

Moral Degradation in an Educational Milieu: Roles of Guardian in Fixing Morality of Students

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ABSTRACT

Moral degradation among students is a common phenomenon in the educational milieu; thus, guardians have a significant role to play in handling it for their future welfare. This study aims to (1) investigate the efforts of the Islamic residential school guardians in dealing with moral degradation among the students; (2) identify the obstacles they encounter and provide facilitation for dealing with the moral degradation; (3) explore the impact of the guidance given by the guardians to the students. The research is a qualitative study with a phenomenological descriptive approach. The sampling was purposive. The informants were two guardians at the pesantren, each serving as a teacher of guidance and counselling, coordinator of the student council, and five students who experienced a moral decline. The results indicate that the guardians build up relationships between the school and students, instill moral values based on religious guidance, prevent the negative effect of globalization on the school, and facilitate communication with the parents if the students do something wrong. The results also show that a highly effective learning environment at the pesantren and the effective role of the student council can support and rehabilitate moral decadence. The results further reveal the impacts of the guidance on students, such as the current cohort of students, who tend to be more disciplined compared to the previous cohort. However, the lack of representative counselling rooms and some counselling teachers who are inattentive to students' behavior is disadvantageous for rehabilitation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Moral degradation is an erosion of personal virtuous values. Among teenagers, it can affect the development of mindsets, behaviors, and even problem-solving capacity (Rahmawati et al., 2021). Currently, moral degradation among teenagers is influenced not only by peer behaviors but also by the effects of globalization. Such influences can cause an erosion of decency among teens. This erosion has recently been seen in Indonesia, where behaviors that were previously impermissible are now observed

in teens, almost as a new normal, and what was previously unimaginable is now a reality (Muthohar, 2013).

Many teenagers do not have good morals, nor even good manners. They may disrespect the elderly, dress inappropriately, or violate cultural rules and norms that had long been ingrained in their community. Indonesians traditionally have a long history of exhibiting politeness, solving problems via deliberation, enjoying cultural diversity, maintaining tolerance, and gladly helping each other. Currently, however, there have been changes toward a hegemony in which groups behave selfishly. This decline of good character among teens is sometimes thought to occur due to progress in science and technology being accompanied by globalization. The character of teens becomes affected by trends beyond their own culture and by attitudes that are less disciplined at school and more disrespectful to their parents at home. In short, such teenagers become delinquent and even deviant (Darmadi, 2017).

In Hurlock's view, the onset of puberty occurs between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, with the final stages of this developmental period spanning the years seventeen and eighteen (Hurlock, 2003). In contrast, the World Health Organisation (WHO) defines an adolescent as someone between the ages of 10 and 19. Regardless, as they approach adulthood, adolescents' moral growth is more impacted by their interactions with peers than by adult instruction (Thalib, 2010). When adolescents experience this change in influence, they may begin to create their own opinions and values in response to their interactions with their peers, which may run counter to parental expectations or society standards. To help teenagers successfully traverse these issues, adults should offer support and advice during this crucial phase of moral development.

Youths are expected to develop morality during their transitional phase from childhood to adolescence, by which time they should have internalized the principles that are generally accepted in the surrounding adult society (Salsabila & Lessy, 2022). Furthermore, they are expected to be able to formulate concepts of morality and build their moral code to function as a guide for, and rules for, their behavior. Concurrently, the main task for achieving adult morality is to deter unacceptable actions and instead embed societally acceptable and beneficial behaviors, in accordance with the developmental stages of youth (Novitasari et al., 2021). However, not all teenagers can make the moral transition, and those who are not able to do so may instead form rules based only on their own paradigms of thought. In such cases, their social environment cannot accept, much less condone, their behavior since it is not suitable within the applicable rules in society (Hurlock, 2003).

According to Gainau, factors that influence the moral development of teenagers include five aspects. Firstly, family plays a significant role in developing the morals of teenagers. If the family is harmonious and teaches religious education and good behavior, the child may be likely to grow up with good behavior. Secondly, society affects the development of morals when individual behavior is observed and assessed based on norms that should not be violated. Thirdly, the social environment can shape and foster morality in accordance with its normative rules. Fourthly, the development of reason influences the morals of teenagers. The higher the teenager's reasoning is, in responding to the societal environment, then the stronger is the moral outlook gained by the teen. Fifthly, the modern mass media plays a significant role in influencing moral development. This factor is notable due to the rapid development of informatics and technology, which stimulates teenagers' curiosity and engagement in social media (Gainau, 2019).

