



# Implementation of the golden age islamic boarding school program in improving the quality of life of elderly students at the Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School

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## ABSTRACT

The Golden Age Program is a program that aims to foster Muslims and Muslim women at the golden age to have a straight creed, correct worship and noble character. In accordance with its title, "IMPLEMENTATION", this study aims to determine the planning of the Golden Age Program, obtain data on the implementation of the Golden Age Program program, and find out the evaluation process of the Golden Age Program at Daarut Tauhid Islamic Boarding School. This research methodology uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques in the form of in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The results of this study explain that the Golden Age Program planning is packaged in the form of training with an Andragogy approach. Consists of setting goals and objectives, program background, curriculum development, education calendar preparation, resource procurement. Then the implementation of the Service Period Program there are activities and activities that will be carried out by elderly students such as registration, testing, orientation period, teaching and learning activities, monitoring and mentoring, evaluation and graduation. Furthermore, the evaluation of the Elderly Period Program is carried out by means of analysis and assessment, collection of feedback, preparation of reports, recommendations and planning for the future.



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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as one of developing country, has a large and growing population, including a significant increase in the elderly demographic. This demographic shift is driven by a higher life expectancy and a declining birth rate, impacting the population structure by increasing the number of elderly individuals (BPS, 2015). Regional Regulation No. 1 of 2023 concerning the welfare of the elderly ensures that elderly citizens have the same rights and obligations as others in various aspects of life, including religious and spiritual services, health services, and access to public facilities (Regional Regulation No. 1, 2023).

Spirituality significantly influences the welfare of the elderly. Studies show that well-met spiritual needs can enhance the quality of life for the elderly, fostering a closer relationship with God, fellow humans, and the environment (Dwi Shalma Salsabila et al., 2023). The World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL) defines quality of life as an individual's perception of their position in life within the context of culture and value systems, which is influenced by physical health, psychological state, level of independence, and relationships with the environment (Yuliati et al., 2014).

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported that the number of elderly people in Indonesia reached 21.6 million (8.49% of the total population) in 2015 and is projected to rise to 41.9 million by 2035 (BPS, 2016). This growing elderly population poses challenges, especially in terms of providing adequate care and attention. Programs like the Elderly Family Development (BKL) and elderly posyandu, developed by the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) in

collaboration with the Ministry of Health, aim to address these needs but have struggled due to inadequate infrastructure and funding (Nunung & Garis, 2023).

The elderly require special attention not only physically and mentally but also spiritually. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) has established initiatives such as Islamic boarding schools for the elderly, which focus on spiritual development. There is a need for integrated programs where stakeholders collaborate to create comprehensive care for the elderly, ensuring they remain healthy, independent, and spiritually fulfilled. The effectiveness of such programs is crucial, and timely implementation enhances their impact. Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Indonesia serve not only as centers for religious education but also for character development. For the elderly, these institutions provide an opportunity to engage more deeply in worship, offering a sense of security and tranquility. The Central Statistics Agency estimates that the elderly population in Indonesia will continue to grow, making the need for such programs increasingly important (Djamhari et al., 2021).

While physical and mental health programs are relatively established, there is a notable gap in the provision of spiritual services for the elderly. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of spirituality in improving the quality of life for the elderly (Dwi Shalma Salsabila et al., 2023), yet there is limited research on structured spiritual education programs tailored for this demographic. Moreover, the effectiveness of existing initiatives, such as the golden age pesantren program at Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School, in enhancing the spiritual and overall well-being of elderly students has not been thoroughly evaluated. This study aims to fill these gaps by investigating the role of the golden age pesantren program in providing spiritual education and improving the quality of life for elderly students. Unlike other programs that may lack comprehensive spiritual support, the Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School offers a focused curriculum that caters specifically to the elderly, making it a unique case study (Djamhari et al., 2021).

This research focuses on the Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School, which offers a program known as the golden age pesantren, specifically designed for the elderly. This program aims to enhance the quality of life of elderly students through spiritual education. The study will examine how the golden age pesantren program is implemented and its effectiveness in improving the spiritual well-being of its participants.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The method carried out in this study is qualitative research, in accordance with the title of the research entitled "Implementation of the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School Program in Improving the Quality of Life of Elderly Students at the Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School". The qualitative research method is a narrative text. This research method is a new finding, based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to research on natural object conditions, (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, and the results of qualitative research emphasize more than generalizations aimed at producing theories (Sugiyono, 2017). The methods that exist in the qualitative research, such as interview, observation, and documentation methods.

