

## REVITALIZATION OF KUTTAB IN INDONESIA IN THE MODERN ERA AND ITS URGENCY IN FORMING CHILDREN'S LIFE SKILLS

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### ABSTRACT

*The revitalization efforts of the kuttab function in Indonesia through Kuttab al-Fatih. This curriculum represents an educational approach that integrates the values of the Qur'an and Hadith with classical educational methods from Salaf scholars. The curriculum includes practical life skills education, covering academic skills (literacy, Arabic language), physical skills (archery, swimming), and social skills such as manners and ethics. This study aims to analyze the Kuttab al-Fatih curriculum, particularly in the field of life skills education, as an Islamic educational institution. This research is a type of library research employing descriptive and analytical methods. Data sources were obtained through literature reviews of books, articles, and other relevant materials on the topic. The analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The study concludes that the Kuttab al-Fatih curriculum has unique characteristics, derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the books of Salaf scholars. The connection to the primary references of Islam is also evident in the life skills education provided to its students. This study offers practical implications for Islamic education in Indonesia by presenting a curriculum development model that can be replicated. Educational institutions can adopt aspects of the Kuttab al-Fatih curriculum to design programs tailored to local needs while maintaining a strong foundation in Islamic teachings.*

### ABSTRAK

Upaya revitalisasi fungsi kuttab di Indonesia melalui kuttab al-Fatih. Kurikulum ini merupakan pendekatan pendidikan yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Qur'an dan Hadis dengan metode pendidikan klasik dari ulama Salaf. Kurikulum tersebut memuat pengajaran keterampilan praktis (*Life Skills*) yang mencakup keterampilan akademik (*calistung*, bahasa Arab), keterampilan fisik (memanah, berenang), serta keterampilan sosial seperti adab dan etika. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kurikulum kuttab al-Fatih, khususnya dalam bidang pendidikan kecakapan hidup (*life skills*) sebagai lembaga pendidikan Islam. Penelitian ini merupakan jenis penelitian kepustakaan (*library research*) dengan metode deskriptif dan analitis. Sumber data diambil melalui kajian pustaka terhadap buku-buku, artikel, dan literatur yang relevan dengan topik pembahasan. Teknik analisis menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman yang terdiri dari reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Penelitian ini menghasilkan kesimpulan bahwa terdapat keunikan pada kurikulum kuttab al-Fatih yang dirangkum dari Al Qur'an dan Hadis serta kitab-kitab ulama salaf. Keterkaitan dengan referensi utama agama Islam juga terlihat dalam pembelajaran *life skill* santri. Penelitian ini menawarkan implikasi praktis untuk pendidikan Islam di Indonesia dengan menghadirkan model pengembangan kurikulum yang dapat direplikasi. Lembaga pendidikan dapat mengadopsi aspek-aspek kurikulum Kuttab al-Fatih untuk merancang program yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan lokal sambil mempertahankan dasar yang kuat dalam ajaran Islam.

**KataKunci:** *Revitalisasi, Kuttab al-Fatih, Kecakapan Hidup Anak, Children's Life Skills*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education continues to develop in line with the development of human social and cultural life in this world. Apart from that, Allah provides instructions as guidance so that humans can maintain and direct social and cultural growth and development so that it remains by the purpose of creation of nature and humans themselves so that they do not deviate from the right path. These instructions were conveyed by Allah through His Messenger<sup>1</sup>. The Prophet was sent at a time or condition when humans and their cultural development needed guidance from Allah. We need to realize that the Messenger sent by Allah was not only aimed at upholding the teachings about the oneness of God but was also sent to develop human social culture and at the same time civilize the natural environment.

So it is necessary to develop individuals as kaamil human beings which is carried out professionally in Islamic educational institutions. Cultivating social awareness through life skills education is a strategic step to support the goals of Islamic education which creates happiness in human life in this world and the hereafter<sup>2</sup>. One of these efforts is reflected in Islamic educational institutions that have existed since classical times, namely the Kuttab educational institution which has been revitalized according to developments in the modern era. Before formal educational institutions appeared in the Islamic world, there had been the development of basic educational institutions operating amid Arab society, known as Kuttab or Maktab. The term Kuttab has existed since pre-Islamic times. However, Kuttab became more popular among Arab people after the birth of Islam. Islam motivates its followers to learn and overcome the problem of illiteracy which was a problem in the majority of Arab society at that time<sup>3</sup>.

The subsequent development of Islamic history shows that the kuttab was a basic educational institution that experienced a period of glory at the beginning of the spread of Islam. At that time, kuttab became the first place and became a basic educational concept for a child to learn to read and write the Koran. However, the role of the kuttab is not limited to just that, because this institution also teaches children the fundamental values of the Islamic religion, language, and arithmetic. As explained by Sjalaby, this kind of kuttab emerged in the first century of the Hijriyah, which was initiated by Abul Qassim al Baikhi's kuttab. Its development expanded in the second century of the Hijriyah when kuttab appeared in every village in the Arab world<sup>4</sup>.

