

THE MODERNIZATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: ANSWERING THE CHALLENGES OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

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Abstrak

Pendidikan yang ideal akan sulit terwujud manakala tata kelolanya tidak bermutu. Salah satu faktor penting dari manajemen pendidikan yang baik bersumber dari peran penting kepala sekolah. Sebab itu, antara pendidikan yang bermutu dan manajemen pendidikan harus menjadi satu kesatuan. Keduanya saling beriringan dalam rangka melahirkan lulusan yang berkualitas. Kepala SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam dan SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Kota Malang berhasil memodernisasi manajemen sekolahnya sehingga kualitas lulusannya berdaya saing tinggi. Manajemen tersebut diberi nama Manajemen Sekolah "No Box", yang dalam penerapannya meninggalkan tradisi berfikir lama menuju pemikiran yang lebih progresif. Riset ini menggugurkan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, dengan penggalan data berdasarkan studi kepustakaan melalui mesin pencari yaitu google scholar untuk menemukan referensi yang relevan, dipadukan dengan wawancara serta observasi secara mendalam. Hasil penelitian menemukan, penerapan modernisasi manajemen sekolah mampu mendongkrak kualitas lulusan dan meningkatkan daya saing lembaga.

Kata Kunci: Modernisasi, Lembaga Pendidikan Islam, Tantangan Pendidikan

Abstract

The ideal education will be difficult to materialize if the governance is not good quality. One of the important factors of good education management comes from the important role of the principal. Therefore, between quality education and education management must become one unit. The two of them go hand in hand in order to produce quality graduates. Principals of SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam and SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Malang have succeeded in modernizing their school management so that the quality of their graduates is highly competitive. The management is named "No Box" School Management, which in its application leaves the old tradition of thinking towards more progressive thinking. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach, by extracting data based on literature studies through a search engine, namely Google Scholar, to find relevant references, combined with interviews and in-depth observations. The research found that the implementation of school management modernization was able to boost the quality of graduates and increase the competitiveness of the institution.

Keywords: Modernization; Islamic Educational Institutions; Educational Challenges

Introduction

Discussing on educational themes will not end. It is like separating chilies from spicy, impossible. Because indeed the object reviewed by education is a human being in which always dynamic.¹ Nevertheless, the discussion has always been an exciting topic, even for those who do not directly struggle in education, because of education's vital role in building a superior civilization both in the present and the future. The vision of smartening the nation's life set out in the opening of the 1945 Constitution will be a headwind when it comes to putting aside the role of education. Jusrin Efendi says that education has at least two critical roles, firstly helping people become human and secondly helping people to become complete human beings.²

Education as the central pillar in civilization; the better the quality of education then the more quality civilization will be upright. When a person has a good education, he can carry out his caliphate duties on the earth's face. For when a man is educated, he will find a solution to the problem that is happening. History records the role of people in the past being able to make their best contribution thanks to the educational process. For example, call Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, and Al Razi. Ibn Rushd, an Islamic philosopher who famous. With their medical knowledge that inspires the world, Ibn Sina and Al Razi are respected in Islam and the western.³ Even long before that, there were Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle whose minds became a source of reference for philosophers afterward even today.⁴ As it is known from various sources that the three have a teacher-student relationship, hard to resist that it is only education can build a civilization.

The Prophet Muhammad said clearly about the vital role of education: *"If you want to succeed in this world then only by knowledge, if you want to succeed in the Hereafter then only by knowledge and if you want to succeed in both then only with knowledge"* (al-hadith). Science is only gained when the educational process is fair. Based on the hadith, it can be concluded that Islam actually puts education at a high level. In another narration it is mentioned that *"Every Muslim male or female is obliged to study"* (al hadith). It reinforces how important education is in the survival of human life even after death.