In this study, a descriptive analysis method will be used. The descriptive research method is a method in researching the status of a group of people, an object, a condition, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present with the aim of making a systematic, factual and accurate description, description or painting about the facts, properties and relationships between the phenomena being investigated (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Data sources are anything that can provide information regarding related research. The data used in this study uses two types of data sources, which are as follows: 1) Primary data, primary data is a data source that directly provides data to the data collector, data is collected by the researcher himself directly from the first source or place of the research object (Sugiyono, 2017). The places of the research objects that we research are: Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM) at Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School.. This researcher used the results of interviews obtained from respondents, namely the head of the life skills and polytheism section regarding the research topic as primary data. 2) Secondary Data, Secondary data is a data source that does not directly provide data to the facilitator; data, for example through other people or through documents. This data can be found quickly (Sugiyono, 2017)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Daarut Tauhiid Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM) is a non-formal education unit that organizes a typical educational program for the Daarut Tauhid Islamic Boarding School. One of these programs is the life skills program. The life skills program is a program that organizes life skills programs based on spiritual values for adolescents to the elderly, including the golden age pesantrem program. The Golden Age Islamic Boarding School program has actually been present since 2005. However, in that year the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School program was still named as Golden Age Muslim Women's Guidance or commonly called BM2K. The BM2K program is not much different from the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School program, but the BM2K program is specifically for the elderly women only. As for the male elderly, it is still called the k3A joint program (Khusnul Khotimah Special Fathers). So that finally the two programs were merged and renamed the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School program (Chadidjah et al., 2021).

A Golden Age program is an initiative or a series of activities specifically designed to provide attention and support to individuals who have entered advanced age or advanced age. This program aims to improve the quality of life and physical, mental, and social well-being for the elderly. According to (Belani et al., 2017) The Golden Age Islamic Boarding School is one of the education and training programs for the elderly. The program was carried out for 40 days with the average age of participants being 50 years old and above. The Golden Age Islamic Boarding School program itself is held in a structured manner under the supervision of KH. Abdullah Gymnastiar as the kyai who founded the Daarut Tauhiid foundation, is managed by the foundation, and his students are fostered by the *asatidz/ah* chosen by Daarut Tauhiid with a syllabus that has been prepared (Dwi Shalma Salsabila et al., 2023). The Golden Age Islamic Boarding School is also present to deal with the elderly who are confused about how to spend their old age and end their lives in a state of *husnul khatimah*. The purpose of this program is to Foster Muslims and Muslim Women in the Golden Age, Prepare Themselves to Achieve *Husnul Khotimah*, Forming Individuals with BAKU Character (good and strong). In order to achieve an activity effectively and efficiently, it starts from the implementation, implementation and evaluation (Aini et al., 2022). According to Abdul Halim as the Chairman of the background section, the presence of the PMK program is due to the need for pilgrims to learn specifically for the elderly. They have not seen a special program at their age because in general Islamic boarding schools are specifically for children under 17 years old or students. The elderly pilgrims also have the motivation to achieve the title of *husnul khotimah*, which is a happy end of life. One way to achieve the title of *husnul khotimah* is to study *ibadan* well and take advantage of their time in their golden age.

### A. PROGRAM PLANNING

Planning is a key part of management, involving the systematic organization of activities to address challenges and achieve set goals efficiently. It involves utilizing resources like time, money, and energy while considering socio-cultural, physical, and biological factors. In program planning, such as for the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School, the process includes identifying goals, analyzing the situation, developing strategies, and allocating necessary resources. The aim is to achieve objectives effectively and efficiently. In carrying out the program planning process, it is necessary to know in advance the steps in planning the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School program with several stages as follows:

1. Goal and goal determination, the Golden Age Program is the flagship program of the Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School, designed for individuals aged 45 and above. It is a 40-day residential program that uses andragogy, or adult learning methods, to provide comprehensive religious and moral education. The program aims to develop participants' faith, worship, and character, focusing on fostering straight faith, true worship, and noble morals. It also seeks to prepare participants for *husnul khotimah*, or a good end to life, through teachings on *aqidah* (creed), *sharia* (Islamic law), and the cultivation of daily worship habits. The program specifically targets Muslims aged 50 and older, emphasizing the importance of good and strong (BAKU) character. The primary objective is to enhance the participants' acts of charity and improve the quality of their worship as they prepare for the final phase of life.

