

The Role Of Khitobah Practice In Enhancing Santri's Self-Confidence And Public Speaking Skills

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received:
10-04-2026
Revised:
12-05-2026
Accepted:
13-06-2026

Keywords

Khitobah; Self-Confidence;
Public Speaking; Santri;
Islamic Boarding School

ABSTRACT

Public speaking skills and self-confidence are essential competencies that santri (Islamic boarding school students) need to develop as preparation for fulfilling their roles in Islamic preaching (da'wah) and community life. However, some santri still experience nervousness, lack self-confidence, rely heavily on written speech scripts, and are unable to deliver their presentations systematically during khitobah (speech practice) activities. This study aims to describe the implementation of khitobah practice, analyze its role in enhancing the self-confidence and public speaking skills of santri, and identify the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting its effectiveness at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School. This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings indicate that khitobah practice is conducted regularly through a rotational assignment system accompanied by continuous guidance and evaluation. The practice contributes to improving santri's self-confidence, as reflected in their increased willingness to speak in public and reduced nervousness. It also enhances their public speaking skills in terms of intonation, articulation, mastery of the material, fluency of delivery, and eye contact. The effectiveness of the program is supported by encouragement from student administrators, structured mentoring, regular evaluation, opportunities for public performance, and a conducive learning environment. Meanwhile, shyness, speaking anxiety, limited experience, and technical constraints constitute the primary inhibiting factors. This study confirms that khitobah practice represents a form of experiential learning that contributes to the development of santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills and may serve as a reference for the development of communication training programs in Islamic boarding schools.



Pendahuluan

Public speaking is one of the essential twenty-first-century skills increasingly required across various fields, including education, organizational settings, and socio-religious activities. This competency extends beyond the ability to speak before an audience; it also encompasses the capacity to communicate ideas systematically, persuasively, and effectively. In the context of Islamic education, public speaking is regarded as a strategic competency because it is closely associated with the mission of da'wah (Islamic preaching), the dissemination of Islamic values, and the strengthening of students' social roles. Meifilina (2021) explains that public speaking involves mastery of the subject matter, verbal communication skills, appropriate intonation, effective use of body language, and meaningful interaction with the audience. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions are expected to cultivate students' communication skills as an integral part of developing adaptive and communicative human resources.

Within the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) environment, the development of santri's communication skills occupies a central role, as santri are prepared not only to acquire Islamic knowledge but also to become agents of da'wah capable of conveying Islamic teachings to the wider community. One of the programs commonly implemented to foster these competencies is khitobah or muhadharah (public speech training). This activity provides santri with opportunities to practice public speaking through speeches, religious lectures, and the delivery of Islamic messages. Previous studies by Wahidah and Fatikhun (2022), Aldiyansah (2021), and Sya'bana and Hamama (2023) demonstrate that regular khitobah practice enhances students' confidence in public performance, communication competence, mastery of the subject matter, and public speaking skills. Accordingly, khitobah functions not only as a medium for developing da'wah competencies but also as an effective means of fostering soft skills that are relevant to the demands of contemporary society.

Although khitobah has become a routine program in many pesantren, its effectiveness in improving santri's communication skills and self-confidence remains inconsistent. Preliminary findings at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School indicate that some santri, particularly those at the junior secondary level, continue to encounter difficulties during khitobah activities. Several students appear nervous when speaking before an audience, struggle to maintain eye contact, use unclear intonation, and rely heavily on written speech scripts when delivering their presentations. Furthermore, some santri are unable to organize their speech content systematically and exhibit symptoms of public speaking anxiety. These findings reveal a gap between the intended role of khitobah as a medium for communication skills development and the actual competencies demonstrated by some santri in practice. Yet, public speaking skills and self-confidence constitute

essential assets for santri in fulfilling their social, leadership, and da'wah responsibilities within the community.