But unfortunately, the existence of kuttab as an Islamic educational institution has disappeared in the current era. The existence of kuttab was gradually replaced by the modern education system so the term kuttab then began to disappear from the world of Islamic education. Especially in Indonesia, kuttab institutions are still unknown to the public as a place for Islamic teaching. This is also because the Indonesian people already have their

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<sup>1</sup> Abid Nurhuda, "Prophetic Mission And Islamic Education In Surah Saba': 28 And Al-Anbiya': 107," *JURNAL HURRIAH: Jurnal Evaluasi Pendidikan dan Penelitian* 4, no. 1 (2023): 108–116.

<sup>2</sup> Abid Nurhuda and Nur Aini Setyaningtyas, "Nilai-Nilai Edukatif Dalam Surat Al Kautsar Beserta Implikasinya Dalam Kehidupan (Tela'ah Tafsir Al Qurthubi)," *Social Science Studies* 1, no. 3 (2021): 162–176.

<sup>3</sup> *Ensiklopedia Islam Jilid 3* (Jakarta: Ikhtiar Baru Van Hoeve, n.d.).

<sup>4</sup> Ahmad Sjalaby, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*, ed. Muchtar Jahja and Sanusi Latief (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, n.d.).

model of Islamic religious education through Islamic boarding school institutions which have developed since the early days of the spread of Islam in Indonesia<sup>5</sup>.

However, recently, kuttab educational institutions have begun to appear in Indonesian society. This indicates that there is an effort to revive the tradition of classical Islamic education through kuttab institutions. With the return of kuttab educational institutions, it is hoped that traditional educational values and methods rooted in Islamic teachings can be preserved and integrated with the modern education system to provide a comprehensive education to the young generation of Muslims<sup>6</sup>. The idea of establishing a kuttab in Indonesia was initiated by Ustadz Budi Ashari, an alumnus of the University of Madinah, located in Depok, West Java, in 2012. The initiation of the establishment of a kuttab was welcomed by Muslim intellectual circles by establishing kuttab branches in various regions in Indonesia<sup>7</sup>.

So based on this background, the author aims to reveal the history of Kuttab's development in ancient times in depth in this research. This research will cover the philosophical side, the basics underlying its founding, the educational goals it carries, as well as its practical aspects involving teaching and learning methods. Next, the author will also discuss the urgency of kuttab as an Islamic educational institution to produce individuals with Islamic personalities to support development in the 21st century. This is important because more and more efforts are emerging to maintain the Kuttab tradition and revive an education system that is similar to today's context and challenges.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This type of research is included in the library research category. Library research is a study carried out by reviewing the literature found in the library. However, with the development of technology and information, literature studies can not only be carried out in libraries but also in other locations using the internet network<sup>8</sup>. Writing in research uses a descriptive-analytical method that attempts to describe the research object accompanied by relevant analysis<sup>9</sup>. Sources taken for research are books, journal articles, papers, or other literature that discuss issues relevant to the research topic. The data analysis technique uses Miles and Huberman's analysis techniques, which consist of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification<sup>10</sup>.

The discussion regarding kuttab al-Fatih as an effort to revitalize the classic kuttab institution has been discussed several times by other studies. The study of the kuttab al-Fatih curriculum was discussed systematically in previous research. Research conducted by

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<sup>5</sup> Abid Nurhuda and Abdullah Hadziq, "Implementation of Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Program At Boarding School Smpq Abi Ummi Boyolali," *Paedagogia: Jurnal Pendidikan* 11, no. 2 (2022): 257–274.

<sup>6</sup> Syukron Ni'am, Fachrurizal Bachrul Ulum, and Abid Nurhuda, "Hakikat Metodologi Pembelajaran Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *JIS: Journal Islamic Studies* 1, no. 3 (2023): 282–310.

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad; Suja'i and Ahmad Faujih, "Kuttab: Sejarah, Tujuan, Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Pesantren Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pendidikan Agama Islam* 5, no. 1 (2022): 16–27.

<sup>8</sup> Dudung Abdurrahman, *Pengantar Metode Penelitian* (Yogyakarta: Kurnia Kalam Semesta, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> Abid Nurhuda, Muhammad Al Fajri, and Ts Engku Shahrulerizal bin Engku Ab, "The Concept of Facilities and Infrastructure Management in Schools: A Literature Review," *IJECA (International Journal of Education and Curriculum Application)* 6, no. 3 (2023): 248–260.

<sup>10</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013).

Hidayat examined the systematics of the kuttab al-Fatih curriculum in Purwokerto<sup>11</sup>. Meanwhile, Zulia and Ratna researched the peculiarities of the kuttab al-Fatih curriculum which was founded in Semarang<sup>12</sup>. Likewise, research written by Aisyah et al mentions the kuttab al-Fatih curriculum in Cileunyi, West Java<sup>13</sup>.

All of these studies have something in common which states that the uniqueness of the kuttab al-Fatih curriculum which refers to the Qur'an and Siroh Nabawi has similarities even though they are in different areas of establishment. This is because there is a unified instruction that uses learning modules formulated by the central Kuttab al-Fatih in Depok, West Java. Meanwhile, research explaining the history of kuttab al-Fatih was carried out by Hasanah and Suseno. This research discusses efforts to revitalize kuttab in modern times through kuttab al-Fatih. This revitalization is reflected in the curriculum, vision and mission, kuttab financing, and other aspects<sup>14</sup>.