2. Curriculum development, according to Bukhari Umar (2010) that a curriculum consists of several components, namely objectives, content, methods or teaching-learning processes and evaluations. Each component in the curriculum is actually interrelated, in fact, each is an integral part of the curriculum itself. With the curriculum, Islamic education in PMK is clearly planned both in terms of objectives, materials and methods used. The curriculum made by the management is quite good, because the components in the PMK curriculum include, important components such as objectives, materials, methods, stages of activities and so on. Selection of learning model
3. Preparation of educational calendar, the existence of this educational calendar is to make it easier for the management to carry out the program for the next year. So, in this one year, the management only needs to carry out what has been planned and scheduled in advance. The educational calendar made by the management is the scheduling of programs at the Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School for the next year. With this, it will be easier for the management so that one program and another do not clash with each other. This planning is usually carried out at the end of the year, namely before the implementation of the working meeting (raker). So, a few weeks before the meeting, the planning and development team plans the program for the next year.
4. Resource procurement, in the planning process of the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School Program at Daarut Tauhiid, administrators carefully prepared various resources. This preparation includes funds and facilities managed in collaboration with the Daarut Tauhiid integrated waqf section, where a portion of the registration and education fees is allocated for productive waqf, which is used for land acquisition and dormitory construction. Teachers and speakers for the elderly students are carefully selected by Laznas Syari'ah, a management body of the Daruut Tauhiid Foundation, to ensure that the material presented aligns with the students' needs and comprehension levels. The program offers specialized materials tailored to the elderly's needs through its three types: Regular, Thematic, and Ramadan Golden Age Islamic Boarding School Programs. These materials cover topics such as management of the heart (qolbu), aqidah (creed), morals, and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), with a focus on preparing participants for a good end to life (husnul khotimah). Additionally, pre-tahsin activities are conducted to assess the elderly students' abilities in reading the Qur'an. The administrators also design various Islamic education activities, including registration, testing, orientation, teaching and learning, monitoring and mentoring, evaluation, and graduation, ensuring a comprehensive and supportive educational experience for the participants.

## B. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation, as defined by the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, is the process, method, or act of putting a plan or decision into action. It involves executing a carefully and meticulously prepared plan, usually following a thorough planning phase. Successful implementation depends on good preparation and a clear understanding of the plan, significantly increasing the likelihood of achieving the set goals.

In the context of the Golden Age Program, implementation involves various activities designed to encourage elderly students to lead more productive and active lives, rather than passively awaiting the end of life. The stages of implementing these activities, as gathered from interviews with participants, include processes from registration through to graduation/release, ensuring a comprehensive and engaging experience for the elderly students.

1. Registration, registration for the Golden Age Program involves a detailed process. On the first day, elderly students fill out a form providing personal information, medical history, health conditions, and emergency contacts. Information can also be obtained through the pesantren's website or by contacting the program administrators. Participants are required to submit documents such as personal identification, a health certificate from a doctor, and emergency contact details. An interview is conducted as part of the registration process to better understand the participants' needs and readiness. Administrative tasks include paying an application fee and possibly signing a contract or service agreement. Participants are then informed about their entry schedule and any necessary preparations. Upon arrival and re-registration, they are assigned a room and provided with a nametag and scarf.