Morality is key to the rise and continuance of a nation's civilization, whereas a lack of morality can lead to its fall. If a nation can build good morals for its people, then the nation will form a civilization with a noble character. However, if the youth experience moral degradation, they will be unlikely to mature into future assets for the nation. Accordingly, each generation of teenagers need to be nurtured toward worthy behaviors. Therefore, they are able to become wise human beings who serve their nation well and can help to form an even better and more advanced civilization (Muslim & Ranam, 2020).

As Setyawati and Zakiyah have stated, it is in the midst of the swift currents of globalization and easy access to information that many teenagers commit acts of juvenile delinquency. Thus, an Islamic

educational institution, such as Islamic residential school – *pesantren* -- should be able to attract parents' attention, since it can provide a safe place for education to occur amid changing times. An expression says that *pesantren* is a moral workshop that can protect the young generation because *pesantren* has an educational role in building teenagers' lives, especially in nurturing religious and spiritual aspects (Setyawati & Zakiyah, 2017). In addition, Alnasr takes note of the social problems that can harm humans, such as racial and ethnic conflicts, religious religious disputes, wars, corruption, juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, free sex, and others. Toward these problems, a comprehensive approach is needed by utilizing education to overcome those related to moral problems, especially the improvement of morality (Alnasrh, 2020). A study by Muhid et al. asserts that Islamic residential school or *pesantren* can improve the moral quality of its students by providing teachings that contain moral messages (Muhid, Asnawi, & Sa'adillah, 2018).

Islamic residential schools or *pesantren* are especially strong in delivering religious teaching. In *pesantren*, students learn either religious or science teachings with the aim at gaining knowledge to guide their behavior in accordance with Islamic teachings because individuals who have moral intelligence will have positive, correct, and honorable behavior (Suharyanto & Yunus, 2020; Urrohmah et al., 2022). Indeed, the main mission of the *pesantren* is to form students' identity with good morals so that moral values are embedded and establish sincerity, patience, trustworthiness, humility, honesty, and independence (Siroj, 2006).

Moral deficit among youth is a big issue anywhere that needs the deepest attention of educators and society. Therefore, youth vigilance and misconduct can be mitigated by the way education is oriented toward instilling strong character of the youth. In the same vein, society can take important roles by applying multiple types of education spread among the community whether it is informal or non-formal structure of education in order to tame inappropriate behavior (Lessy et al., 2022). Moral degradation occurs among students where they lack moral conduct although they have been in the school for some years, and this is an indication that there is something wrong tby the way the methods of instruction and guidance given by the teachers and the counselor at the boarding school. This research rests its focus on this matter in which scant current research studies have conducted the issue (Savitz-Romer et al., 2021). This research will fill up the rift left by previous research.

This study, therefore, focuses on the moral degradation occurring among students, who are of course in the teenage phase. They tend to behave in a manner not in accordance with their moral identity as Muslims. Their transgressions are various, such as violating rules of the residential school; being lazy about prayers at the mosque and about studying the Qur'an; behaving impolitely toward fellow students and the teachers; bringing cellphones into the dormitory; following cultural trends from abroad, such as Korea pop culture. These moral failures had actually become a tradition at *pesantren*. In grades VII and XI, the students still maintained a polite attitude and were afraid to violate rules. But when they entered grade XII, they began to exhibit moral degradation. According to the student council coordinator, who was an informant in this study, the guardians had been making various efforts to deter such moral degradation, so that the current grade XII students would not follow in the mistaken footprints of the previous cohort.

When such problems go unsolved, they have effects that are not in accordance with the Islamic residential school being a character-building institution. The goals of the guardians in any *pesantren* are to build the morality of students and to shape their noble character. These goals are deliberately built into a regulatory system so that students will be educated and moral human beings (Fauzi, 2020). So it is very unfortunate if, despite the efforts in *pesantren* to place great emphasis on moral development, there is yet evidence of contrary cadres leaning toward moral crises.

For this study, in light of such problems, we examined the efforts made by the guardians of the Datok Sulaiman Islamic Residential School in dealing with moral degradation of students. Objectives of the study are to: (1) explore guardians' methods for dealing with moral degradation of students; (2) investigate the obstacles and facilitating factors in dealing with the moral degradation, and (3) find out

the results of coaching from the residential school guardians, according to the perspective of grade XII students who experienced moral degradation.