A description of the relevance of kuttab al-Fatih to community needs is included in the following research. Laisa explained that the existence of kuttab is always in the process according to changing times as the center of Islamic knowledge. Laisa not only explains the revitalization of kuttab through kuttab al-Fatih but also explains the regeneration of kuttab through full-day schools in Indonesia<sup>15</sup>. Meanwhile, research conducted by Syuja'i and Faujih outlined the relevance of kuttab al-Fatih to Islamic boarding school institutions in Indonesia.

Both institutions have similar systems and legality and both have an informal position that allows them to design their curriculum<sup>16</sup>. All of the research that has been mentioned provides the conceptual framework for writing this research. Previous research adds to the treasures of this research in discussing the kuttab revitalization curriculum in Indonesia. However, there are specific differences between this research and previous research. The difference lies in the focus of this research study which discusses the urgency of the Kuttab al-Fatih curriculum in forming life skills for students.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Classical Era Kuttab Education

*Kuttab* and *maktab* has its origin from *kataba*, which means "to write" or "a place to write." Thus, kuttab is a place where someone can learn to write<sup>17</sup>. Kuttab has roots from *kataba*, *yaktubu*, and *kitaaban*, which means "to write." *Maktab* also means a place to write or learn to write, or it could also refer to a basic educational institution that teaches reading and writing to children and teenagers. More broadly, according to Zainal Aqib, kuttab is a place

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<sup>11</sup> Fahri Hidayat, "Pertumbuhan Ideologi Pendidikan Di Era Reformasi (Kajian Terhadap Ideologi Pendidikan Di Kuttab Al-Fatih Purwokerto)," *Literasi* VIII, no. 2 (2017): 85–98.

<sup>12</sup> Rikha Zulia and Tri Ratna Ambarwati, "Implementasi Kurikulum Kuttab Al-Fatih Semarang," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam AL-ISHLAH* 18, no. 2 (2020): 165–187.

<sup>13</sup> Nurul Aisyah et al., "Kurikulum Kuttab Untuk Usia 5 Sampai 6 Tahun Di Kuttab Al-Fatih Cileunyi Bandung," *Agapedia* 5, no. 2 (2021): 141–151.

<sup>14</sup> Huswatun Hasanah and Ahmad Qodim Suseno, "Revitalisasi Pendidikan Kuttab Di Indonesia (Studi Kasus Kuttab al-Fatih)," in *Prosiding Konferensi Ilmiah Mahasiswa Unissula (KIMU)* 4, 2020, 819–827.

<sup>15</sup> Emma Laisa, "Kuttab Sebagai Pusat Ilmu Pengetahuan Pendidikan Islam," *Rabbani: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 2 (2020): 94.

<sup>16</sup> Suja'i and Faujih, "Kuttab: Sejarah, Tujuan, Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Pesantren Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia."

<sup>17</sup> Suwito, ed., *Sejarah Sosial Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2005).

where children can learn to write and read. Historians also agree that kuttab was the basic level of education for children<sup>18</sup>.

Before the emergence of Islam, kuttab existed in the Arab region during the period of ignorance but was still not well known. One of the cities where kuttab was introduced was Mecca. Sufyan bin Umayyah bin Abdul Shams and Abu Qais bin Abdul Manaf bin Zuhrah bin Kilab were two residents of Mecca who first learned to write and read Arabic letters in the kuttab. They studied from a teacher named Bisyr bin Abdul Malik, who had previously studied at Hirah<sup>19</sup>.

With the arrival of Islam, the education that was available developed for the better. This development cannot be separated from the role of the Qur'an which views the importance of education as well as the policies and recommendations of the Prophet Muhammad SAW to his people regarding education<sup>20</sup>. For example, the Prophet freed prisoners after teaching reading and writing to a group of Muslims. The Prophet also ordered al-Hakam bin Sa'id to teach a kuttab in Medina<sup>21</sup>. The development of kuttab as an Islamic educational institution progressed in the second century Hijriyah. This development was initiated by the caliph Muawiyah. The development of kuttab cannot be separated from the need for writing skills in big cities<sup>22</sup>. The Umayyad Daula's Arabization Movement created a policy of recording the Qur'an and Hadith which provided space for Muslims to learn to read and write<sup>23</sup>.

Kuttab education in the classical period had various types or characteristics that differed from one Islamic region to another. Overall, according to Ahmad Syalabi as quoted by Suwito, there are several types based on the characteristics of Kuttab education in Islamic areas during the classical period, namely as follows:

1. *Kuttab* The first type is educational institutions that teach reading and writing using basic texts of Arabic poetry. Interestingly, most of the teachers at this institution are non-Muslim. According to Suwito's explanation, quoting Philip K. Hitti, this type of Kuttab existed in the city of Damascus in 1184 AD. In Ibn al-Jubair's history, it is stated that the children in Kuttab learned to write by using references to ancient Arabic poetry, not the Koran. This is because they believe that erasing the pronunciation of Allah in the process of learning to write would be considered an act of insulting and degrading Him<sup>24</sup>.
2. *Kuttab* to studied the Koran and the main points of religion. The second type of kuttab education became popular after many friends who were good at reading and writing memorized the Koran, especially after the Koran was compiled during the reign of Abu

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<sup>18</sup> Mahmud Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam: Dari Zaman Nabi Muhammad Saw Khalifah-Khalifah Rasyidin, Umayyah Dan Abbasiyah Sampai Zaman Mamluk Dan Usmaniyah Turki* (Hidakarya Agung, 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Sjalaby, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*.

