

## **SELF RELIANCE AMONG MUSLIM RURAL COMMUNITY TOWARD CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY: THE CASE OF SCHOOL FOR DISABLED CHILDREN LENTERA HATI NAHDLATUL ULAMA KECAMATAN PESANGGARAN KABUPATEN BANYUWANGI**

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### **Abstract**

*Nahdlatul Ulama as the biggest Islamic mass organization in Indonesia have contributed to the educational and social welfare of Muslim especially in rural community. One of autonomous body of Nahdlatul Ulama which concern to Muslim women, Muslimat in Pesanggaran district in Banyuwangi have a special attention toward disabled children from low income family in rural community. Muslimat pesanggaran are founder of school of disabled Children (SLB) NU Lentera HATI In Pesanggaran. this study will expose the realiance of Muslimat NU pesanggaran on giving special attention toward disabled children. the main data is the SLB NU Lentera Hati, the collected data came from depth interview of some teachers, Muslimat board and some social activist in Banyuwangi. The study concluded that every body has the responsibility on helping each other especially toward disabled children. what have been done by Muslimat in Pesanggaran should be followed by any support of government and any other organization so that every disabled children have the opportunity to get their educational rights.*

**Keywords: Muslimat, Nahdlatul Ulama, Disabled Children, Rural Community**

### **Abstrak**

*Nahdlatul Ulama sebagai organisasi massa Islam terbesar di Indonesia telah berkontribusi terhadap kesejahteraan pendidikan dan sosial umat Islam terutama di masyarakat pedesaan. Salah satu badan otonom Nahdlatul Ulama yang berkepentingan dengan perempuan Muslim, Muslimat di kabupaten Pesanggaran di Banyuwangi memiliki perhatian khusus terhadap anak-anak cacat dari keluarga berpenghasilan rendah di masyarakat pedesaan. Muslimat pesanggaran adalah pendiri sekolah Anak Cacat (SLB) NU Lentera HATI Di Pesanggaran. studi ini akan mengekspos keserupaan Muslimat NU pesanggaran dalam memberikan perhatian khusus terhadap anak-anak cacat. data utama adalah SLB NU Lentera Hati, data yang dikumpulkan berasal dari wawancara mendalam terhadap beberapa guru, dewan Muslimat dan beberapa aktivis sosial di Banyuwangi. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa setiap tubuh memiliki tanggung jawab untuk saling membantu terutama terhadap anak-anak cacat. Apa yang telah dilakukan oleh Muslimat di Pesanggaran harus diikuti oleh dukungan pemerintah dan organisasi lain sehingga setiap anak yang cacat memiliki kesempatan untuk mendapatkan hak pendidikan mereka.*

**Kata kunci: Muslimat, Nahdlatul Ulama, Anak Cacat, Komunitas Pedesaan**

## A. Background of study

*Nahdlatul Ulama* or it is popular to be shortened by NU, is the biggest Islamic organization in Indonesia. NU was established on January 31, 1926. Historically NU was established as the answer of anxiety among *Ulama* in Indonesia toward King Saud's decision in setting up totally wahabi doctrine in Saudi Arabia. NU is the organization which is dominated by the middle-lower community in Indonesia. Most of traditional Islamic leaders in Indonesia are NU cohort firmly; it brings their follower to do the same.

The number of NU or support base is estimated to reach more than 40 million people, they come from various professions. Most of them are ordinary people, both in cities and in villages. In general, they have a strong enough bond with the *pesantren* which is the center of people's education and cultural heritage of NU. In rural community, NU has main role in maintaining the activity related to Islamic teaching. To implement this activity, NU has some autonomous body such as *Muslimat*, *Fatayat*, *Anshor* etc (<http://www.nu.or.id/about/badan+otonom>). *Muslimat* is one of autonomous body under NU which focuses on women empowerment. This organization is very strong in rural communities, especially in pertaining of women empowerment. *Muslimat* NU is well established also in Pesanggaran Banyuwangi. It is one of districts in southern part of Banyuwangi East Java.

Banyuwangi is located in eastern part of Java island, it is also popular to be called as sunrise of Java. As a growing area, Banyuwangi develops rapidly in all sectors such as economy, social, and tourism. One of sector which takes full attention from *Bupati* is children disability access on education. The government of Banyuwangi allocates education fund for children with disability, they are also prioritized in a program named Program beasiswa pendidikan untuk meningkatkan kualitas sumberdaya manusia (SDM). The number of children with disability in Banyuwangi for about 4000 children as stated by Ufah, one of disability activist in Banyuwangi (interview at august 16, 2016).