Many Islamic scholars spend their energy, time, even their lives gaining knowledge. Salman Al Farisi, the example, had to leave Persia to meet the Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad. Even that he was forced to sell to the slave market before finally being reunited with Muhammad, in Indonesia, call it KH. Ahmad Dahlan (*founder of Muhammadiyah*), KH. Hasyim Asy'ari (founder of Nahdlatul 'Ulama/ NU, both before founding the largest organization in Indonesia, had to spend years studying even to Arab countries. Of course, many scholars spend their youth studying science, how thirsty they are for science; even the thirst does not disappear until death picks up—the main reason awareness of education importance as a provider of life.

¹ Jusrin Efendi Pohan, *Filsafat Pendidikan: Teori Klasik Hingga Postmodernisme dan Problematikanya di Indonesia* (Depok: Rajagrafindo Persada, 2019). p. 12-14

² Jusrin Efendi Pohan, *Filsafat Pendidikan: Teori Klasik Hingga Postmodernisme dan Problematikanya di Indonesia* (Depok: Rajagrafindo Persada, 2019). p. 29-35

³ Muhammad Imarah, *45 Tokoh Pengukir Sejarah* (Solo: Era Intermedia, 2009). h. 130-143

⁴ Asmoro Achmadi, *Filsafat Umum* (Depok: Rajagrafindo Persada, 2014). h. 31-45

However, the education needed is not an only formality but also sensitive to current problems. That is, a liberating education, which means to free all people from all problems both current and provision to answer future challenges.⁵ Muhammad Abed Al Jabiri added that Islamic education today must integrate the thinking of the past with current thinking, which is then both used as a reference to answer challenges in the future. Furthermore, Al Jabiri asserts the importance of integrated science to produce scholars who understand religion and science. He will be a member of fiqh as well as philosophy, Ibn Rushd, al-Razi and al-Ghazali, for example.⁶

However, looking at Indonesia's current phenomenon, the education process is more centered on administrative issues that do not significantly impact student's development. Based on learning tools, reports of learning outcomes, attendance present only aim to complement Supervisor's needs or school accreditation. Whereas the policy should be a reference in the learning process but currently more for administrative purposes only. Then the change of Minister of Education and Culture, which is usually accompanied by the emergence of a new policy where the policy often makes the perpetrators of education at the education unit level, is inflamed. Because the policy does not even solve the problem, but this tends to be *involtif*, namely simply changing and adding new complexities not even to bring up new ideas that are oriented towards restoring the success of education (Islam) in the past.⁷

The purposes of national education are written in Educational Law (*UU Sisdiknas No. 20 of 2003*), which states that national education serves to develop the ability and shape the nation's dignified disposition and civilization to educate the life of the nation. Then, aiming to develop the student's potential to become believers and rule to the One True God, noble, healthy, capable, creative, independent, and become a democratic and responsible citizen. Of course, such noble purposes should not merely be a complement to meaningless discourse. Nevertheless, nowadays, the fact that many schools are implementing the Act is far from the ideal concept even a few justify under various pretexts. So they are educated or not; in the end, it makes no difference until it seems that the school existence has no use. Departing from the phenomenon, the Head of SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam Malang city and head of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Kota Malang refused to remain silent. They blocked the existing curriculum, a curriculum rule that was only fixated by the number of teaching hours modified in such a way. Of course, the goal is for the desired target to materialize. Modernization in all fields is carried out as a concrete step, ranging from curriculum, students, procurement of infrastructure, public relations, et Cetra. All are designed in order to realize the idea of modernization of school management.

Based on this phenomenon, this article will answer at least two crucial issues. First, what kind

⁵ Ahmad Sulaiman, Supriyanto Supriyanto, and Fantika Febry Puspitasari, "Islam Dan Pembebasan: Elemen-Element Teologis Dalam Menciptakan Transformasi Sosial," *Nalar: Jurnal Peradaban Dan Pemikiran Islam* 3, no. 2 (2019): 112–21, <https://doi.org/10.23971/njppi.v3i2.1478>.