<sup>20</sup> Murjazin Murjazin, Abid Nurhuda, and Thariq Aziz, "Community Social Education in the Perspective of the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW," *IJECA (International Journal of Education and Curriculum Application)* 6, no. 2 (2023): 161–170.

<sup>21</sup> Ruswan Thoyib, "Kuttab Sebagai Institusi Pendidikan," in *Sejarah Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Klasik*, ed. Armai Arief (Jakarta: UIN Jakarta Press, 2004).

<sup>22</sup> Abid Nurhuda et al., "Flashback Of The Mosque In History: From The Prophet's Period To The Abasiyyah Dynasty," *LISAN AL-HAL: Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran Dan Kebudayaan* 17, no. 2 (2023): 241–250.

<sup>23</sup> Thoyib, "Kuttab Sebagai Institusi Pendidikan."

<sup>24</sup> Suwito, *Sejarah Sosial Pendidikan Islam*.



Bakr. The difference between the two types of kuttab is that the second type of kuttab was not discovered at a time when the first type of kuttab had begun to develop in the early Islamic era. The Koran the second type of kuttab only started to be taught after the number of qurra' (Quran reading experts) and huffaz (Quran memorizers) had increased and they had time to teach in various kuttabs<sup>25</sup>.

3. *Kuttab* which owns the building and teaches religious sciences and general sciences. Hanun Asrohah explained that in the 8th century AD, kuttab as an Islamic educational institution began to teach general knowledge apart from religious knowledge. In fact, at this time, kuttab can be divided into two types, namely secular learning (kuttab that teaches non-religious knowledge) and religious learning (kuttab that teaches religious knowledge)<sup>26</sup>.
4. *Kuttabas* had a lower education in the palace. It has different characteristics from education in kuttabs in civil society. Basic education subject matter at the palace was determined by the student's parents, namely palace officials, who adapted it to the talents and goals the parents wanted to achieve. Therefore, the lesson plans for education at the palace can be added and reduced by the student's parents according to their wishes<sup>27</sup>.

Meanwhile, the aims of kuttab education, as explained by Asma Hasan Fahmi, include the following:

1. Religious aims: Kuttab education aims to enable children to memorize the Koran and understand its meaning. In this way, they will have a very valuable treasury of piety, guidance, and holiness.
2. The aim of forming character: Through the influence of poetry, advice, and exemplary attitudes, kuttab education aims to shape the character of young people so that they imitate the behavior of pious people.
3. Purpose of benefit: Kuttab education also aims to provide practical knowledge in everyday life, such as political science (Akhbar science), nahwu grammar, arithmetic, and so on. It is hoped that all of this will benefit their lives in the future<sup>28</sup>.

Initially, kuttab education was carried out in the homes of teachers (mu'alim, mu'addib) or the area around the mosque. The material used in reading and writing lessons generally takes the form of poetry and Arabic proverbs which contain positive traditional values<sup>29</sup>. The curriculum taught is still simple, which includes: learning reading and writing skills, reading the Al-Quran and memorizing it, and learning basic aspects of the Islamic religion, such as procedures for ablution, prayer, fasting, and so on<sup>30</sup>. Then, during the reign of Caliph Umar bin Khattab, he ordered the city residents to teach and memorize poetry and proverbs, read,

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<sup>25</sup> Suwito, *Sejarah Sosial Pendidikan Islam*.

<sup>26</sup> Asrohah, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*.

<sup>27</sup> Sjalaby, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*.

<sup>28</sup> Asma Hasan Fahmi, *Sejarah Dan Filsafat Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1979).

<sup>29</sup> Asari Hasan, *Menyingskap Zaman Keemasan Islam Kajian Atas Lembaga-Lembaga Pendidikan* (Bandung: Mizan, 1994).

<sup>30</sup> Yasin Syafii Azami et al., "Islamic Education Environment In The Perspective Of Hadith And Its Implications For Student Development," *Forum Paedagogik* 14, no. 2 (2023): 150–170.

archery, ride horses, and swim<sup>31</sup>. Caliph Umar's policy received a response in various cities that have rivers, such as Egypt, Iraq, and others<sup>32</sup>.