*Muslimat* NU which focused on women empowerment from its first founded, also takes attention to social problems especially related to women and children. In the case of Pesanggaran district in Banyuwangi, *Muslimat* also takes main role in standing up the right of disabled children around the environment. School for social needs, *SLB Lentera hati* firstly comes from the idea of social activist, Alfian who have concerned

toward disabled children for a long time. Alfian's agitated toward disabled children's condition around his village brings his idea to found school for disabled children. Most of disabled children in Pesanggrahan come from low-income family. Their parents find difficulties taking care their children and do not have enough fund to send their children to school for disabled children.

The idea of Alfian about founding special school for special needs converged to the mission of *Muslimat* NU Pesanggrahan. SLB Lentera Hati was established at 2014 through the support of Nahdlatul Ulama community in Pesanggrahan especially Muslimat and Perkins International.

This paper aims to expose how muslim rural community begins to struggle the right of getting education access toward children minority group in rural area. This study will cover school for disabled children (SLB) Lentera Hati as the main object. The motive which interests me to expose this theme is how a group of female Muslim in rural community has special attention toward disabled children who also comes from Nahdlatul Ulama community.

## **B. Problem of Study**

How is the application of Moslem group community (Nahdlatul Ulama) in supporting of children with disability in Pesanggrahan Banyuwangi?

## **C. Theoretical Framework**

### **1. Definition of disability**

Disability means inability, it refers to term for people who have physical limitations, mental, intellectual, and sensory in the long term that interact with the environment and the attitude of the community can see the obstacles that make it difficult to participate fully and effectively based on equal rights. People with special needs are people living with specific characteristics and differences with people in general. Because of these different characteristics require special care so that she gets her rights as a human being living on this earth.

Disabled people in society is still regarded as a minority , most people are still indifferent to the rights of disabled people . Sometimes, disabled people are stuck in the socio-economic problems . Limitations of disabled people to social services, the

economy, education, health and causing them to groups vulnerable to poverty (Prasad, 2010). Even disabled people are still getting negative stigma from society.

This condition is also faced by children with special needs. Number of Children with Special Needs (ABK) in Indonesia is quite large. It is estimated for about 4.2 million ABK in Indonesia . This data is based on the assumption of United Nation, which said that 10 percent of school age children in this world bearing special needs (<http://nasional.republika.co.id>).

Many terms are used as a variety of special needs, such as disability, impairment, and handicapped. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the definition is as follows :

- a. Impairment is a condition in which people experience a loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure of body. For example someone who suffer the amputation of his legs, and then he/she suffered a leg disability.
- b. Disability is a condition in which people experience inability of impairment such as defects in body organs.
- c. Handicapped means a situation in which individuals experience an inability to socialize and interact with the environment. This is possible because of abnormalities and decreased function of individual organs. For examples of people who suffered a leg amputation so for mobility activities or interacting with the environment he/she needs a wheelchair.

Due to the characteristics owned by special needs children, they need special education services that can accommodate their abilities and potential , for example, they require modification for the visually impaired reading text into Braille and hearing impairments to communicate using sign language . There are several types of special needs children, namely :

- a. Mental Disorders

This mental disorder consisting of children with average intelligence or have a high IQ, and vice versa disorder with a low IQ is below 70. It refers to children who have specific learning difficulties .

- b. Physical and sensory disabilities, hearing and visual impairment

- c. emotional disorder, emotional disorder is a psychological problem and can only be seen from the indication observed behavior of individuals . Kind of behavioral disorder is impaired concentration (ADD) and a hyperactive disorder.

## **2. Educational right of disabled children**

Indonesia is a country that has obligation to develop student potential without looking to any religion and race. This assumption comes up from Indonesian law no 20 of 20013 about National Education System section 5 paragraph 3: Citizens who have disability on physical, emotional, mental, and intellectual need special education . From these statements it is known that children with special needs who is the subject of the provision coverage right to education in accordance with its potential through special education.