⁶ Abed Al-Jabiri, *Formasi Nalar Arab (Takwin al-'Aql al-'Arabi)* (Beirut: IRCiSoD, 2014). h. 9

⁷ Samkhan M M, "Reorientasi Pendidikan Islam Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0," *Progresiva : Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (2019): 25–40, <https://doi.org/10.22219/progresiva.v8i1.8928>.

of modernization of school management is implemented in SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam Malang city and SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Malang City. Second, why is the application of management modernization in other schools important?

Research Method

By using a qualitative descriptive approach, the author will present the results of the study so that authors expect that the reader can easily understand the substance of the research. The study results were obtained from a library study using the google scholar search engine to find relevant references in both research journals and e-books, combined with interviews and observations to obtain complete and detailed data.

Discussion

Modernization of Islamic Educational Institutions

Realized or not, today's education is still oriented towards the past. Many educational actors (Principals and Teachers) are still reluctant to depart from their traditions and move towards future-oriented education.⁸ In this industrial revolution 4.0 era, the Indonesian education's orientation should be more modern, no longer bound by habits that instead lead to unproductive. Khurshid Ahmad expressed the view that the problems that arise today result from the deterioration of education quality. That is, education has a close correlation with social conditions that occur so improving quality becomes an inevitability for all educational institutions.⁹

Therefore, educational institutions must modernize; various innovations need to be made to face the challenges of an increasingly complex age. The principal as the supreme leader must encourage teachers and be initiators in thinking and contributing new ideas so that the resulting graduates have quality, positively not only quality at the local or national level, but currently, graduates must have global quality -global quality. Because currently, territorial boundaries are not an essential issue in the context of science. The idea of freedom of learning, if well laid out, will be able to boost the abilities of students, which they can use critical reasoning so that their minds are no longer shackled by past doctrines that are not oriented towards productivity. Related to the efforts of modernization of educational institutions, Muhammadiyah has started first. The effort that has been made is to combine the western (secular) curriculum with the Islamic education curriculum, Pondok Pesantren Muallimin and Muallimat are the results of the *ijtihad*.¹⁰ The idea that later became a break-in of modernization in other Islamic educational institutions.

Many Islamic thinkers have given a view on how important it is to modernize education (Islam). Fazlur Rahman, a Muslim intellectual, said that Islamic education strategies are have not been

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Muhammad Fahmi, "Pendidikan Islam Perspektif Fazlur Rahman," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 2, no. 2 (2014): 273–98, <https://doi.org/10.15642/jpai.2014.2.2.273-298>.

¹⁰ Nelly Yusra, "Muhammadiyah: Gerakan Pembaharuan Pendidikan Islam," *POTENSIA: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (2018): 104–25, <http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/potensia.v4i1.5269>.

oriented on universal positive goals. However, more focus is the nature of saving Muslims from dogma or broken thinking caused by the impact of Westerners hijra through the disciplines, especially ideas that would undermine Islamic morality standards.¹¹ In other words, Islamic education is not currently able to be an initiator for progress. So far, Islamic education is only preoccupied with counters to the phenomenon happening so that it is less perceived existence. Alternatively, even still shackled to the differences of *khilafiyah* about specific fiqh laws. Azra considers Islamic education today still shackled to history, for example, which is more mainstream among intellectuals or fuqaha. As with the historical feud between the Mu'tazilahs and the Fuqaha, the two are still confirming each other. On the one hand, Fuqaha claims to be the last bastion of religion, while rationalist-empirical thinkers ruled out his role even considered subversive. While the thinkers (empirical-rationalists) consider themselves representations of progress.¹² In sparing the author, both have advantages and disadvantages so it should not be necessary to feel the right way more than to confirm each other precisely the need is to fill each other and perfect each other.