2. METHODS

This study employed qualitative research with a phenomenological descriptive design. According to Roberts and Taylor, phenomenological studies are conducted to elucidate specific subjects in a given situation and their appearance, as well as to explore a situation to gain deep information (Roberts & Taylor, 2012). Leedy, Ormrod, and Johnson acknowledge that phenomenological study is the qualitative method that attempts to understand the perspectives of participants and their views of physical and/or social realities (Leedy, Ormrod, & Johnson, 2019). In our study, the guardians were striving by various means to forestall or correct moral decline among their XII-grade female students.

In the process of selecting a sample, we used purposive sampling, to choose the informants who would best know the information that we were seeking, and who could respond to our questions (Wolcott, 2017). We solicited two residential school guardians serving respectively as a teacher doing guidance counselling and as a builder of the student council, plus five grade XII female students experiencing moral decline. As explained by Creswell, purposive sampling is a technique in which a sample is taken with the consideration that persons chosen are those who best understand the research topics and the problems to be examined by the study (Creswell, 2015).

Data collection techniques were observations, interviews, and the study of relevant documents. This data was gathered at the Datok Sulaiman Modern Islamic Residential School, or *pesantren*, in Palopo, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. When the observations were made, it turned out that a phenomenon occurred in the *pesantren* and thus became the theme, namely the efforts of the residential school guardians in dealing with the moral degradation of grade XII students. Simultaneously, while identifying the problems, several interviews were carried out with informants who best knew about the problems. These participants included two Islamic residential school guardians and five grade XII students who experienced moral degradation. To support the observations and interviews, we also collected data from existing documents. Documentation focused on belongings of grade XII students that had been confiscated by the residential school guardians and on records of violations, which we checked carefully. According to Glesne, research that employs observations and interviews will have even more accurate results when supported by relevant documents obtained while conducting the research (Glesne, 2006).

Analysis techniques in this research include data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. In this study, the observations and interviews were analyzed, summarized, and presented in narrative form. Lastly, conclusions were drawn according to the findings obtained in the study (Yegidis, Weinbach, & Morrison-Rodriguez, 1996). According to Neuman, such research analysis uses systematically compiled data obtained from observations and interviews to then interpret such data in order to produce inferences, ideas, and knowledge (Neuman, 1997). To test the validity of data in the current study, a triangulation technique was conducted by crosschecking multiple data sources and the collection procedures, in order to ensure trustworthiness and authenticity (Wiersma & Jurs, 2019).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Roles of the Pesantren Guardians

3.1.1 Building Mutual Relationships between the Guardians and Students

Grade XII students certainly have entered the adolescent phase, and accordingly, they already have more complex thinking patterns than younger children in general and their own younger selves. The physical growth of adolescents is accompanied by ongoing development of their intellectual powers, and thereby adolescents are establishing their own mindsets regarding honesty, loyalty, or justice. Adolescents in general also have developed a logical stance and thus they seek reasons that underlie various actions. Developments in intellectual ability emboldens adolescents to enter into

discussions of ideas. This impetus to discuss serves as a way for adolescents to identify differences of opinion among their peers and to be testing their arguments (Rageliene, 2016).

The guardians know the importance of building communication with students through discussions and they know that the grade XII students can be relatively rational. Consequently, it would be better if the students were invited to a discussion, rather than immediately giving sanctions, when rules are violated. MA, the student council builder, said:

As a guardian and as a builder of the student council, I did not immediately scold or punish younger students if they made a mistake. But I explained first why they had to obey the rules and what impact it would have on them if they broke the rules. I called the students with moral problems; then gave them directions, and distributed papers containing the rules in the school. So, they do know, for example, the rules that must be complied with before entering the dormitory after semester break. After reading the rules with them, I asked whether they agreed with the sanctions. If they did not agree, then the students were allowed to express their opinions. We subsequently discussed again and took common ground as a result of the discussion. As the guardian, I chose the discussion path to build closeness with the students. (Interview with MA, 26 November 2021)

UR, the guidance and counseling teacher, as well as the leader of the residential school, also believes that:

Grade XII students are no longer children who have to be scolded when they break the rules. If we find students breaking the rules, then we give the opportunity for them to explain the reason why they violated the rules. After they explain their reason, we as patrons explain what the short-term and long-term impacts on them will be if they committed the offence. After such discussions with the students, the administration applies sanctions to the students who violated the rules, according to the specific violations they committed. (Interview with UR, 26 November 2021)

