International Islamic Boarding School Strategy for Realizing Superior Islamic Boarding School Management

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	This study aims to analyse the strategy of international Islamic boarding schools and the realization of continuous improvement in realizing superior Islamic boarding school management. This study employed qualitative research. The research describes various empirical phenomena implemented regarding excellent Islamic boarding school management at international Islamic boarding schools. The research setting was the Aqobah International School (AIS) Islamic boarding school, Jombang. The researchers analyzed the data using Miles Huberman's interactive analysis. The study results show that the strategy of international Islamic boarding schools in realizing superior Islamic boarding school management accepts all new students based on equality and equity. It believes that every child is special and can be a champion. Moreover, the management of students is based on data and research, standardization of the quality of teaching staff, standardization of infrastructure, and standardization of student personal service. As for the realization of continuous improvement in superior Islamic boarding school management – integrating school and Islamic boarding school learning, specialization programs and checkpoint examination & IGCSE, and Cambridge curriculum.

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INTRODUCTION

Superior Islamic boarding school-based education is a necessity. Islamic boarding schools, as one of Indonesia's oldest Islamic educational institutions, have been rooted in society with various advantages and characteristics of each Islamic boarding school. Islamic boarding schools continue to develop along with the times by carrying out systematic management to produce superior students emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically.[1] The development of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia can be seen in the number of Islamic boarding schools. The Ministry of Religion's report for January 2022 stated that there were 26.975 Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, spread across all provinces. West Java has the most significant number of Islamic boarding schools, namely 8.343, followed by Banten Province with 4.579, and the third, namely East Java, with 4.452 Islamic boarding schools.[2]

Islamic boarding schools contain various privileges. They prioritize *tafaqquh fid din* and the morality of students.[3] They equip students with intellectual, literal, and moral abilities. Those values are preached by kyai and teachers and supported in a religious environment. This style and variety are because it is not only a place for learning but also a place where there is interaction between the kyai and the student, which is very close and is based on excellent and superior religious and cultural values.[4]

Quality improvement and sustainable quality are new future education paradigms, including in Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools are no longer synonymous with stagnation, lagging in various aspects. Several Islamic boarding schools have been transformed into international Islamic boarding schools with additional facilities, managerial arrangements, and a combination of local, national, and international curricula.[5] The most remarkable thing today is that with an expectation of quality education results, the community or parents are willing to pay dearly for the cost of Islamic boarding school education.

Various studies show the importance of educational institutions' social and environmental conditions in influencing and improving the quality of learning. A conducive environment supported by social support can help students adapt, make good friends, have good thoughts, increase independence and decrease emotional stress, ultimately achieving harmonious subjective well-being.[6] Islamic boarding schools need to innovate to balance the development of science and technology in the 4.0 era and map

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[1] Apud, 'Penguatan Karakter Santri Di Sekolah Berasrama', in *Proceeding of Annual International Conference on Islamic Education and Language: The Education and 4.0 Industrial Era in Islamic Perspective*, 2019, 374.

[2] Cindy Mutia Annur, 'Ada 26.975 Pesantren Di Indonesia, Di Provinsi Mana Yang Terbanyak?', accessed 21 January 2023, https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2022/01/31/ada-26975-pesantren-di-indonesia-di-provinsi-mana-yang-terbanyak.

[3] Zainal Arifin, 'Budaya Pesantren Dalam Membangun Karakter Santri', *Al Qodiri: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 6, no. 1 (2014): 1.

[4] Iwan Mulyanto, Sofyan Sauri, and Wiwik Dyah Aryani, "Peran Kepemimpinan Kyai Dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Lulusan Pesantren (Studi Kasus Di Pondok Pesantren Al-Mukhlis Cangkuang Kabupaten Bandung)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Edukatif* 8, no. 1 (2022): 86.

[5] Siti Nur Hidayah, "Pesantren For Middle-Class Muslims in Indonesia (Between Religious Commodification and Pious Neoliberalisme," *Qudus Internasional of Islamic Studies (QIJIS)* 9 (2021): 221.

[6] Aulia Rachma Nindya, 'Pentingnya Social Support Untuk Meningkatkan Subjective Well-Being Santri Pondok Pesantren: A Systematic Literature Review', *Tarbawy: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2022): 59.

students' potential by providing space for intensive potential development.[7]

On the other hand, not all Islamic boarding schools can manage students optimally. It is due to various factors, including the lack of control from the teachers and administrators of the Islamic boarding school, the monotonous Islamic boarding school activity program, strict regulations that are not accompanied by proper rewards, and the Islamic boarding school's lack of professionalism in arranging activity schedules and compiling the curriculum.[8] Students lack discipline to follow the rules of the Islamic boarding school, weak supervision of the board of the Islamic boarding school, and lack of awareness to follow the procedures and regulations of the Islamic boarding school.[9] In addition, there is a lack of qualified teaching staff, less varied and traditional learning methods which make students bored, inadequate educational facilities and minimal funding for Islamic boarding schools[10], the lack of ability of Islamic boarding schools to improve teacher human resources and the low capacity to make the most of information technology.[11]