From an academic perspective, research on khitobah, muhadharah, self-confidence, and santri's public speaking has evolved along several major strands. First, a number of studies have examined the implementation of khitobah programs as a means of improving santri's communication and public speaking skills (Wahidah & Fatikhun, 2022; Muttaqin et al., 2025; Zahri & Farhan, 2023). Second, other studies have explored the role of khitobah in fostering self-confidence and the courage to speak before an audience (Aropah, 2016; Rahayu et al., 2024; Millati, 2025). Third, several researchers have focused on the development of life skills, communication skills, and santri's social competencies through muhadharah programs and public speaking training (Syahrendi et al., 2024; Arifandi et al., 2025; Ma'ruf & Purwanto, 2021). Overall, these studies indicate that communication practice-based activities have a positive impact on the development of santri's personal and social competencies.

Nevertheless, previous studies exhibit several limitations. Most have tended to examine self-confidence and public speaking skills as separate constructs, resulting in a lack of comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the two within a single research framework. Furthermore, the majority of studies have concentrated primarily on the implementation of khitobah programs without providing an in-depth explanation of the mechanisms through which khitobah practice fosters santri's self-confidence and communication skills. Another limitation concerns the research context, as existing studies have been conducted in different pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) and therefore do not adequately represent the distinctive characteristics of khitobah implementation at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School, where the khitobah program is organized through a more comprehensive and structured series of activities than is commonly found in other pesantren. Consequently, a research gap remains regarding a more comprehensive understanding of the contribution of khitobah practice to the development of santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills.

In response to this gap, the present study offers a novel contribution by providing a simultaneous analysis of the role of khitobah practice in enhancing both the self-confidence and public speaking skills of junior secondary-level santri at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School. This study not only describes the implementation of khitobah activities but also examines the relationship between practical speaking experiences, the development of confidence in public performance, and the improvement of santri's communication skills. In addition, it identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the effectiveness of khitobah as a medium for communication skills development. Accordingly, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the scholarship on pesantren education while offering practical implications for the development of communication- and da'wah-based santri development programs.

This study is grounded in the assumption that khitobah practice represents a form of experiential learning, or learning by doing, through which santri develop communication skills by engaging in repeated practice. Direct experience of speaking before an audience enables santri to build confidence, reduce public speaking anxiety, and strengthen their belief in their own abilities. According to Lauster (2012) and Hakim (2021), self-confidence develops through successful experiences, habituation, and positive reinforcement from the surrounding environment. Within the pesantren context, such experiences are acquired through santri's active participation in khitobah activities. Therefore, this study argues that the regular implementation of khitobah plays a significant role in fostering santri's self-confidence while simultaneously enhancing their public speaking skills through continuous practice, habituation, and sustained communication experiences.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of khitobah practice in enhancing santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills within the natural context of an Islamic boarding school (pesantren). A case study design enables researchers to explore a phenomenon comprehensively through participants' experiences, interactions, and perspectives in a real-life setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). In this study, the phenomenon under investigation was the implementation of khitobah activities and their contribution to the development of santri's communication skills and self-confidence at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School.

The study was conducted at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School from May 28 to June 22, 2026. The research site was selected because khitobah is implemented regularly as an integral component of the santri development program. Furthermore, preliminary observations indicated that some santri, particularly those at the junior secondary level, continued to experience difficulties in public speaking, including nervousness, dependence on written speech scripts, limited eye contact with the audience, and low self-confidence during presentations. These conditions made Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School an appropriate setting for examining the role of khitobah practice in developing santri's communication skills.

Research participants were selected using purposive sampling, whereby individuals were chosen based on their knowledge of and direct involvement in the implementation of khitobah activities (Patton, 2015). The participants comprised three groups: (1) pesantren administrators responsible for organizing khitobah activities; (2) khitobah supervisors or mentors who guided santri throughout the preparation and implementation processes; and (3) junior secondary-level santri who actively participated in khitobah activities. The selection of these participants was intended to obtain comprehensive data regarding the implementation of khitobah, changes in santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills, and the factors influencing the effectiveness of the program.

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine the implementation of khitobah activities, santri participation, speaking performance, interaction with the audience, and the overall dynamics of the activities. Semi-structured interviews were employed to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and views regarding the role of khitobah in enhancing santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills. This interview format enabled the researcher to obtain rich and in-depth information while maintaining alignment with the study objectives (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Documentation was used to complement the data through the collection of activity schedules, evaluation records, pesantren archives, photographs of activities, and other documents relevant to the study.