### **a. Indonesia Constitution**

1) article 28 C (1)

Everyone has the right to develop themselves through the fulfillment of basic needs, related to get educational right and to get benefit from science and technology , arts and culture, in order to improve the quality of life and for the welfare of mankind "

2) article 31 (1)

Every citizen have to have educational right

3) Pasal 1 (2) UU National Education System

"National education is education that is based on Pancasila and the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Year 1945 is rooted in religious values , national culture of Indonesia and responsive to the changing demands of the times "

4) Article 4 ( 1 ) of the Education Law -

"Education is held in a democratic and fair and not discriminatory to uphold human rights , religious values , cultural values , and the diversity of the nation "

5) Article 5 of the National Education Law on the Rights and Duties of Citizens

- a) Every citizen has the same right to obtain a quality education .

- b) Citizens who have physical , emotional , mental , intellectual , and / or social entitled to special education

### **3. The role of *Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama* in women and children empowerment among rural community.**

Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama was firstly founded at March 29, 1946 as the closing of XI congress of NU. That day was marked as the birth day of Muslimat NU. Muslimat NU was a part of women organization of NU which has the fundamental principle of *Ahlu sunnah wal jamaah* in serving among religion, race and community (<http://muslimatnu.or.id/>). According to the basic rule and household regulation of *Muslimat*; this organization aims to awaken and strengthen muslim women to be empowerment women so that they can help the struggle of NU.

*Muslimat* NU since it was founded has the main duty at providing a forum for women to actualize their self in the field of organization at NU. In NU congress in 1950, it was mentioned specifically that the duty of *Muslimat* is "... to eradicate illiteracy among women Indonesia". But in the field of education, NU has existed educational institutions, it is called *Maarif*, so that the division of duties was made related to education among NU. Muslimat only handle kindergarten, group of women reciting and training skills for women.

Throughout its history, *Muslimat* have been active in the empowerment of women, particularly related to education, and social welfare. In terms of education, *Muslimat* having *Bina Bakti* foundation, the main duty of this foundation was to manage the educational institutions under *Muslimat*. At April 1, 1992, the foundation was renamed to be *Yayasan Pendidikan Muslimat NU Bina Bakti Wanita*, and shortened to be YPM. In the field of social welfare, *Muslimat NU* founded *Yayasan Kesejahteraan Muslimat NU*; it was established on June 11, 1963. The Foundation is handling the orphanage that handles not only orphans, but also the poor children who need help, hospital, maternity, and clinics, day care centers, homes for the elderly and female dormitory belonging to the coaching programs include infants, immunization, improvement of skills, improving the welfare of the family, family planning counseling and etc.

#### **D. Research method**

This study took school for disabled children (SLB) NU-Lentera Hati as the main object of the study. The school is located in Sumber Agung Pesanggaran Banyuwangi East Java. The supporting data came from any books, journal, and online news. To collect the data, I did a deep interview to some people; a chief of Muslimat NU Pesanggaran, an advisor of SLB NU Lentera Hati, teachers and parents of students. Interviewing involves asking questions and getting answers from participants in a study. Interviewing has a variety of forms including: individual, face-to-face interviews and face-to-face group interviewing (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). Observation was also done to complete data, I just observed the school of disabled children and took some pictures around school to support the data of this study.

#### **E. Discussion**

##### **1. SLB – NU Lentera Hati**

SLB – NU Lentera Hati was firstly founded by *Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama* in Sumberagung Pesanggaran district Banyuwangi at 2014. Pesanggaran is one of districts in southern part of Banyuwangi East Java. The territory of Pesanggaran consists of tropical forest and littoral. There are five villages in Pesanggaran, four of them are called as *Desa Pantai* because they are bordered by Indian Ocean. There are also plantation and some mountains in Pesanggaran, the famous mountain is *Tumpang Pitu* which is now on the process of gold mining (BPS kecamatan Pesanggaran; 2015). But Farming is still the biggest contribution of people in Pesanggaran, it shows that livelihood of people are farmer.

*Muslimat* is one of autonomous body organization under Nahdlatul Ulama, the biggest Islamic mass organization in Indonesia. *Muslimat* is a women organization between the ranges 40-60 years old. Muslimat have a big contribution in supporting education and social empowerment of muslim women in Indonesia. This organization develops from the center board management until the lowest management in rural area. Muslimat also thrives in Pesanggaran Banyuwangi. Now, the member of Muslimat in Pesanggaran for about 400 women. Muslimat in Pesanggaran as other Muslimat organization around Indonesia has routine activity weekly, monthly and yearly. Most of Muslimat activity related to social religion such as routine reciting Al

Qur'an and raising donation for orphan children. Above all, *Muslimat* in Pesanggran has massive contribution toward the social welfare and empowerment among women especially in rural area.

