

Designing an Integrated Curriculum at Islamic Junior High School

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to analyze the integrated curriculum design planning at MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap. This Sresearch uses a qualitative approach with a case study research type with multiple case analysis units. Data collection was carried out by participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis used data collection techniques, data condensation, data presentation, and then drawing conclusions and verification. The results of the research show that: The integrated Madrasah curriculum planning at Nurul Iman Cilacap is carried out by: a) integrating curriculum objectives, namely aligning the vision for the development of general knowledge, religion, skills and noble character, and b) integrating the organization of curriculum content by juxtaposing Islamic religious material in the same subject area.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important factor in determining the progress of a nation (Fatimah & Mahmudah, 2017; Hasan, 2024). Good education will produce a good generation for the nation (González García et al., 2020; Mandasyahri et al., 2023). One of the successes of a nation's education can be seen from the use of a curriculum that encourages its students to continue to learn and develop (Ali, 2020; Hosaini et al., 2024; Pratama et al., 2022; Rokhmaniyah et al., 2019). To achieve all of this, the use of a good curriculum and principles is needed to determine the direction and goals of education. The curriculum is a core component in the national education system, including the Islamic education system, which is constantly developed as an effort to fulfill the psychological, spiritual, and material needs of its society, aligned with educational goals to create a better life (Ali, 2020; Frank Angelo, 2023). The curriculum is always dynamic and flexible, influenced by changes in several underlying situational and conditional factors.

The implementation of character education in educational institutions can be carried out by combining or integrating formal education and Islamic boarding schools (Hasan, 2024; Mandasyahri et al., 2023). Integrated education between schools or madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools has at least two different models. Where he distinguishes it into two different forms. Namely, first, it is referred to as an "integrated school" (integrating an existing school with an Islamic boarding schools), second, "integrating a school with an Islamic boarding schools " (an existing non-formal institution).

This second integrated education model is the one implemented at MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap. Where they integrate Islamic boarding schools' education into a formal education institution (school), namely at MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap. This means that the Islamic boarding schools, as a non-formal institution, was established first. Due to the large number of students from various regions, the Islamic boarding schools adopted formal education as a platform for the students in the Islamic boarding schools. From the observations carried out by the researchers, it shows the phenomenon of the integration of the Islamic boarding schools and school education systems at MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap. MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap has implemented school curriculum management (integrated). The results also indicate that the content of the Islamic boarding schools and school curriculum materials runs independently, in other words, there is no integration in the form of merging the scientific materials of the Islamic boarding schools and the school.

Islamic education in Indonesia plays a fundamental role in shaping the character of the younger generation and developing comprehensive intellectual capacity. Islamic boarding schools, as indigenous educational institutions, have proven to be the main pillars in social transformation and national character building. Islamic boarding school-based Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) occupy a strategic position in the national education ecosystem, integrating Islamic scientific traditions with the demands of contemporary education. The current reality of education reveals a significant gap between conventional curriculum

practices and the need for holistic student potential development (Mandasyahri et al., 2023; Rozi et al., 2023). The dichotomy between general knowledge and religious knowledge remains a major challenge in the Islamic education system. The existing curriculum tends to artificially separate scientific, technological, and spiritual values, thus hindering the process of meaningful knowledge internalization.

Many studies have examined the integration of curriculum in formal schools and Islamic boarding schools. Ali found that to create an integrated curriculum program between schools and Islamic boarding schools, it should be adjusted based on the vision and mission objectives. Teaching and learning activities in schools and Islamic boarding schools are determining factors in the success of implementing an integrated curriculum program (Ali, 2020). Pratama et al. found a similar finding that integrated curriculum planning is based on institutional foundations. Curriculum implementation consists of systems and strategies in education and teaching (Pratama et al., 2022).

Based on the explanation, this research examines in more detail how to design the preparation for creating an integrated curriculum in formal schools, namely MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap and Islamic Boarding Schools. Thus, it obtains an overview of how to plan an integrated curriculum for other schools and Islamic boarding schools as an effort to optimize students' potential.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Education is the most important factor in determining the progress of a nation (Fatimah & Mahmudah, 2017; Hasan, 2024). Good education will produce a good generation for the nation (González García et al., 2020; Mandasyahri et al., 2023). One of the successes of a nation's education can be seen from the use of a curriculum that encourages its students to continue to learn and develop (Ali, 2020; Hosaini et al., 2024; Pratama et al., 2022; Rokhmaniyah et al., 2019). The implementation of character education in educational institutions can be carried out by combining or integrating formal education and Islamic boarding schools (Hasan, 2024; Mandasyahri et al., 2023).