In the classical period, the kuttab curriculum showed the following things:

1. Although the aim is to learn to write and read, the study of the Koran becomes an important topic in kuttab. Al-Qur'an lessons not only teach cognitive aspects but also affective aspects so that children can appreciate the values of the Koran.
2. Moral education is prioritized because it is considered the actualization of the teachings of the Koran. Educational institutions are considered to be the guardians of morals, so generally, every lesson, especially religious lessons, always contains moral content.
3. Arts lessons such as music and dance are not developed in kuttab because they are thought to damage children's morals.
4. Other lessons outside the Qur'an such as Arabic grammar may be taught as a medium for understanding the Qur'an.
5. Information about numeracy and sports lessons in kuttab has not been provided in detail, including the materials and implementation.
6. There are no lessons that can be used as a basis for developing knowledge at the next level of education<sup>33</sup>.

### **Revitalization of Kuttab in Indonesia in the Modern Era**

Education applied in classical history remains relevant and worthy of consideration as a source of inspiration. The need for education is not only limited to providing cognitive knowledge but is also important for providing an understanding of the values and wisdom of life<sup>34</sup>. Especially in urban areas, where parents are often busy working so it is difficult to provide adequate religious education to their children<sup>35</sup>. Therefore, Islamic basic education institutions are the main support in implementing the new kuttab concept where teaching and learning activities adopt the classic kuttab learning system<sup>36</sup>.

In 2012, the emergence of kuttab educational institutions in Indonesia was initiated by Budi Ashari, an alumnus of the Faculty of Hadith at the University of Medina. This institution is named Kuttab al-Fatih and is located in the Depok area. Kuttab al-Fatih functions as a non-formal educational institution with a license from the Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM). With this license, kuttab in Indonesia is considered equivalent to an Islamic boarding school, even though it adopts different patterns and systems<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Yassir Lana Amrona et al., "Human Nature In The Perspective Of Islamic Philosophy," *LISAN AL-HAL: Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran Dan Kebudayaan* 17, no. 2 (2023): 204–216.

<sup>32</sup> Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam: Dari Zaman Nabi Muhammad Saw Khalifah-Khalifah Rasyidin, Umayyah Dan Abbasiyah Sampai Zaman Mamluk Dan Usmaniyah Turki*.

<sup>33</sup> Ahmad Tafsir, *Cakrawala Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam* (Bandung: Mimbar Pustaka, 2004).

<sup>34</sup> Yassir Lana Amrona et al., "Manajemen Peserta Didik Sebagai Sarana Dalam Mencapai Keberhasilan Tujuan Pendidikan," *Jurnal BELAINDIKA (Pembelajaran dan Inovasi Pendidikan)* 5, no. 3 (2023): 93–103.

<sup>35</sup> Abid Nurhuda and Afifah Vinda Prananingrum, "Empowerment of Children in Dawung, Matesih, Karanganyar Village Through Educational Classes in the Time of Covid-19," *Journal of Educational Analytics* 1, no. 1 (2022): 61–70.

<sup>36</sup> Laisa, "Kuttab Sebagai Pusat Ilmu Pengetahuan Pendidikan Islam."

<sup>37</sup> Hidayat, "Pertumbuhan Ideologi Pendidikan Di Era Reformasi (Kajian Terhadap Ideologi Pendidikan Di Kuttab Al Fatih Purwokerto)."

The initiation the establishment of kuttab in Indonesia began with routine discussions regarding sirah nabawiyah led by Ustadz Budi Ashari. The discussion participants then discovered the concept of kuttab as an Islamic educational institution that was implemented from the time of the Prophet Muhammad to Ottoman Turkey. They consider that the kuttab concept is a good basic education concept, but it has been buried in history for a long time. By observing the condition of education in Indonesia, they initiated the establishment of kuttab Indonesia<sup>38</sup>.

*Kuttabal-Fatih* is a basic education institution intended for children aged 5-12 years which was founded in June 2012, with a curriculum that focuses on faith and the Koran. This curriculum began to be formulated in routine discussions and was used as a source for compiling guide modules for learning. This institution draws its curriculum from the books of scholars based on the Koran and Sunnah<sup>39</sup>.

*Kuttabal-Fatih* has a different approach by using an independent curriculum that refers to the classical Islamic education model. The main aim of establishing this educational institution is to provide basic education that prioritizes the principles of Islamic education from the classical period which have been successful in bringing about the progress of Islam in the past, based on the Koran and Hadith<sup>40</sup>. *Kuttab al-Fatih* is committed to returning to Islamic education according to the model developed by Muslims in the classical era, including the time of the Prophet, Khulafa al-Rasyidin, the Umayyads, and the Abbasids<sup>41</sup>.

*Kuttab Al-Fatih* has a goal, namely "to produce a superior generation at a young age." Meanwhile, the mission of this institution includes: 1) Teaching and forming the character of faith, 2) Memorizing the Koran, 3) Research, explore, and prove the miracles of the Koran, 4) Encourage mastery of the language of civilization, 5) Develop life skills<sup>42</sup>. Learning at *Kuttab Al-Fatih* is based on concepts taken from the Book of Ar-Rosul Al-Mu'allim, which is the work of Sheikh Abu Fatah Abu Huda which includes 40 teaching methods once used by the Prophet. The teachers at *Kuttab Al-Fatih* apply 40 teaching methods, including the exemplary method, the example method, the use of pictures, and various other methods, which are usually called the Prophetic education method<sup>43</sup>.