2. Pre-test, before the program starts, participants' knowledge, abilities, and attitudes are pre-tested. Pre-test assesses basic knowledge and prepares for post-test comparisons. The Golden Age Program at Islamic boarding schools assesses senior students' needs and ability to ensure orderly study. The musyrif/ah performed these pre-tests: a. The Quran Reading Ability Test evaluates tajweed comprehension and application in Quran reading. b. The Recitation Test assesses the ability to read the Qur'an slowly and clearly and pronounce passages correctly. c. Memorization Test—Elderly students remembered short Juz Amma letters. d. Worship Skills Test, this Practice Test assesses students' prayer readings and actions. Dhikr and Prayer Test: This test assesses dhikr and daily prayer memorization and comprehension. f. Health tests verify that elderly pupils are physically well and can engage in activities. This health test also gathers information from elderly students' families about their health, including medications and allergens for the offered food. g. Mental wellbeing Tests, check their mental and emotional wellbeing for stress or psychological issues.
3. Orientation Period, orientation is crucial for adjusting to a new environment, and for the Golden Age Program, it involves several key activities. During orientation, participants are introduced to the Dārut Tauhīd Foundation and the Dārut Tarbiyah unit, which run the program. The orientation includes an overview of the PMK program's background, objectives, and operational details, with an emphasis on aligning participants' intentions to deepen their religious knowledge. Students gather to review the PMK curriculum, including teaching modules, materials, and daily evaluation activities. The musyrif/ah also establish study contracts and program rules. Additionally, the orientation features health education sessions led by doctors from the Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School, who provide relevant, accessible health information and offer individual consultations to address the specific health needs of elderly students.
4. Teaching and Learning Activities, the Golden Age Program at Daarut Tauhiid Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM) provides a structured schedule for elderly participants, encompassing both regular classroom sessions and outing classes. The daily routine starts early, with students waking around 2:00 AM to prepare for tahajud prayers at 3:00 AM, followed by dawn prayers at 4:30 AM. After listening to religious broadcasts from 5:00 to 6:00 AM and engaging in personal activities, formal classes begin at 8:00 AM and continue until 9:30 AM. Following a break for dhuha prayers, classes resume until 11:30 AM, with dzuhur prayers in between. The afternoon includes personal time from 12:30 to 3:00 PM, followed by resumed classes after ashar prayers from 3:30 to 4:30 PM, concluding with Maghrib prayer preparations. The program runs Monday to Friday, with Saturdays for physical activities and encouragement of sunnah fasting on Mondays and Thursdays.

The curriculum emphasizes spiritual education aimed at achieving "purity of heart" and true happiness through stages of spiritual purification: Tahallik (emptying the heart of worldly attachments), Tahallid (embodying divine attributes), and Tajalli (experiencing God's presence). Key subjects include Ma'rifatullah/Tawhid (understanding the Creator), Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and Qur'anic Studies (divided by proficiency). Akhlak focuses on moral values, while Istiqomah Keeper covers essential Islamic practices. The program also integrates physical and mental sports, nature appreciation to reduce stress, and foster social interaction, offering a comprehensive approach to religious education, physical health, and emotional well-being for elderly students.

5. Monitoring and Assistance, monitoring and mentoring elderly students in the pesantren involves several key steps to ensure their well-being. Firstly, goal setting is established to ensure physical, mental, and emotional support for the students. A supervisor team, consisting of knowledgeable pesantren staff, is assigned to oversee this process. Routine monitoring activities, including health checks and evaluations of physical and mental needs, are scheduled regularly. Records of these evaluations are maintained to inform care improvements. Emotional support and guidance are provided to address individual needs, ensuring students feel heard and understood. Communication with students' families is crucial for sharing updates and involving them in the care process. Additionally, the program undergoes periodic evaluations and revisions to enhance the quality of care provided.

6. Graduation, the graduation of elderly students from the Golden Age Program at Daarut Tauhiid Islamic Boarding School represents a significant milestone, celebrating their completion of the program and honoring their life experiences. This event underscores the program's impact on enhancing the quality of life for elderly participants. According to the theory of social release, the elderly students in this program successfully transition from their previous activities to focus on self-improvement and preparation for the hereafter. This aligns with the view that elderly individuals should prioritize their spiritual development to gain higher self-esteem and life satisfaction, as emphasized by Baharuddin & Sandra (2020).

Interviews with elderly students reveal that the Golden Age Islamic Boarding School Program has led to notable improvements in their health conditions, physical fitness, and reduced risk of certain diseases. Psychosocial benefits include increased independence, greater participation in social activities, and enhanced family support. Additionally, families have observed positive changes in behavior and health among the elderly students. Testimonials from participants highlight a renewed pleasure in worship and a deeper understanding of religious knowledge, overcoming previous distractions caused by health, psychological, social, and environmental factors.

The implementation of this program has effectively achieved its goal of equipping the elderly with the necessary skills to improve their overall quality of life, resulting in a marked improvement in their physical and psychosocial well-being. This golden age program focuses on practical application and is tailored for the elderly, facilitating their involvement in various activities. The implementation of this program can be linked to Knowles' andragogy theory. According to Knowles (2013), andragogy is the practice-oriented art and science of facilitating adult learning. The program offers many suggestions for the organization, guidance, and assessment of adult learning. Hanselmann (1951) in Loeng (2018) argue that andragogy does not only focus on adult education but rather on facilitating the learning process for adults, viewing the goals of andragogy as an extension of the goals of education.