Data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting, focusing, and simplifying the information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation in accordance with the research objectives. Subsequently, the data were presented in the form of narrative descriptions and thematic categories to facilitate interpretation. The final stage involved drawing and verifying conclusions through an ongoing process of identifying patterns, relationships, and meanings emerging from the data. Data analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection, allowing the researcher to further explore emerging findings throughout the fieldwork process.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, both source triangulation and methodological triangulation were employed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from pesantren administrators, khitobah mentors, and santri. Methodological triangulation involved comparing data collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, member checking was conducted with several participants to verify that the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected their experiences and perspectives. These procedures were undertaken to enhance the trustworthiness and accuracy of the research findings.

This study adhered to the ethical principles of social and educational research. Prior to data collection, the researcher explained the objectives of the study, the research procedures, and the participants' right to participate voluntarily. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the interviews and observations were conducted. All participants' identities were anonymized to ensure confidentiality and protect their privacy. Furthermore, the research process was carried out without disrupting the learning activities or the daily routines of the pesantren (Islamic boarding school). The data collected were used solely for academic purposes and were securely stored throughout the research process.

Results and Discussion

The findings indicate that khitobah practice constitutes one of the santri development programs conducted regularly every Saturday evening. Based on

interviews with pesantren administrators and khitobah mentors, the program was designed to strengthen santri's mental preparedness, cultivate the habit of speaking before an audience, and prepare them to deliver Islamic teachings effectively when serving the wider community.

The implementation of khitobah follows a rotational system across the pesantren residential complexes, ensuring that all santri are given equal opportunities to participate. During each session, several participants are assigned specific roles, including master of ceremonies (MC), Qur'an reciter, tahlil reciter, speaker delivering the opening remarks, Al-Barzanji reciter, main speaker, and prayer leader. Prior to the activity, santri receive practice sessions with the administrators according to their assigned responsibilities and are provided with guidance whenever they encounter difficulties. At the conclusion of each session, the administrators evaluate the participants' performances to provide constructive feedback for future improvement.

One pesantren administrator explained:

"Khitobah activities are conducted every Saturday evening using a rotational system across the residential complexes, and all santri must be prepared if they are assigned to perform in the following week's session."

This statement was corroborated by the interview findings from the santri. Most participants reported that they had been involved in khitobah activities since entering the pesantren, allowing them to develop their public speaking skills through continuous practice. They also explained that, before performing, they typically prepared by memorizing their speech, studying the assigned material, practicing Al-Barzanji recitation, and rehearsing with fellow santri and khitobah administrators.

The observational findings further revealed that the entire sequence of activities was conducted systematically according to the predetermined program schedule. Each participant performed the assigned role in turn, while the administrators supervised the proceedings and provided evaluative feedback after the completion of the entire program.

Tabel 1. Pelaksanaan Praktik Khitobah

Aspect	Research Findings
Frequency of implementation	Every Saturday evening
Implementation system	Rotational system across pesantren residential complexes
Participants	All santri are given equal opportunities to participate
Preparation	Practice sessions with pesantren administrators based on assigned roles
Evaluation	Conducted after the completion of each khitobah session

The Role of Khitobah Practice in Enhancing Santri's Self-Confidence and Public Speaking Skills

The findings indicate that santri experienced noticeable improvements in self-confidence after participating regularly in khitobah activities. Based on interviews with pesantren administrators, santri initially exhibited nervousness, anxiety, trembling voices, low self-confidence, and fear of speaking before a large audience when they first participated in khitobah. However, after taking part in several sessions, the administrators observed that the santri became more willing to speak in public, appeared calmer while delivering their speeches, and no longer felt embarrassed when standing before an audience.

One khitobah mentor stated:

"Through this program, santri develop self-confidence more rapidly. Those who initially appeared nervous and visibly trembled became more confident and composed after participating in khitobah several times."

These findings were consistent with the interview responses from the santri. Nearly all participants reported that, when they first joined khitobah, they were afraid of making mistakes, felt embarrassed, lacked self-confidence, and were anxious about becoming the center of attention among their peers. After participating regularly in khitobah, they reported becoming more confident in speaking before an audience, more willing to express their opinions, and better prepared to speak when called upon to address members of the wider community.

