child psychology, but due to limited resources, it does not have dormitory teachers who are specialized in this field. Sometimes the teachers are fierce, sometimes they are good at embracing students. If by chance the teacher is good at approaching, the intensity of the violation will be very small. Meanwhile, Santoso (2021) said that *ustaz/ustazah* in *pesantren* is expected to have basic knowledge of counseling so that they are wiser in examining the psychological problems of students.

d. Lack of facilities and infrastructure

Conditions for fully implementing regulations are often constrained by the relatively small dormitory complex with incomplete facilities and infrastructure, especially for physical activity and consumption needs. Because of this condition, sometimes the violation that should be punished becomes understandable. The location of the al-Azhar boarding school is in the middle of a residential area. The *pesantren* infrastructure in other studies also plays an important role in efforts to enforce discipline. Sometimes there are rules that are violated, but seeing the lack of environmental facilities, these violations are understandable (Khamidah, 2021).

e. Imbalance between reward and punishment

In daily life at the boarding school, students who orderly follow the rules do not get special rewards, in contrast to violators who get specific punishments. Although good students are often praised in front of other students, there are no guideline regarding specific awards for those who

have orderly carried out the rules. The system of imbalance between punishment and reward in education according to Schutter and Honk (2005) is a symptom of psychopathology that occurs due to an imbalance of motivation. This type of imbalance exists, according to both, between giving the punishment too heavy and the reward too light, or vice versa.

CONCLUSION

Every Islamic boarding school, or any educational institution, must have certain goals that will not be exactly the same with one another. To make this happen, they then set the rules. The rules in Islamic boarding schools are never standardized, but very much depend on the cultural background, religious or political understanding adopted by the *pesantren* administrators.

Even though the rules in *pesantren* do not have to be the same, there are still common values that must be adhered to, namely those regulations must be fair and compassionate. Rules must be made to give the individual the opportunity to grow into a complete human being (Hadiyansyah, 2018). What happened at Ponpes al-Azhar Banyutengah, the author believes is a typical condition of *pesantren* in general—of course, further research is needed to confirm this claim.

In teaching discipline, as a goal of reward and punishment, *pesantren* needs to direct this process to help students connect their body and soul, make people present within themselves and enjoy what they are doing. So that they don't do something and want to do another thing out of self-awareness, not out of fear of being punished.

Furthermore, everyone will try to follow his inclinations. Therefore, when he has to gather in one super large family called *pesantren*, his voices need to be heard. Therefore, making rules by involving students is a vital point in this case. This will make students more responsible for the rules because it is their own decision.

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