Implementation of Curriculum Modernization

Educational institutions in this era should no longer just talk about the competence of "what" but should lead to the level of "why" and "how", thus being able to build critical reasoning of students. "What" only deals with the temporary notion of "why" and "how" is more than just an outside understanding that is more likely to be theoretical but should talk about the content of an object. In technology issues for example, students no longer know but can operate and produce technology products.

One of the steps of modernization that can be done is to improve students' and educators' abilities in digitization. This pandemic teaches all educational actors how vital the mastery of informatics technology is in the educational process.¹³ Everyone is forced to learn while being responsive to the current development of science and technology. Elementary schools to universities should be able to make ideal use of technological developments, ranging from learning aspects to marketing institutions so that the international world can read the quality of Indonesian educational institutions.¹⁴ When the ability to digitize is combined with the concept of Islamic education oriented towards strengthening morals (character) in addition to maximizing the role of reason, then Islamic education will manifest into an educational institution that is not only oriented "sky" but also oriented "earth".¹⁵ So that the progressive-

¹¹ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam Dan Modernitas: Tentang Transformasi Sosial* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1985). h. 85-87

¹² M Anis, *Reliugilitas Iptek: Rekonstruksi Pendidikan Dan Tradisi Pesantren* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1998). h. 76-79

¹³ A Abidah et al., "The Impact of Covid-19 to Indonesian Education and Its Relation to the Philosophy of 'Merdeka Belajar,'" *Studies in Philosophy of Science and Education (SiPoSE)* 11, no. 1 (2020): 38-49, <https://doi.org/10.46627/sipose.v1i1.9>.

¹⁴ Muhammad Munadi, *Manajemen Pendidikan Tinggi Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2020). h. 159

¹⁵ D Deswita, "Pendidikan Berbasis Kecerdasan Ruhaniah: Membentuk Insan Paripurna/ Insan Kamil," *Jurnal Ta'dib* 13, no. 2 (2010): 186-96, <http://dx.doi.org/10.31958/jt.v13i2.190>.

religious education that many people want is not only sweet-lipped (lips service) but real in actualization.

Education in Indonesia currently needs more thinkers who are experts with technology and other sciences, so the idea of integration and interconnection of science is something that needs to get attention from all parties.¹⁶ Based on these considerations, SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Kota Malang is working to realize the big dream. Through the modification of the curriculum, the Principal and curriculum team sought to explore the national educational objectives set out in the Sisdiknas Law, which has been discussed at the beginning by combining the national curriculum concept with the Islamic curriculum. So the subjects of Islamic Religious Education and Citizenship Education not only take place in classes but instead more happen in the field. The form can be diverse, one of which is to reduce the delivery of theoretical materials in the classroom and be replaced by habituation in the school environment. Obligatory prayer and congregation al-Sunnah, behaving politely, saying manners are among some of his concrete activities. In the field of digitization, students are given special hours to learn to make short videos, ranging from video capture, editing to ready to go.

In addition, the procurement of national standard facilities and infrastructure (automotive) is also an integral part. In vocational terms, it is commonly known as vocational programs. Generally, students may practice when sitting on the XI grade bench, but here is another story. According to the majors, students are just starting to practice repairing vehicles (motorcycles and cars), certainly with intensive assistance. Theoretical study hours are trimmed and integrated with practice in the field. In the interview session, the Principal said the central core of PAI and PKN subjects is discipline (character education). This can not only be pursued with the only discussion in the classroom. They (learners) should be habituated. The practice of the field and the teacher's example is a real effort to realize that target. So, the example of teachers and habituation is the essential thing in moral education (character) of students.¹⁷

The same was done by SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam Malang, in order to modernize Islamic education, the principal made curriculum adjustments to be more effective and efficient. Imagining elementary school-age children learning from morning to afternoon (full day) is undoubtedly difficult if learning is not packed with enjoyable. One of his efforts was to reduce the intensity of learning in the classroom replaced by practicum. In a day ideally, children learn for up to 8 hours but not so in school. The maximum learning is only 3-4 hours. The rest must be outside the classroom. Activities that are oriented towards improving students' digital abilities, for example, by being taught about simple technology. One of its products is solar cars. They have been introduced where the solar panels work in a car at the elementary school level. Of course, in the future, students will be able to develop more advanced technology.