In addition to enhancing self-confidence, the findings also revealed significant improvements in the santri's public speaking skills. According to the pesantren administrators, many santri initially spoke with unclear intonation, trembling voices, relied heavily on written speech scripts, and were unable to present their material in a coherent and systematic manner. After being given repeated opportunities to perform, their abilities improved considerably, particularly in terms of intonation, articulation, mastery of the subject matter, fluency of delivery, and confidence in maintaining eye contact with the audience.

The santri provided similar accounts. They reported that khitobah activities helped them improve their mastery of the subject matter, speak more fluently, reduce their reliance on written speech scripts, and enhance their ability to maintain eye contact with the audience. Nevertheless, several santri acknowledged that they still experienced difficulties memorizing their presentation materials and occasionally continued to feel nervous when speaking before a large audience.

Observations conducted throughout the study revealed noticeable differences in performance between santri who frequently had opportunities to perform and those who participated less often. Santri who were more actively involved appeared more composed while speaking, used clearer intonation, presented their ideas in a more systematic manner, and demonstrated more effective eye contact with the audience.

Table 2. Changes in Santri's Self-Confidence and Public Speaking Skills

Before Participating in Khitobah	After Participating in Khitobah
Nervous and anxious	More composed when speaking in public
Low self-confidence	Greater self-confidence
Trembling voice	More stable delivery
Reliance on written speech scripts	Reduced reliance on written speech scripts
Unclear intonation	Clearer intonation
Limited mastery of the subject matter	Improved mastery of the subject matter
Limited eye contact	Better eye contact with the audience
Presentation not yet systematic	More organized and systematic presentation

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Khitobah Practice

The study also identified several factors influencing the effectiveness of khitobah practice. Based on interviews with pesantren administrators and khitobah mentors, the primary supporting factors included the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure, such as a sound system and other equipment, pre-performance guidance, motivational support from the administrators, regular post-activity evaluations, and equal opportunities for all santri to participate through a rotational assignment system.

The santri's responses further reinforced these findings. They explained that the guidance, encouragement, and mentoring provided by the administrators made them feel better prepared before performing. In addition, support from their peers during khitobah activities helped reduce their nervousness, thereby increasing their confidence in carrying out their assigned roles.

On the other hand, the study identified several inhibiting factors. Interviews with pesantren administrators revealed that the most common obstacles included the absence of scheduled participants and administrative meetings that occasionally required khitobah sessions to be postponed. Beyond these technical issues, the administrators also emphasized that the diverse characteristics of santri presented an additional challenge, as not all participants possessed the same level of self-confidence. Some santri continued to exhibit shyness, low self-confidence, and limited experience in speaking before an audience.

The interview findings with the santri indicated that the most frequently encountered challenges were fear of making mistakes, nervousness during public performances, low self-confidence, and difficulties memorizing the presentation material. Nevertheless, they consistently reported that repeated practice and continuous encouragement from the pesantren administrators gradually helped them overcome these obstacles over time.

Table 3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors Affecting Khitobah Practice

Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
Motivation from pesantren administrators	Shyness
Pre-performance guidance	Nervousness when speaking in public
Regular evaluation	Low self-confidence
Rotational opportunities to perform	Limited experience
Peer support	Difficulty memorizing presentation materials
Adequate facilities and infrastructure	Absence of scheduled participants and scheduling conflicts among pesantren administrators

The findings indicate that khitobah practice at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School is conducted regularly every Saturday evening through a rotational assignment system accompanied by guidance and evaluation. Interview data obtained from both pesantren administrators and santri revealed improvements in self-confidence, as reflected in increased willingness to speak before an audience, reduced nervousness, and greater composure during public speaking. In addition, the findings demonstrated improvements in public speaking skills, including intonation, articulation, mastery of the subject matter, fluency of delivery, and eye contact with the audience. The study also identified that the success of the program was supported by motivation, mentoring, regular evaluation, opportunities to perform, peer support, and adequate facilities, whereas the primary obstacles included shyness, public speaking anxiety, limited experience, difficulties memorizing presentation materials, and technical constraints related to program implementation.