Grade XII students who are in the adolescent phase have emotional development characteristics that tend to be rebellious and overly reactive. Volatile teens commit acts that are harmful to themselves, such as opposing authority, disobeying rules, neglecting requirements, ignoring ethics, and in general rebelling against long-known and clearly applicable rules. Ironically, these emotional phenomena in adolescents are accompanied by overly sensitive, and even vulnerable feelings. Even so, these subtle sensitivities may still be helpfully guided by religious advice. Adolescents may also accept constructive criticism directed at themselves if it is conveyed gently. And importantly, adolescents can be more receptive if the person who conveys the advice can still be respectful toward them. However, teenagers will be much less likely to truly listen to an advisor who is being demeaning or insulting (Hellstrom & Beckman, 2021). Giving guidance to students during their adolescence is a complex process of remaining firm in the critique and expectations, while also providing kindly wisdom.

3.1.2 Instilling Moral Values Based on Religious Guidance

Students are the future assets of a nation; thus, the nation is necessarily affected by the principles imbued during childhood and adolescence. So, the *pesantren* and the guardians play an especially important role for fostering good morals while students attend residential schools. Accordingly, the educational agenda is closely linked with understanding and developing spiritual intelligence. For such purposes, the students not only engage in rituals and worship, but also are led to understand the significant meanings and wise purposes of worship. Gaining spiritual intelligence can lead to moral sensibility becoming a source of guidance for individual behavior (Nullens, 2019).

Maturity and wisdom are nonetheless not automatic, and the residential school guardians are always aware of the many students who, at various times, fail to respect or understand the deep purpose and meaning of praying, fasting, and reading the Qur'an. Then, students may disobey the school's rules and fail to respect others. In fact, UR revealed that:

I see a lot of students who do worship, but just because they are following the rules of the residential school. This happens when students enter grade XII, they become too lazy to go to prayer, or to study, yet they have the energy to violate rules of the residential school, and even to ignore the student council rules. In these cases, the guardians want to change the mindset and behavior of such students by exploring with them the understanding they have about both the meaning of what they should do and the purpose of why they need to obey all the rules. It is, accordingly worth noting that we try to guide them to grasp the purpose of incorporating Islamic values based on the Qur'an and Hadith. (Interview with UR, 26 November 2021)

Religiosity in adolescents is manifested in a series of their worships. The level of understanding of worship implementation for teenagers will relate to the level of understanding of norms and moral values by teens, if it can be understood and interpreted with a clear conscience. If the Islamic dimension is regularly presented amid the lives of adolescents, they will tend to uphold norms, religious values, and morals in such a way that will deter them from immoral actions. A research study by Reza stated that a higher level of religiosity in adolescents goes along with a higher level of morality in them (Reza, 2013).

To maintain the morale of the students, the guardians of *pesantren* emphasize that the classroom teachers should give moral messages to their students through an understanding of Islamic values (Suhardi, 2021). Examples are teaching the female students how to cover themselves in *aurah* (wear neat clothes), why Islam glorifies women by emphasizing *aurah*, how to follow etiquette in talking to teachers, why to maintain etiquette with one's parents, and how to behave when forming friendships. This is done so that students remain polite and know their limits, as well as women, and as an effort to prevent immoral behavior among grade XII students. MA, the student council builder, who is authorized to oversee implementation of student council rules in this residential school, said:

As a student council builder, I collaborate with the other guardian who resides in, and guards, the pesantren, and with the homeroom teacher (the teacher responsible for students during classroom instruction). We immediately report students who commit serious violations. These would be violations that can no longer be handled by the student council builder and that need to be followed up immediately. This is done so that the student council builder as soon as possible can provide a curative action to the students who commit a serious violation. The intention is to be able to prevent recurrence of the violation. (Interview with MA, 26 November 2021)

The teachers and the guardians emphasize their intent that students have morals that are in accordance with Islamic values. This is developed not just by carrying out ritual worship, but also by understanding the meanings and effects of what a person chooses to do. Moral development, as they intend for students to gain, is to be imbued by instilling religious values, pursuant to the values of the Almighty God, so that the knowledge gained while at *pesantren* can become a blessing and for themselves and society (Shihab, 2011). *Pesantren*, being an Islamic residential school, has two fundamental functions. (1) As a scholarly and religious institution, it is a center for the development and dissemination of Islamic teachings, to include creed, *shari'a*, and morality, by providing education to the students. (2) In its social function, it serves as an agent of social reform and community betterment. *Pesantren* in general, is active in social development because it is institutionally based on the values of Islamic teachings, and it plays an important role in preserving spiritual development and moral rectitude in society (Aini, 2014).