The learning levels in kuttab are divided into two, namely: first, initial kuttab: at this level, children learn to read, write, and memorize the Koran, basic religious knowledge, and basic arithmetic. Second, *Kuttab Qonuni*: at this level, children and teenagers learn language and manners. They study religious sciences, hadith, and various other sciences. In general, the age for *Kuttab* learning from an early age is 5 or 6 years. Children will continue to be in *Kuttab* until they have perfected memorizing the entire Koran or part of it, in addition to

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<sup>38</sup> Ida Novianti, *Reorientasi Model Pendidikan Islam Klasik Di Indonesia: Studi Kasus Terhadap Kuttab al Fatih* (Yogyakarta: Lontar Mediatama, 2018).

<sup>39</sup> *Kuttab Al Fatih*, "No Title."

<sup>40</sup> Yasin Syafii Azami, Abid Nurhuda, and Murjazin Murjazin, "Terminologically of Tasawuf: An Introduction," *Advances in Humanities and Contemporary Studies* 4, no. 2 (2023): 160–166.

<sup>41</sup> Aisyah et al., "Kurikulum Kuttab Untuk Usia 5 Sampai 6 Tahun Di Kuttab Al-Fatih Cileunyi Bandung."

<sup>42</sup> *Kuttab Al Fatih*, "No Title."

<sup>43</sup> Aisyah et al., "Kurikulum Kuttab Untuk Usia 5 Sampai 6 Tahun Di Kuttab Al-Fatih Cileunyi Bandung."



learning to read and write, some linguistics, arithmetic, and various tools for understanding religion<sup>44</sup>.

Al-Fatih's kuttab education levels are described as follows: first, initial kuttab which consists of kuttab 1, kuttab 2, and kuttab 3. Second, kuttab qanuni which consists of kuttab qanuni 1, kuttab qanuni 2, kuttab qanuni 3, and kuttab qanuni 4. Santri who studied in initial kuttab 1 and 2 studied the nature module. Kuttab Awal 3 and Kuttab Qanuni 1 study the human module. Kuttan Qanuni 2 and 3 study the tadabbur module. Meanwhile, level 4 Qanuni kuttab studies the siroh nabawiyah module<sup>45</sup>.

In its development through the kuttab module quoted by Hasanah and Suseno, kuttab al-Fatih explained that this institution resulted in the revitalization of the classic kuttab institution with the following criteria<sup>46 47</sup>:

No	Kuttab's role	Revitalization
1	Curriculum	Using the same curriculum as the Prophet or classical kuttabs, namely the Koran and faith as the main concentration.
2	Vision and mission	Cultivate children's bright souls at a young age
3	Learning age	Starting from the age of 5 or 6 years
4	Social society	There is learning about social etiquette and parental halaqah as a forum for learning Islamic social guidance.
5	Economy	Development of productive business zakat Development of foundation mini markets Development of culinary business Cattle and goat farming
6	Financing	Waqf institutions and subsidies from parents of students
7	Method	Oral learning, writing, and memorizing
8	How to learn	Forming halaqah. Students surround the ustadz.

Revitalization efforts *kuttab* through the kuttab al-Fatih institution in line with Kuntowijoyo's concept of Islamic science. By understanding texts in the Qur'an and Hadith, you can increase the element of religious awareness in studying science. The texts in the two Islamic reference sources are applied to see the context in which this occurs. This approach is called the social prophetic approach. According to Kuntowijoyo, the prophetic social approach, as quoted by Ulum, seeks to elaborate religious teachings into social theory. The aim is not only to change the concept of social phenomena but also to provide direction to the direction of these phenomena, namely by the Prophet's prophetic mission. Thus, human actualization of knowledge is based on the value of monotheism<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> Budi Ashari, "Apa Itu Kuttab?"

<sup>45</sup> Novianti, *Reorientasi Model Pendidikan Islam Klasik Di Indonesia: Studi Kasus Terhadap Kuttab al Fatih*.

<sup>46</sup> Hasanah and Suseno, "Revitalisasi Pendidikan Kuttab Di Indonesia (Studi Kasus Kuttab al-Fatih)."

<sup>47</sup> Suja'i and Faujih, "Kuttab: Sejarah, Tujuan, Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Pesantren Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia."

<sup>48</sup> Fachrurizal Bachrul Ulum Ulum, "Upaya Penalaran Islam: Telaah Gagasan Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan Dan Islam Sebagai Ilmu," *Thaqafiyat: Jurnal Bahasa, Peradaban dan Informasi Islam* 20, no. 1 (2021): 24.

### **The Urgency of Kuttab as an Educational Institution in Forming Children's Life Skills**

Education is a strategic step in religion to instill Islamic religious values in students. For this reason, in practice, the implementation of learning must be inspired by the goals of Islamic education as the goal of the learning process. According to Nata, Islamic education has a goal, namely: first, directing humans to become good khalifahs on earth. Second, directing humans so that all implementation of their duties as khalifa on earth is based on the intention of worshipping Allah. Third, directing people to have noble character. Fourth, developing human potential, intelligence, and physicality, so that they have the skills to support the duties of the caliphate. Fifth, directing humans to obtain happiness in life in this world and the hereafter<sup>49</sup>. Barni quoted al Jumbulati's view which said that the aims of Islamic education are principally divided into two, namely: first, religious aims which direct people to do good deeds for the afterlife by religious guidance through the Qur'an and Hadith. Second, pragmatic worldly goals prepare children to face the future<sup>50</sup>.