Khitobah Practice as Experiential Learning for the Development of Santri Competencies

The findings demonstrate that khitobah practice at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School is conducted regularly every Saturday evening through a rotational system across the pesantren residential complexes, ensuring that all santri are provided with equal opportunities to perform. The implementation of the program extends beyond merely assigning santri to speak before an audience. Rather, it begins with a preparation phase involving guidance from pesantren

administrators, continues with direct speaking practice, and concludes with an evaluation of each participant's performance. These findings suggest that khitobah is implemented as a gradual and continuous learning process rather than merely as a ceremonial activity.

This implementation demonstrates that khitobah functions as a learning medium through which santri gain authentic experience in delivering Islamic teachings before an audience. The rotational opportunities to perform ensure that every santri undergoes a comparable learning process, while the practice sessions and post-performance evaluations enable participants to recognize their weaknesses and improve their performance in subsequent sessions. Consequently, the learning process does not end with the completion of the activity but continues through ongoing reflection and continuous improvement.

These findings are consistent with Experiential Learning Theory proposed by Kolb (1984). According to this theory, effective learning occurs through four interrelated stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Within the context of this study, santri gained concrete experience while performing their assigned roles during khitobah activities and subsequently engaged in reflective observation through the evaluations provided by the pesantren administrators after each session. These evaluations enabled the santri to identify areas requiring improvement and to prepare more effectively for future performances. This cycle was repeated each time santri participated in khitobah, allowing learning to occur through direct experience (learning by doing).

The provision of guidance before performances and evaluation after each activity further indicates that khitobah emphasizes not only learning outcomes but also the learning process itself. Pesantren administrators function as facilitators by assisting santri in preparing their presentation materials, providing technical guidance, and evaluating aspects of their performance that require further improvement. This finding demonstrates that learning within khitobah develops through the interaction of experience, mentoring, and reflection, thereby enabling santri to improve their performance progressively. These findings reinforce Kolb's (1984) proposition that meaningful learning experiences lead to competence development when accompanied by reflection and opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in subsequent learning experiences.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Aldiyansah (2021), who argued that muhadharah serves as an effective medium for public speaking practice because it provides santri with direct opportunities to perform before an audience. Similar findings were reported by Wahidah and Fatikhun (2022), who concluded that the regular implementation of khitobah enhances santri's communication skills through continuous habituation to public speaking. Furthermore, Muttaqin et al. (2025) found that khitobah programs accompanied by systematic mentoring and evaluation improve santri's preparedness to deliver

Islamic teachings effectively. The present findings also support the study by Zahri and Farhan (2023), which identified khitobah as an effective medium for communication and da'wah learning within the pesantren environment.

Nevertheless, this study extends previous research in several important respects. Earlier studies have generally focused on the implementation of khitobah programs or their impact on santri's public speaking abilities. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that the effectiveness of khitobah is determined not only by the frequency of its implementation but also by the presence of a continuous learning cycle consisting of opportunities to perform, pre-performance guidance, post-activity evaluation, and opportunities for participants to improve their performance in subsequent sessions.

The academic implication of these findings is that khitobah practice can be understood as a model of experiential learning within pesantren education. This model demonstrates that the development of santri's communication competencies occurs through the integration of direct experience, habituation, reflection, and mentoring. From a practical perspective, the findings underscore the importance of maintaining systematic mentoring, continuous evaluation, and equitable opportunities for all santri to perform so that the learning process embedded in khitobah activities can be sustained effectively and continuously.

The Role of Khitobah Practice in Enhancing Santri's Self-Confidence and Public Speaking Skills

The findings indicate that khitobah practice contributes significantly to enhancing santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills. Before participating regularly in khitobah activities, most santri experienced nervousness, fear, embarrassment, low self-confidence, trembling voices, and a strong reliance on written speech scripts when speaking before an audience. Following sustained participation in khitobah, they demonstrated substantial improvements, including greater confidence in public performance, increased composure while speaking, enhanced mastery of the subject matter, clearer intonation, more systematic presentation of ideas, and improved ability to maintain eye contact with the audience. These improvements did not occur immediately but developed progressively as santri accumulated experience through repeated participation in khitobah practice.