Both schools, both SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam and SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Malang, are well

¹⁶ Fantika Febry Puspitasari, "The Integration-Interconnection Discourse of Islamic Education and Science in Indonesia," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pendidikan* 8, no. 2 (2020): 153–62, <https://doi.org/10.36781/tarbawi.v8i2.3090>.

¹⁷ Fantika Febry Puspitasari and Supriyanto Supriyanto, *22 Kotak Sutra Untuk 22 Mutiara (Kumpulan Adab)* (Surakarta: Farishma Indonesia, 2018).

aware of how vital vocational education is for students, especially concerning technology mastery. Students can be directed to vocational education at the primary and secondary school level so that the provisions obtained when graduating are not only memorization skills but also life skills. Then at the college level, the curriculum can be directed at strengthening soft skill competencies and adequate technological reasoning.¹⁸ Not even closing the possibility at the level of primary and secondary education has been introduced with simple technology so that when they enter the level of college the ability only to smooth or develop, as already applied in SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam.

Modernization Challenges and Solutions

Although education is not only left to the school as a formal educational institution, so far, parents still think that the only place of good education for their children in school. This is certainly not to blame because it is the school that plays the most role in developing children's education, especially the application of full-day learning. Based on this condition, it turns out that not all schools are ready to deal with it. There is still a mutual sense of responsibility between the two parents and the school, about who is at the forefront of accepting responsibility regarding their education. When they have paid SPP and other costs to the school, the lay community judges, then the obligation to educate has changed hands so that many parents are more preoccupied with their work. On the other hand, the school thinks that parents are the first and primary education for their children while school is only helpful. As a result, the results of that educational process are not ideal. The noble goal of education is to be a mirage.

So building understanding between parents and schools is the first challenge. The old paradigm that assumed absolute education belonged to schools should be transformed into a shared property (parents and schools). Parents' involvement in the child's education process should be well combined, maximizing the role of the school committee can be the solution.¹⁹ What is more, the current government has issued a policy on the committee's involvement in the school policy-making process. Based on General Guidance of the Board of Education, Decree of the Minister of National Education No. 044/U/2002, the objectives for which it was formed include:

- a. Accommodate and channel community aspirations and initiatives in the delivery of operational policies and education programs in the education unit.
- b. Increase the responsibility and participation of the community in the implementation of education in the education unit.
- c. Creating a transparent, accountable, and democratic atmosphere and condition in the implementation and service of quality education in the education unit.

While principals and committees can synergize, the achievement of learning programs will be better. The same thing was done by the Principal of SD Muhammadiyah 3 Assalam. He built good communication with the School Committee so that all school programs get full support - even in terms of the school building, and parents cooperate to make their best contribution. Yunus (2014) said that so far the committee's involvement only relates to finance (funding),

¹⁸ Samkhan M M, *loc. cit.*

¹⁹ M Misbah, "Peran dan Fungsi Komite Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan," *INSANIA: Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan* 14, no. 1 (2009): 68–91.

while other supports such as thought, morals, and goods/services is less understanding for education organizers, hence frequent misperceptions.²⁰ Service to parents is an essential part of realizing the excellent services of an institution. Therefore, it must be realized by all educational actors that currently, the management of educational institutions can not only rest on one foot (school) and rule out the role of parents (society). top-down communication patterns should be changed to bottom-ups so that all parties go down as well as in the child's education process.