METHODOLOGY

The approach used in this research is a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is one that uses a basic paradigm of knowledge based on a constructivist view, namely individual, social, and historical views, which are intended for the development of a theory. This type of research is field research. This research aims to understand the experiences, perceptions, and meanings given by individuals or groups to a social phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). The subjects in this research are the school principal, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, the head of the Islamic boarding school, teachers, and ustadz (Islamic teachers) at the Islamic boarding school. The data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation. Triangulation is used to determine the validity of the research data. The data analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman and Saldana model, which includes four stages: data

collection, data condensation, data presentation, and data verification (Miles et al., 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum planning is further divided into several sub-discussions, namely, first, the objectives of the curriculum, and second, the organization of the curriculum content. These activities are a series of activities in curriculum planning, which will produce instructional documents for the madrasah and Islamic boarding schools curriculum before implementation. The data obtained is limited to the educational unit level curriculum objectives (madrasah/school). These curriculum objectives are none other than the educational goals at MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan, which are stated in the madrasah's vision, detailed in the madrasah's mission, and elaborated into ideal achievements in the madrasah's objectives. The details are as follows:

Vision: To Become a Madrasah that is Pious, Excellent, Capable, and Achieves Prestigious Results.

Mission:

- a. Realizing a national standard educational unit level curriculum.
- b. Realizing a national standard teaching and learning process.
- c. Providing educational and teaching staff who possess the competence and qualifications to manage a national standard Madrasah.
- d. Realizing national standard educational facilities and infrastructure.
- e. Realizing national standard Madrasah management.
- f. Realizing a national standard educational assessment system.
- g. Realizing Madrasah members who possess the behavior of pious individuals.
- h. Realizing Madrasah members who possess noble character.
- i. Realizing funding to meet the national standard Madrasah cost standards.
- j. Realizing national standard graduate competencies.
- k. Realizing Madrasah members who are able to compete in all forms of competition.

Meanwhile, the vision and mission of the Islamic boarding school are as follows:

Vission:

- a. Forming a superior generation towards the establishment of a khaira ummah (the best community).
- b. Educating and developing a generation of believing Muslims who are of high character, healthy in body, broad in knowledge, and free-thinking, as well as serving the community.
- c. Teaching religious and general sciences in a balanced manner towards the formation of intellectual ulama (religious scholars).
- d. Realizing citizens who possess an Indonesian personality that believes in and is devoted to Allah SWT.

Mission:

- a. Realizing a superior generation towards the formation of a khaira ummah (the best community).
- b. Forming a generation of believing Muslims who are of high character, healthy in body, broad in knowledge, and free-thinking, as well as serving the community. Giving birth to intellectual ulama who have a balance of dhikr (remembrance of God) and thought. Realizing citizens who possess an Indonesian personality that believes in and is devoted to Allah SWT.

From the educational visions of the madrasah and islamic boarding school above, it can be concluded that the point of integration lies in their curriculum objectives, which is their shared commitment to developing general and religious knowledge, developing additional skills, and instilling good character. However, only the emphasis differs. The curriculum objectives of MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap are more general in nature, focusing on intellectual and skill development as preparation for students in further education, while the curriculum objectives of islamic boarding school are developed on the formation of a complete Muslim personality (*'alim, 'abid, and hanif*) with an emphasis on mental, spiritual, and good character, while also being able to practice it in daily life. The results of this research are relevant to previous research that the integration between Islamic boarding schools and schools has an impact on improving the quality of education in schools. This strong collaboration has a direct impact on the character development of students (Hasan, 2024). The involvement of all stakeholders is a key factor in the implementation of this integrated curriculum. Badrun's findings indicate that the existence of this integrated curriculum has an impact on improving the quality of education but requires collaboration and proactivity between Islamic boarding schools and schools, as well as all stakeholders (Badrun, 2024).