These findings suggest that improvements in santri's self-confidence result from a gradual learning process fostered through repeated public speaking experiences. Regular opportunities to address an audience enable santri to recognize their own capabilities, reduce public speaking anxiety, and strengthen their belief in their ability to fulfill assigned responsibilities. Consequently, khitobah practice not only develops technical public speaking skills but also cultivates the psychological readiness that underpins confidence in public communication.

These findings can be interpreted through Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura, individuals' beliefs in their capabilities develop through mastery experiences, social persuasion, and repeated learning

experiences. In the context of this study, rotational opportunities to perform provided santri with authentic experiences in overcoming their fear of public speaking. Furthermore, the guidance and motivation provided by pesantren administrators before each performance, together with the evaluations conducted afterward, served as forms of social persuasion that strengthened santri's confidence in their own abilities. Therefore, the improvement in self-confidence identified in this study was influenced not only by the frequency of practice but also by the continuous mentoring process embedded within khitobah activities.

In addition to enhancing self-confidence, this study also identified significant improvements in santri's public speaking skills. The most notable developments were observed in intonation, articulation, mastery of the subject matter, fluency of delivery, and the ability to maintain effective eye contact with the audience. These indicators are consistent with Meifilina's (2021) conceptualization of public speaking, which argues that effective public speaking is determined not only by the confidence to speak before an audience but also by the quality of message delivery, mastery of the subject matter, effective voice utilization, and the ability to establish meaningful interaction with the audience. Accordingly, khitobah practice provides santri with opportunities to develop both the psychological and technical dimensions of communication simultaneously.

The findings of this study reinforce those of Aropah (2016), who reported that khitobah training contributes to improving santri's self-confidence. Similar conclusions were drawn by Rahayu et al. (2024) and Millati (2025), who demonstrated that khitobah activities foster self-confidence through the habituation of public speaking. From the perspective of public speaking competence, the present findings are also consistent with those of Aldiyansah (2021), Wahidah and Fatikhun (2022), Syahrendi et al. (2024), and Arifandi et al. (2025), all of whom concluded that muhadharah or khitobah activities contribute to the enhancement of santri's communication skills, particularly in terms of speaking confidence, mastery of the subject matter, and more effective message delivery.

Nevertheless, this study extends the findings of previous research. Most earlier studies have examined self-confidence and public speaking as two separate constructs. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that these two dimensions develop simultaneously through the same learning process. Improved self-confidence encourages santri to speak more confidently before an audience, while increased opportunities for public speaking practice further enhance the quality of their public speaking skills. This reciprocal relationship indicates that the development of psychological attributes and communication competencies occurs through a mutually reinforcing process within khitobah practice.

Another noteworthy finding is that improvements in self-confidence appear to occur more rapidly than improvements in public speaking skills. Based on the interview data, santri tended to demonstrate greater willingness to perform before an audience relatively early, whereas the development of technical competencies, such as mastery of the subject matter, effective use of intonation, and systematic presentation of ideas, required a longer period of practice. This pattern suggests that the confidence to speak publicly constitutes a prerequisite for the development of more advanced communication skills. Accordingly, the learning process embedded

in khitobah progresses in stages, beginning with the development of psychological readiness and subsequently advancing toward greater proficiency in public speaking.

The academic implication of these findings is that khitobah practice can be understood as a learning strategy that simultaneously integrates the development of affective attributes and communication skills. Within the context of pesantren education, khitobah functions not only as a medium for da'wah training but also as a means of developing soft skills that are essential for santri's interactions within the wider community. From a practical perspective, the findings underscore the importance of maintaining the continuity of khitobah activities, ensuring equitable opportunities for all santri to perform, and sustaining systematic mentoring and evaluation so that the development of self-confidence and public speaking skills can continue progressively over time.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Khitobah Practice in Developing Self-Confidence and Public Speaking Skills

The findings indicate that the effectiveness of khitobah practice is influenced by a range of interrelated supporting and inhibiting factors. The primary supporting factors identified include motivation and guidance provided by pesantren administrators, post-activity evaluation, rotational opportunities to perform, peer support, and the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure. Conversely, the study identified several inhibiting factors, including shyness, nervousness when speaking before an audience, low self-confidence, limited public speaking experience, difficulties memorizing presentation materials, and technical constraints, such as the absence of scheduled participants and scheduling conflicts involving pesantren administrators. These findings suggest that the success of khitobah practice depends not only on the implementation of the program itself but also on individual characteristics of santri and the support provided by the pesantren environment.