The second challenge that schools have to face is the competence of teachers who are not the same. The ability of teachers in one school is very diverse, especially about its technological capabilities. The percentage level of teachers who have technological skills is minimal, considering the number of elderly teachers who have never been following technology development. Workshops or training aimed at improving educators' and educators' capabilities needs to be done so that there is an explosion of innovation. Abdul Madjid's thesis emphasized the importance of the workshop in improving educational institution's quality. The workshop has an essential contribution in school quality management as long as this activity is carried out with mature concepts, measurable targets, and a good evaluation system.²¹ Training (workshop) is essential in improving educator's and educational personnel's quality but is often neglected. Because during this time, most people consider this to be only ceremonial and seem saturated; therefore, the Principal and curriculum team should be able to present different packaging.

The third challenge is the creative reason for educators and educational personnel, including the Principal. Principals must be able to live up to tradition in order to create change. Modernization cannot be created if the way of thinking and policy is still blocked in the unproductive condition. In the context of Muhammadiyah school, it is necessary to continue to bring the fire to life as did Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan.²² If until the fire is extinguished, then it becomes mere nonsense; the dream of modernization is realized. Amin Abdullah said that the *ijtihad* must continue to be pursued so that Muhammadiyah does not lose the spirit of advancing that has been jargon all along.²³

To maintain this progressive tradition is necessary to make visits to other more advanced schools. The culture of intellectual discussion even though it is turned on to make references richer. Many schools are closed because of their customers (parents and students) because there is a stagnation of movement. All school residents, teachers, and principals are stuck in their

²⁰ Yuliwati Yuliwati, Venti Mawarni, and Nurhasanah Nurhasanah, "Kajian Evaluasi Kinerja Komite Sekolah Di Provinsi DKI Jakarta," in *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan*, MNJP:001 (Jakarta: STKIP Kusuma Negara, 2019), 1–12, <http://jurnal.stkipkusumanegara.ac.id/index.php/semnara2019/article/view/159>.

²¹ Abdul Madjid, "MANAJEMEN PENINGKATAN MUTU PENDIDIK DAN TENAGA KEPENDIDIKAN PADA IMPLEMENTASI KURIKULUM 2013 (Studi Multikasus SMAN 3, MAN 3, Dan SMKN 4 Kota Malang)" (Malang, Universitas Negeri Malang, 2017). h. 361

²² Robert W Hefner, Sukidi Mulyadi, and Abdul Munir Mul Khan, *Api Pembaharuan Kiai Ahmad Dahlan* (Yogyakarta: Multi Pressindo, 2008). h. 25

²³ Muhammad Amin Abdullah, *Fresh Ijtihad: Manhaj Pemikiran KeIslaman Muhammadiyah Di Era Disrupsi* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2020). h. 4-11

comfort zone until they are reluctant to look for new things. Comfort wrapped in laziness and fear is a dangerous brake on educational institutions today. The tradition of remembrance and thought has barely resonated in Islamic educational institutions today. The training of the principal's competence that was once carried out by the government only led to the strengthening of the administration only on strengthening the competence of the actual leadership. The second step that can be done as an effort to swamp the renewed fire is to provide further study opportunities for teachers and principals. The intensity of thinking in the lecture school will revive their critical reasoning because, in addition to being academically required also trained. Then with the opportunity to advance the study, it allows them to have a dialogue with other students from various backgrounds and gain new insights from lecturers who are in a capacity certainly different from lecturers when teaching at the undergraduate level.

Conclusion

Nowadays, the modernization of Islamic educational institutions is inevitable due to the increasingly unstoppable dynamics of educational challenges. In this case, the principal, as the highest manager at the level of the education unit, has a vital role. Some views to modernize the school management are: improving digitization skills for both teachers and students, starting from the learning process and school marketing system. Its implementation will undoubtedly experience challenges, such as educators and diverse educator's ability, communication with parents (school committees) that have not been axial, and improving school leaders. To solve the first challenge through conducting in a structured and measured manner training. Establishing better communication with the school committee can solve the second challenge so that both parties understand their respective roles and synergize in the school programs. The last problem can be solved by doing a comparative study to other schools and allowing continuing the study, both master (S2) and doctor (S3), for teacher and education staff.

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