3.1.3 Preventing the Negative Effects of Globalization

The development of communication tools has contributed to the process of globalization. These tools and many other technological advances have had roles in social change and cultural exchange (Yuniarto, 2014). Effects include the Western styles of clothing worn by teenagers and by adults, which are in contrast to the traditional styles worn in Indonesian culture. Use of internet technology can negatively impact a younger generation if they trend toward behavior unsuitable for their surroundings. Young people may be led to behave impolitely and to disdain their cultural environment. Many cultures from abroad have aspects that are not suitable for teens in Indonesia to follow, yet the younger generation seems to act as they please and without regard to traditions. Over time, the moral sensibilities of the younger generation declined dangerously (Agustin, 2011).

The Datok Sulaiman Modern Islamic Residential School adults are aware of the magnitude of the influence of globalization, arising from how easily teenagers can access the internet and see so many aspects of the lives of foreign celebrities. Such views of foreign cultures, such as those from the West and Korea, are so popular that some of those cultural characteristics can affect the moral behavior of teenagers at the school. MA, a residential school guardian and student council builder, said that:

At the times when the student is allowed to be at home, the student is no longer the responsibility of the residential school guardian and the student is no longer under the supervision of the guardian. The influence of culture from abroad, such as Korea, which is now much loved by teenagers, can affect the behavior of teenagers via movies, songs, or life styles seen on television and social media. The residential school guardians try ways to discourage students from following foreign cultural aspects that can damage the morals of teenagers. The guardians also confiscate objects or attributes that have to do with foreign cultural trends. This confiscation is carried out every Sunday afternoon by the student council builder, together with the student council member on duty, by checking every student's belongings. If it turns out that a student has brought items that are not allowed, then the items will be confiscated. Also, specifically for grade XII, the checking is carried out more strictly because the guardian is worried that it is especially the grade XII students who will bring cellphones to the residential school, just like the previous generations who dared to do so. Grade XII students can be even more daring with their cellphone usage now, because they no longer have a room attendant, who used to help with monitoring students for twenty-four hours. (Interview with MA, 26 November 2021)

Pesantren as an Islamic educational institution has characteristics of strict discipline and always maintaining their institutional dignity in order that students are not affected by the negative impacts of globalization and technological progress. But the schools do not sequester themselves from the aspects of progress via current globalization that can have a positive effect on the scientific development of students. Nonetheless, almost all of the Islamic residential schools in Indonesia still forbid students to bring cellphones or read books that are not Islamic in nature. These rules aim to avoid interference in the learning process for their students (Hidayatullah, 2021). It is undeniable that cellphones also have many positive impacts that can be accessed through some features that could be provided. Nonetheless, to keep the students focused on the learning process and to keep them undisturbed by current trends that could harm morality, the students are prohibited from bringing cellphones and various foreign cultural trends into the residential school.

UR also explained the same thing as MA, that the guardians made special efforts for grade XII students, namely by conducting regular checks in the students' rooms to ensure that grade XII did not bring cellphones or other prohibited items, such as novels that were not Islamic, as well as posters, bracelets, and other items related to cultural trends from abroad. (Interview with UR, 28 November 2021)

The influence of globalization from abroad can be quite negative for the morality of students; therefore, many parents send their children to Islamic residential schools in order that their children will not be so much affected. Strict guidance in a residential school is considered important for oversight, guidance, and control of students' behavior, with the aim that they will grow up to have and to keep good morals (Tohir, 2020).

3.1.4 Calling Students' Parents If There Is No Improvement

The Islamic residential school guardians maintain the monitoring of, and providing guidance for, for all students, including those who commit major violations in grade XII.

UR explained that if a student commits a violation and has been given a punishment, but if the student has not changed according to the time period that has been mutually agreed upon between the student and the residential school guardian, then the parents of the student will be summoned to discuss the problem with their child. Communication between the residential school guardian and the parents of the students needs to be well established, so that the leaders and parents of the students can easily discuss the problems or obstacles experienced by their children while at the residential school. (Interview with MA, 3 December 2021)

Student violations at school certainly cannot be solved separately from parenting at home. Parents play a very important role in the moral development of their children, but not all students come from harmonious families or good guidance from their parents. Accordingly, it is important for the guardians to pay attention to behaviors in order to perceive and attend to the problems of students comprehensively and not half-heartedly. Various adults at the Islamic residential school need to strengthen friendships and establish intense communication in monitoring the development of students seeking knowledge (Dasir & Munawiroh, 2020). If the relationship between the residential school guardians and the parents is well established, it will be very easy for them to engage in mutual discussions about the behavioral development of the *santri*.