Within the context of this study, the motivation and guidance provided by pesantren administrators played a crucial role in helping santri overcome public speaking anxiety. Pre-performance mentoring enabled santri to prepare their presentation materials and gain a clear understanding of their assigned responsibilities, while post-performance evaluation helped them identify aspects of their performance that required further improvement. Furthermore, the rotational system ensured that all santri had relatively equal opportunities to gain practical experience in developing their public speaking abilities. Consequently, the pesantren environment not only provides opportunities for practice but also fosters a supportive learning climate that facilitates the development of santri's communication competencies.

These findings can be interpreted through Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984), which emphasizes the importance of experience, reflection, and repeated practice in fostering meaningful learning. In the present study, motivation, guidance, and evaluation constituted integral components of the reflective process that enabled santri to make sense of their learning experiences, while regular opportunities to perform represented a form of active experimentation, allowing them to apply feedback from previous evaluations to

subsequent performances. In other words, the supporting factors identified in this study sustained the experiential learning cycle, thereby facilitating the gradual and continuous development of santri's competencies.

Furthermore, these supporting factors can also be interpreted through Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1997). Bandura argues that individuals' beliefs in their capabilities are shaped by mastery experiences, social support, and verbal persuasion from their surrounding environment. In the context of this study, motivation provided by pesantren administrators, support from peers, and the successful completion of khitobah assignments constituted positive experiences that strengthened santri's self-confidence. Conversely, shyness, public speaking anxiety, and limited experience indicate that not all santri possessed the same level of self-efficacy when they first participated in the program. Therefore, continuous mentoring emerged as a crucial factor in helping santri strengthen their confidence in their public speaking abilities.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Sya'bana and Hamama (2023), who reported that the success of khitobah programs is strongly influenced by the active role of pesantren administrators in organizing activities and mentoring santri throughout the training process. These findings also support those of Syahrendi et al. (2024), who emphasized that continuous mentoring contributes significantly to the development of santri's life skills, particularly their communication competencies. Likewise, Ma'ruf and Purwanto (2021) found that intensive mentoring effectively enhances santri's confidence in speaking before an audience. Similar conclusions were reached by Arifandi et al. (2025), who highlighted the importance of repeated practice and a supportive learning environment in improving santri's public speaking skills.

On the other hand, this study also extends previous research. Earlier studies primarily emphasized supporting factors, such as structured practice and mentoring. The present study demonstrates that internal factors among santri, including shyness, low self-confidence, public speaking anxiety, and limited speaking experience, remain major challenges despite the regular implementation of khitobah activities. In addition, the study identified technical constraints, such as the absence of scheduled participants and scheduling conflicts involving pesantren administrators, which may affect the smooth implementation of the program. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of khitobah is shaped by the interaction of personal, pedagogical, and organizational factors.

The academic implication of these findings is that the development of santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills cannot be separated from the support of a conducive learning environment. Khitobah practice is likely to produce more optimal outcomes when supported by a structured mentoring system, continuous evaluation, and equitable opportunities for all santri to perform. From a practical perspective, pesantren should maintain the existing mechanisms of mentoring and evaluation while simultaneously developing strategies to address the internal challenges experienced by santri. These strategies may include collaborative practice sessions, simulated public speaking activities, individualized mentoring for santri who remain reluctant to speak in public, and more effective scheduling of program activities. Such efforts are expected to enhance the long-term effectiveness

of khitobah practice as a means of fostering santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills.

Overall, the findings indicate that khitobah practice at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School represents an experiential learning process that contributes to the development of santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills. The regular implementation of khitobah activities, accompanied by mentoring, rotational opportunities to perform, and post-performance evaluation, establishes a continuous learning cycle that enables santri to gain direct experience, engage in reflection, and improve their performance in subsequent sessions. This pattern demonstrates that the development of santri's competencies does not occur instantaneously but evolves gradually through a sustained process of practice.