Globally, a similar pattern is seen in senior education, where programs that promote continuous learning and facilities that cater to the elderly have shown beneficial impacts on cognitive and emotional well-being. Studies conducted by Jenkins & Mostafa (2015) and Narushima et al. (2018) supported these findings, suggesting that engaging in lifelong learning can improve mental well-being, encourage active engagement, and help older individuals cope with adversity, ultimately reducing potential risks and improving overall quality of life. Similarly, a study by Nyandra et al. (2018) confirmed that older adults who engage in lifelong learning initiatives are able to improve their overall well-being. A series of educational initiatives offered to these older adults have effectively stimulated cognitive function, encouraged prolonged mental engagement, and prevented the onset of depression. Consequently, this has improved the quality of life for the elderly population.

### C. PROGRAM EVALUATION

Program evaluation is a way of collecting data or providing information based on objective standards that are carried out systematically to determine the extent of success of a program to get better results and to be considered in making decisions in a program (Mertens & Wilson, 2018). Evaluation of the elderly student program is very important to ensure that the program is effective in meeting the set needs and goals. Based on the results of interviews with the person in charge of the Golden Age Program, there are several steps taken in the evaluation of the Golden Age Program:

1. Feedback Collection, the life skills section makes an instrument of questions consisting of physical appearances (*tangibles*) such as learning facilities and dormitory facilities, caring (*empathy*) between participants and musyrifah, responsiveness in listening to every input of complaints, criticisms and suggestions, reliability (*reliability*) In program activities, criticism and suggestions to improve program services such as learning facilities, dormitory facilities, musyrif/ah and asatidz regarding the satisfaction of elderly students. This activity was carried out to measure the satisfaction of the elderly students during the program and ensure that the elderly student program remains relevant, quality, and has a positive impact on the participants.

2. Analysis and Assessment, the analysis of the results was carried out using a post test where the implementation was the same as the pre-test. This post test aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a program and measure improvement in terms of knowledge, skills or attitudes. Meanwhile, program assessment is one of the main components in determining and evaluating learning that has been carried out. Assessment is very important, as well as the administrators of the Masa Paket Program hold an assessment activity for this program to find out how elderly students perceive the program, the performance of musyrif/ah, presenters/teachers, and changes in themselves.
3. Reports and Recommendations, the results of the satisfaction survey from the elderly students were used as material for evaluation with musyrifah, operational, and rembang. This evaluation was organized by Rembang and invited all sections to participate in the PMK program. The evaluation that was held discussed the findings of the problems that occurred, shortcomings, things that must be improved and maintained. The results of this evaluation are a benchmark in improving the PMK program, from the results of the evaluation that has been carried out, there are things that need to be improved and there are also things that must be strengthened. After all evaluations are carried out, the Rembang section makes a program report that is booked and recommends all forms of improvement of the golden age pesantren program
4. Planning for the future, after the implementation of the PMK program, the next program planning is the advanced PMK program organized by PMK alumni to increase the motivation and understanding of learning of elderly students so that they remain consistent in worship.

#### **D. INHIBITING AND SUPPORTING FACTORS**

The success and sustainability of the Golden Age Program for elderly students at Islamic boarding schools are influenced by a variety of restraining and supportive variables. Inhibiting factors include participants' resistance or lack of interest in the program, which is frequently due to personal discomfort or apathy. Health concerns are also a significant barrier, as serious or chronic diseases might limit active engagement, particularly when intense medical care or special supervision is required. Furthermore, mobility restrictions might limit access to events and facilities, and the death of a participant can have an emotional impact, altering group dynamics and engagement.

In contrast, supporting variables are critical in increasing the program's effectiveness. The majority of elderly students actively participate and commit to the program, which contributes greatly to its success. Mutual support and motivation among participants can improve participation and social interaction. Accessible health facilities and medical care are critical for participants' health, while health counseling and lifestyle promotion foster improved habits. Furthermore, strong support from pesantren staff, including teachers and employees, as well as involvement from families and the larger community, contributes to the program's strength and effectiveness in meeting the needs of senior pupils.

#### **CONCLUSION**

A Golden Age program is an initiative or a series of activities specifically designed to provide attention and support to individuals who have entered advanced age or advanced age. This program aims to improve the quality of life and physical, psychological, and social well-being for the elderly. The implementation of the Golden Age Program program in improving the quality of life of elderly students has been successful. This can be seen from the testimonials of the benefits felt by the elderly students after implementing the Golden Age Program program.

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