After the institutional vision and mission are established, the next step is to organize the curriculum. The organization of curriculum content is a very important part of curriculum planning, in addition to other parts. The organization of the curriculum content at MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan is developed from the national curriculum standardization and the elaboration of the madrasah's vision. The school principal stated that:

"The Islamic boarding schools curriculum is indeed designed to support the MTs Nurul Iman curriculum. However, we leave the technical details of its development and model entirely to the Islamic boarding schools administrators."

Thus, the existence of the Islamic boarding schools curriculum is to support the madrasah curriculum. In other words, the content of the Islamic boarding schools curriculum is an effort to realize the objectives of the madrasah curriculum and automatically also supports the vision and mission of the madrasah.

This statement is reinforced by the explanation from the Head of the Islamic Boarding School that:

"The existence of the Islamic Boarding School within the madrasah must have a significant positive impact on the madrasah. Moreover, the students of the Islamic boarding school must have added value compared to non-boarding school students. Especially, the focus of the Islamic boarding school is to shape the character or morals of the students. This character is fostered within the Islamic boarding school by emphasizing: a) the provision of subject matter and b) the cultivation of worship. In its concrete form in the Islamic boarding school curriculum, there are three areas of Islamic boarding school activities, namely: a) religious subject matter teaching, b) prayer/cultivation of worship, and c) academic tutoring for general subjects."

In observing the organization of the curriculum content, we can see it in the curriculum structure that exists in the madrasah and Islamic boarding schools. General and religious subject matter provided in the madrasah is also provided in the Islamic boarding schools. To avoid duplication and overlapping of materials, general subjects in the madrasah are also provided in the form of scheduled tutoring in the Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic Religious Education materials in the madrasah are provided in the form of learning yellow books in the Islamic boarding schools. A special structure is designed to provide maximum service to the development of students' competencies, so that students who have average to high abilities can be properly and appropriately developed towards a balanced mastery of faith and piety and science and technology. The curriculum content structure of MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan includes the substance of learning that is pursued in one level of education for three years.

The Islamic boarding school curriculum also has its own content/curriculum content, which is managed by the Islamic boarding school administrators. The learning materials are compiled by the internal Islamic boarding school, adjusting to the characteristics and objectives of the madrasah curriculum. The existence of this integrated curriculum aims to provide a strong foundation of general knowledge while maintaining a balance between general and Islamic knowledge. Furthermore, this integration can comprehensively develop the potential of students. However, on the other hand, designing this integrated curriculum requires adequate support and resources. It is undeniable that the challenges of developing this integrated curriculum include the lack of supporting facilities and learning resources, as well as teachers who possess multidisciplinary competencies.

The results of this research are relevant to previous research that an integrated curriculum between schools and Islamic boarding schools can develop students' potential and competencies more optimally, namely being able to strengthen the development of general and Islamic knowledge, develop integrated soft skills, and be able to form a comprehensive character (Hosaini et al., 2024; Rozi et al., 2023).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the research show that: The integrated Madrasah curriculum planning at Nurul Iman Cilacap is carried out by: a) integrating curriculum objectives, namely aligning the vision for the development of general knowledge, religion, skills and noble character, and b) integrating the organization of curriculum content by juxtaposing Islamic religious material in the same subject area. Research on the development of teacher competence based on ethnopedagogy can be explored further to determine the effectiveness of the integrated curriculum model that has been implemented.

FURTHER STUDY

This study applied a qualitative case study approach conducted at MTs Nurul Iman Kesugihan Cilacap, focusing on the planning and organization of an integrated curriculum between madrasah and Islamic boarding school education. Therefore, the findings of this study are limited to the specific context of one institution and cannot be generalized to all Islamic junior high schools or other integration models between formal and non-formal education. Future research is encouraged to apply quantitative or mixed-method approaches to measure the level of effectiveness of integrated curriculum implementation in improving students' academic performance, religious understanding, and character development. Further studies may also compare different models of curriculum integration for example, integration between madrasah and pesantren in urban versus rural settings to explore contextual differences and management strategies. In addition, it would be valuable for future researchers to examine the role of teacher competence, leadership, and institutional collaboration in sustaining integrated curriculum practices. Research can also explore curriculum innovation based on ethnopedagogical or local wisdom approaches to strengthen the relevance of integration to students' social and cultural environments.

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