Therefore, the aim of Islamic education is that the core of learning is to produce changes in attitudes in students, both personally and in society, which are useful for facing life's problems. So in the learning process, Islamic educational institutions must include Islamic values as a form of life skills for students personally and intrapersonally. Therefore, as quoted by Bulu and Muhaimin, Azhar formulated that educational institutions must equip their students with the ability to be emotionally aware and open, have good values, and have the characteristics of skilled humans. All of this is an effort to shape students' life skills to have a complete and balanced life personality<sup>51</sup>.

Life skills teach children how to interact with other people, recognize their potential, and actualize it to others, and make children more independent. According to Western understanding, as quoted by West Java, life skills include things related to personal health and the environment, friendships, and life norms. Some group them into general skills which include self-awareness, social skills, and thinking skills, as well as specific skills which include vocational skills and academic skills<sup>52</sup>.

The introduction of life skills in educational institutions is a strategic plan. Because in adulthood, the introduction of life skills through the environment and family is starting to be pushed aside. This happens because today's family is concerned with material family welfare. Likewise, the community environment does not all teach positive life skills<sup>53</sup>. As quoted from the kuttab website, the kuttab al-Fatih teaching curriculum is taken from the Qur'an and Sunnah as well as relevant books, such as Siroh Nabawiyah, Al-Jami' Li Syuabil Iman, Ar-Rasul Al-Mu'allim, and so on. The levels in kuttab al-Fatih consist of initial kuttab and Qanuni kuttab. Like other educational institutions, Kuttab al-Fatih also has a mission to instill life skills in its students<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Abuddin Nata, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1997).

<sup>50</sup> Mahyudi Barni, "Dasar Dan Tujuan Pendidikan Islam," *Al-Banjari: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman* Vol.7, no. I (2008): 1–18.

<sup>51</sup> Bulu K. and Muhaemin, *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* (Palopo: Read Institute Press, 2014).

<sup>52</sup> Cepi Safruddin Abd. Jabar, "Mengajarkan Life Skill Melalui Kegiatan Ekstrakurikuler Sekolah," *Dinamika Pendidikan* Vol. 10, no. No. 02 (2002).

<sup>53</sup> Jabar, "Mengajarkan Life Skill Melalui Kegiatan Ekstrakurikuler Sekolah."

<sup>54</sup> Kuttab Al Fatih, "No Title."

The curriculum in kuttab al-Fatih is divided into the faith curriculum and the Qur'an curriculum. Both curricula are formulated based on the concept of tadabbur al-Qur'an. The curriculum that studies life skills is listed in the faith curriculum<sup>55</sup>. The faith curriculum technically discusses reducing the verses of the Qur'an into sub-themes which include the disciplines of mathematics, science, and social studies. These verses are discussed at the same time as skills topics such as trade, sports, and so on. This is what differentiates the kuttab teaching concept from others. Where the verses of the Qur'an are discussed first, and then revealed to be the topic of discussion<sup>56</sup>.

The life skills provided to students are embedded in several programs. Learning at kuttab teaches academic skills such as sports and reading and writing arithmetic. Sports activities are carried out periodically as motor training for students. Meanwhile, calistung skills are taught every day as a basis since students are 5 years old. The difference with the curriculum of other institutions is that each activity is always accompanied by the instillation of objectives taken from the Koran. Learning sports is associated with the Hadith to always live a healthy life while learning calistung is also associated with the obligation to be proficient in reading the Qur'an<sup>57</sup>.

Apart from the general skills as mentioned, Kuttab al-Fatih in its curriculum also teaches specific skills related to physical and academic matters. Examples of special skills in the physical field are learning archery and swimming<sup>58</sup>. These two skills are taken from the Hadith of the Prophet, namely the Hadith which was accepted by Imam Nasa'I in the book Sunan Al Kubra which reads:

عن عطاء بن أبي رباح قال : رأيت جابر بن عبد هلالا وجابر بن عمي الأنصاري - رضي الله عنهما - يرميتان ، فملا أحدهما فجلس ، فقال له صاحبه : أجلست ؟ ! أما سعت رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - يقول : " كل شيء ليس من ذكر الله فهو سهو وهلو إلّا أربعاً : مشي الرجل بني الغرضني ، وأنديبه فرسه ، وتعلمه السباحة ، ومالعبته أهله " .