Geographically, the location of Pesanggaran is surrounded by beaches and forest, the distance to reach Kota Kabupaten Banyuwangi from Pesanggaran for about two hours. SLB NU Lentera Hati came from the idea of *Muslimat* In Pesanggaran. Many mothers of disabled children in Pesanggaran are the member of *Muslimat* NU. They come from low income family that have difficulties to send their disabled children to school, whereas the available disabled children schools are far away from Pesanggaran. As a result, many disabled children do not get their educational right and access. Secondly, some of disabled parents do not take responsibility for giving educational right toward their children. It is caused by miss understanding and miss information among parents in treating their children related to their special needs treatment.

As stated by a *chief Muslimat NU* Pesanggaran, this condition motivated her and her friends to build school for disabled children in Pesanggaran. Firstly, *Muslimat* made a list of disabled children in Pesanggaran especially who came from Nahdlatul Ulama community and low income family, *Muslimat* came door to door to give understanding toward the importance of education for disabled children. Some of parents think that it is not important disabled children going to school, and they are enough busy of job rather than taking their disabled children to school (ibu M, 2016).

Furthermore, *Muslimat NU* and some social activists in Pesanggaran began to realize their planning of building SLB. They gathered parents of disabled children and invited professional expert of disabled children to assist them continually. School for disabled children in Pesanggaran formally was launched at June 2014, the school is located in Nahdlatul Ulama Pesanggaran central office in Sumberangung Pesanggaran. Not only *Muslimat* who takes full responsibility of this school, but other boards of autonomous body in NU give their respond in this SLB.





The name of the school is SLB-NU Lentera Hati. SLB is abbreviation of sekolah luar biasa or school for special needs children, NU is Nahdlatul Ulama as the proof of *Nahdlatul ulama* in servicing Muslim community especially in rural area and supporting afford less people. Lentera Hati is Indonesian language means lighting of heart. This name was inspiration for the dream about enlighten for everyone especially for disabled children.



Now, SLB NU Lentera Hati is well established in Pesanggaran Banyuwangi. There are 24 disabled children study in this school from Sunday until Friday at 7.00 AM-10.00 AM. They are assisted by professional teacher which consist of five teachers and some social volunteer. Students of SLB Lentera Hati consists of any kinds of disability, for example Physical and sensory disabilities, autism, hearing and visual impairment. They are treated based on their disability, some of them also do the learning process at home and the teacher comes to their home. Some students which

are homeschooling have physical disability that makes them impossible to go to school.

According to one of the teacher in SLB, she said that the goal of learning process in SLB is quite different to any other schools, for example in the case of autism, she said that the goal is student can be independent and communicative. The method of teaching learning process is also quite different from one disabled children to another (interview of Ibu L at August 16, 2016).

*Muslimat* as the initiator of SLB Lentera Hati takes full responsibility to the daily operational of the school. *Muslimat* which is usually only doing activity mostly related to religion now takes part on caring and supporting disabled children. The students of SLB are taken free of charge, because most of them come from low income family. For daily operational, SLB NU Lentera Hati have some donators, some of them from Nahdlatul Ulama cohort.

The students' parents' support of SLB Lentera Hati increases simultaneously as the increasing of parents' consciousness toward rights of disabled children. It is the effect of *Muslimat*'s efforts and motivation spreading the comprehensive information about disability toward parents. SLB Lentera Hati is also supported by Perkins International; it gives training and assistance toward teachers.

## **F. Conclusion**

Being disabled is being different among society. It is not a simple matter to be different among society, both for their self and for family. Whereas it have been stated that everybody is equal, everybody have the same right on every aspect, especially education. Disabled children from low income family must face some obstacle related to their economy and disability. From this point, *Muslimat* NU as Indonesia women organization under Nahdlatul Ulama takes the responsibility related to the education for disabled children. *Muslimat* NU Pesanggaran Banyuwangi founded school for disabled children (SLB) NU Lentera Hati. This step hopefully will be followed by the support of local government and other mass organization. We are all have the responsibility to help each other, especially toward children with disability as long as they still have bright future in their life.

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