3.2 Impacts of the Guidance on Students

To explore the effects of guardians' guidance from the perspectives of students, interviews were conducted with five students of grade XII to obtain relevant data. The following information summarizes the opinions of five students at the Datok Sulaiman Modern Islamic Residential School: (Interviews with DA, NU, RL, CA, & WS, 5 December 2021)

According to an informant, the current grade XII tends to be more disciplined than the previous grade XII, although it is undeniable that class XII students still commit violations. One of the things that student council builders and guardians of grade XII students do to keep discipline among grade XII students is to take attendance after congregational prayers at the mosque. A great effort has been made by guardians to control grade XII students in such a way that they could be disciplined to pray five times a day in the mosque. Student council builders and guardians of students also boost holiday attendance so that guardians can use absences to identify students who return home without asking for permission. If there are students who fail to ask for permission to go home, or there are students who fail to pray in congregation at the mosque, then the guardian of the students will give punishment to discourage such actions. The punishments given usually involve memorizing a surah selected by the guardian of the *santri* or praying outdoors. Another example is if a student leaves the school grounds without permission, then she must stand in the athletic field for several hours. These two violations are such serious offenses that the punishment given is quite heavy.

One of the identities of a *santri* can be seen from the way she dresses, which is well-covered and of Islamic standards. According to the five informants, current grade XII students do wear more closed and Islamic clothing. The *pesantren* guardian emphasizes the students do so in order to be in accordance

with student council rules about robes and use veils to cover *aurah* perfectly. The guardian emphasized these rules in light of prior experience, over the years, that students in grade XII would tend to dress in ways not in accordance with the student council rules. Now students are more emphatically told to use robes and not to use clothes that are short or tight-fitting. The student council leader urges grade XII students to wear a longer and closed robe or dress, and if grade XII students are caught in violation, wearing clothes not in accordance with the student council rules, they will be given a punishment.

Mobile phone usage is one of the most sensitive issues among the students in this residential school. Both the guardians of the students and the student council builder for grade XII students warn against bringing cell phones to the residential school. Our five informants revealed that the sanction for bringing cellphones is confiscation of the cell phone without any future return of the phone to the student. The punishment from the student council builder is to destroy the item in front of all the students so that they will refrain from such infractions of the rules. The informant admitted that the grade XII students were consequently quite reluctant to bring their cellphones to the residential school for fear of such a penalty.

According to the informant, the school council leader often repeats the advice to grade XII students for maintaining good morals in accordance with Islamic teachings and for behaving on the basis of self-respect. Students should realize that their own failures to behave properly will diminish their own self-respect. And advice from the guardians is meant to encourage grade XII students' self-awareness in such a way that they do not become careless in their actions.

4. CONCLUSION

The intervention was conducted by the *pesantren* counselor, and it was fruitful to students who suffered from moral decadency. The students came from various backgrounds to the *pesantren*, but some were influenced by peers, who could be nice and welcoming, while some were naughty and had bad behavior. Therefore, the function of *pesantren* counselors is very significant in taming the negative behavior of teenagers. More recently, the societal trends due to globalization have affected the behaviors of these students. They tend to try out aspects of foreign cultures that are contradictory to their own heritage. The *pesantren* guardians have an awareness of this issue and therefore are going to considerable effort to deal with the students' moral degradation. They use several ways to curb the moral decline among their grade XII students. Firstly, the guardians and students build a mutual relationship of concern and respect. Secondly, the guardians instill and reinforce moral values in accordance with religious teachings. Thirdly, the guardians seek to prevent negative impacts from other cultures, where teenager behavior differs from the *pesantren* standards. Fourthly, the guardians consult the parents of student wrong-doers, so that these adults can know about, and monitor, and help to reshape the troubling behaviors.

The study has the limitation that it recruited small numbers of participants and had no comparative locuses to capture examples of students' experiences in other schools and *pesantren*. However, the study can imply into wider studies in the future that in dealing with young teenagers who suffer moral deficits the counselor can use a counseling program to structurally restore their misconduct and negative behavior. This can include religious teachings, spiritual advice, and nurturing leadership modelled on by the counselors in the *pesantren*.

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