*Narrated Atho' bin Rabah, he said, "I saw Jabir bin Abdullah and Jabir bin Umair (both friends of Anshor) throwing stones at each other, then one of them sat down and leaned back, and one of them was asked Why are you sitting? And he answered, that I heard the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW that "Everything that does not aim at the remembrance of Allah is vain and just a game, except for four things: a man who practices archery, a man who trains his horse, teaches swimming, and jokes. husband to his wife."<sup>59</sup>*

Other specific academic skills relate to mastery of Arabic. By mastering Arabic, students can develop the knowledge contained in the Qur'an as Muslim scientists did in the golden age of Islam, namely the Abbasid Dynasty<sup>60</sup>. Mastery of Arabic allows students to study scientific paradigms in the Qur'an. This paradigm makes it possible to see reality in

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<sup>55</sup> Khoirun Nisa Nur'Aini, Abid Nurhuda, and Ali Anhar Syi'bul Huda, "Pluralism In The Perspective Of Kh Abdurrahman Wahid: An Introduction To Multicultural Education," *Bidayah: Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 14, no. 2 (2023): 230–238.

<sup>56</sup> Zulia and Ratna Ambarwati, "Implementasi Kurikulum Kuttab Al-Fatih Semarang."

<sup>57</sup> Aisyah et al., "Kurikulum Kuttab Untuk Usia 5 Sampai 6 Tahun Di Kuttab Al-Fatih Cileunyi Bandung."

<sup>58</sup> Hidayat, "Pertumbuhan Ideologi Pendidikan Di Era Reformasi (Kajian Terhadap Ideologi Pendidikan Di Kuttab Al Fatih Purwokerto)."

<sup>59</sup> Ad-durar As-saniyah, "Al-Mausuah Al-Hadisah."

<sup>60</sup> Hidayat, "Pertumbuhan Ideologi Pendidikan Di Era Reformasi (Kajian Terhadap Ideologi Pendidikan Di Kuttab Al Fatih Purwokerto)."

science as the Qur'an understands it so that the development of science cannot be separated from Islamic values<sup>61</sup>.

The life skills given to students at the Kuttab al-Fatih institution are also related to social skills. Learning social skills is reflected in the strict application of etiquette. By upholding the principle of etiquette before knowledge, learning at kuttab al-Fatih always prioritizes the application of etiquette before the subject matter. As the Hadith of the Prophet narrated by Abbas bin Walid reads:

حدثنا العباس بن الوليد الدمشقي حدثنا علي بن عيا حدثنا سعيد بن عمارة أخين الأارث بن النعمان سعت أنس بن مالك يحدث عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال أكرموا أوالدكم وأحسنوا أدهبم

*Narrated by Abbas bin Walid Ad-Damaski, told by Ali bin Ayasy, told by Said bin Imaroh, told me by Haris bin Nu'man, I heard Anas bin Malik say about the Prophet Muhammad who said: "Glorify your children and improve their manners/morals"*<sup>62</sup>.

The verses in the discussion sub-topics that have been revealed contain the etiquette that students must learn. Etiquette learning is carried out as an effort to actualize students' self-actualization in society as a general skill. Learning manners is done through talaqqi first. Namely by studying the verses of the Qur'an about manners, and then getting used to it through a process of example and supervision<sup>63</sup>.

Another difference between learning at Kuttab Al-Fatih and other institutions is that this institution does not use the concept of learning while playing. Therefore, skills learning is carried out in the space provided. Games are only a means to serious learning. When students are concentrating on learning, the media around them can become a place for learning. Students in the initial kuttab period must be accustomed to boredom, disinterest, and lack of focus in learning. They are taught how to regulate these attitudes<sup>64</sup>.

In instilling life skills attitudes, the Al-Fatih Kuttab institution builds collaboration with the guardians of its students. A cooperation agreement is built at the start of school. Then, they held special activities for the guardians of students called parent schools. In this activity, parenting education was held for parents as a provision for cultivating manners at home. This activity also serves as a joint evaluation between teachers and guardians of students during the learning process.

## CONCLUSION

The Kuttab Institute is an educational institution that has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. At that time, kuttab was a type of lower or basic education that taught the Koran and simple reading and writing. As time progressed, the kuttab's existence began to fade and was replaced by other institutions. The effort to revitalize kuttab in Indonesia was initiated by Budi Ashari in 2012 through kuttab al-Fatih. This institution tries to accommodate classical-era kuttab learning and combines it with modern elements that can

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<sup>61</sup> Ulum, "Upaya Penalaran Islam : Telaah Gagasan Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan Dan Islam Sebagai Ilmu."

<sup>62</sup> As-saniyah, "Al-Mausuah Al-Hadisah."

<sup>63</sup> Aisyah et al., "Kurikulum Kuttab Untuk Usia 5 Sampai 6 Tahun Di Kuttab Al-Fatih Cileunyi Bandung."

<sup>64</sup> Novianti, *Reorientasi Model Pendidikan Islam Klasik Di Indonesia: Studi Kasus Terhadap Kuttab al Fatih*.

be accommodated. With a unique and different approach from other educational institutions, Kuttab al-Fatih is a new alternative in efforts to educate students. Learning at kuttab al-Fatih also includes life skills education as stated in its masi. The difference with other educational institutions is that this kuttab relies on learning from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. So the skills taught are archery and horse riding for physical skills, proficiency in Arabic for academic skills, and daily etiquette for general skills. All of these skills are internalized as an effort to equip participants to be able to actualize themselves according to the teachings of the Islamic religion.

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