The findings also reveal a mutually reinforcing relationship between self-confidence and public speaking skills. Repeated opportunities to perform strengthen santri's confidence in their own abilities, while increased self-confidence encourages them to speak more confidently, demonstrate greater mastery of the subject matter, and communicate their messages more effectively before an audience. Accordingly, khitobah practice not only enhances the technical aspects of public speaking but also fosters the psychological readiness that serves as the foundation for the development of santri's communication competencies.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the literature by extending the understanding of khitobah practice as an experiential learning model within the context of pesantren education. Unlike previous studies, which have generally focused either on the implementation of khitobah or on its impact on a single aspect of santri's competencies, the present study demonstrates that improvements in self-confidence and public speaking skills emerge from an integrated learning process involving direct experience, habituation, mentoring, and evaluation. Consequently, this study enriches the scholarship on pesantren education, particularly regarding the development of santri's soft skills through non-formal learning activities.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that pesantren administrators should maintain and further strengthen the existing khitobah development system through more intensive mentoring, continuous evaluation, and equitable opportunities for all santri to perform. In addition, specific interventions are needed for santri who continue to experience shyness, public speaking anxiety, or low self-confidence. Such interventions may include gradual practice, simulated public speaking activities in small groups, and individualized mentoring before speaking in larger public forums. These efforts are expected to maximize the effectiveness of khitobah as a medium for fostering santri's psychological development and communication skills.

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted at a single pesantren (Islamic boarding school) using a case study approach; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all pesantren educational institutions. Second, the study focused exclusively on junior secondary-level santri, and thus does not

capture the development of santri's competencies across other educational levels. Accordingly, future research is encouraged to involve a wider range of pesantren with diverse characteristics, adopt comparative or mixed-methods approaches, and develop more specific measurement instruments to assess the longitudinal development of santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills. Such efforts would enable the effectiveness of khitobah practice to be examined across broader contexts and provide more comprehensive contributions to the advancement of Islamic education.

Conclusion

This study successfully addressed its research objectives by demonstrating that khitobah practice at Nurul Muttaqin Kemiri Islamic Boarding School is implemented systematically through regular activities that incorporate mentoring, rotational opportunities to perform, and continuous evaluation. Khitobah serves not only as a medium for public speaking practice but also as an effective means of enhancing santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills. These improvements are reflected in greater confidence when speaking before an audience, reduced nervousness, enhanced mastery of the subject matter, improved intonation and articulation, greater fluency of delivery, and stronger ability to maintain eye contact with the audience. The effectiveness of khitobah practice is influenced by mentoring support, motivation, continuous evaluation, equitable opportunities to perform, and a conducive learning environment. Nevertheless, shyness, public speaking anxiety, limited experience, and several technical constraints continue to hinder the development of some santri.

This study contributes to the advancement of Islamic education scholarship, particularly in the field of pesantren education, by conceptualizing khitobah practice as an experiential learning model that integrates the development of affective attributes and communication skills. The findings demonstrate that improvements in self-confidence and public speaking skills emerge through a continuous learning process characterized by repeated practice, reflection, mentoring, and ongoing evaluation. From a practical perspective, these findings may serve as a reference for pesantren administrators in designing more structured khitobah programs through enhanced mentoring, systematic evaluation, equitable opportunities for participation, and the provision of a learning environment that encourages confidence and active participation among santri.

The findings further emphasize that the development of santri's communication competencies cannot rely solely on theoretical instruction but requires sustained practical experience in authentic contexts. Therefore, khitobah practice should be maintained and further developed as a strategic component of soft skills development within pesantren. Beyond strengthening communication competencies, khitobah also has the potential to foster character development, leadership capacity, and santri's readiness to fulfill socio-religious roles within the community. Future research is recommended to investigate khitobah practice across different types of pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions, employ comparative or mixed-methods approaches, and examine its influence on

additional competencies, such as leadership, da'wah competence, interpersonal communication, and santri's social readiness.

Study Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted in only one Islamic boarding school using a case study approach, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other pesantren contexts. Second, the study focused exclusively on junior secondary-level santri and therefore did not examine the implementation or impact of khitobah practice across other educational levels. Third, the relatively short research period did not allow for the observation of long-term changes in santri's self-confidence and public speaking skills. Accordingly, future studies are encouraged to include more diverse research settings, a larger number of participants, and longer observation periods in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of khitobah practice in fostering santri's competencies.

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