Nonetheless, the development of Islamic boarding schools shows a positive trend. Several Islamic boarding schools in the era of globalization have modified them by synergizing the community's needs with the objectives of Islamic boarding schools as community development and empowerment institutions. They make changes starting from the paradigm by correcting these deficiencies.[12] There are indications of shifts and changes in Islamic boarding schools to adapt to the demands of the times and become ideal institutions because Islamic boarding schools have the potential to combine intellectual intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and social intelligence. Islamic boarding schools are also holistic, humanistic, practical, idealistic, and realistic to maintain an idealized educational model, a framework developed by a community that can balance faith, learning, and charity.[13]

Muhbib Abdul Wahab[14] argues that the need for internationalization of Islamic boarding schools needs to be designed with a systematic and standardized piloting project. International Islamic boarding schools need to prepare adequate human resources in education services, learning processes, and the Islamic boarding school environment in

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[7] Abdul Rosyid, 'Pesantren Dan Bonus Demografi Dalam Mewujudkan Santri Unggul 2045 (Studi Wacana Visi Indonesia Emas)', *Rabbani: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 2 (September 2022): 164.

[8] Tim Redaksi Al-Masoem Editor, '5 faktor Eksternal penyebab santri tidak betah di pesantren', Yayasan Al Ma'soem Bandung, 16 November 2022, https://almasoem.sch.id/5-faktor-eksternal-penyebab-santri-tidak-betah-di-pesantren/.

[9] Tika, Ifnaldi Nurmal, and Wandi Syahindra, 'Eksistensi Pesantren Arrahmah Curup, Bengkulu: Antara Kemunduran Dan Kurangnya Sikap Disiplin Santri', *Al-Mau'idzhoh* 2, no. 1 (June 2020): 53-68.

[10] Muhammad Sofwan and Akhmad Habibi, 'Problematika Dunia Pendidikan Islam Abad 21 Dan Tantangan Pondok Pesantren Di Jambi', *Jurnal Kependidikan: Penelitian Inovasi Pembelajaran* 46, no. 2 (2016): 280.

[11] Muhammad Khozin Ahyar, 'Tantangan Pondok Pesantren Menuju Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Yang Akuntabel', *JIFA (Journal of Islamic Finance and Accounting)* 3, no. 1 (2020): 52.

[12] Muhammad Jamaluddin, 'Metamorfosis Pesantren di Era Globalisasi', *Karsa: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Keislaman* 20, 1 (2012): 127–39.

[13] Abdul Muis, "Penguatan Manajemen Dan Kepemimpinan Pesantren Dalam Mewujudkan Lembaga Pendidikan Alternatif Ideal," *JIEMAN: Journal of Islamic Educational Management* 1, 3 (Desember 2020): 265-281.

[14] Muhbib Abdul Wahab et al., 'Internasionalisasi Pesantren', SINDOnews.com, accessed 30 January 2023, https://nasional.sindonews.com/berita/1347388/18/internasionalisasi-pesantren.

Arabic and English, as well as an information system using international languages. In addition, Islamic boarding schools need to maximize cooperation and institutional networks with international institutions to develop Islamic boarding schools.

Departing from the desire to contribute to quality development, the Aqobah International School (AIS) Islamic boarding school in Jombang transformed from a regular Islamic boarding school to an international one. The Times Indonesia reported that the AIS Islamic boarding school made a breakthrough in learning the yellow book using English for students and preparing them with character and a devoted spirit.

The strategy of international Islamic boarding schools to realize superior Islamic boarding school management is crucial to strengthen professional Islamic boarding school management practices. It has become one of the moral responsibilities of Islamic boarding schools that have managed them internationally, especially the superior Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang Islamic Boarding School.[15] The professional management of students responsible for Islamic boarding schools at Islamic boarding schools is one of the indicators and barometers of the success of international Islamic boarding schools.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper discusses the strategy of international Islamic boarding schools in realizing superior Islamic boarding school management at the Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang Islamic boarding school. This research used qualitative with a phenomenological approach to describe phenomena and understand the meaning of best practices in implementing international Islamic boarding school management. The primary data was taken from interviews with the management of the Aqobah International School (AIS) Islamic boarding school, Jombang. They were KH. Ahmad Junaidi, S.H., the founder of the Islamic boarding school, KH. Ahmad Kanzul Fikri, M.Pd.I, the caretaker of the Islamic boarding school, and Masrul Hidayatullah, the director of AIS. Secondary data was collected through observation and documentation related to superior Islamic boarding school management and various strategies carried out by international Islamic boarding schools. Data analysis used Miles Huberman's interactive analysis in data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
The Strategy of International Islamic Boarding Schools in Realizing Superior Islamic Boarding School Management at Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang

The Jombang Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) Islamic boarding school was not born suddenly to become an international Islamic boarding school. This Islamic boarding school is the 6th branch of the Jombang Al-Aqobah Islamic Boarding School, which has innovated from a modern traditional Islamic boarding school to an international Islamic boarding school. The Islamic boarding school founded by KH Ahmad Junaidi

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[15] 'Program Spesialisasi Aqobah International School', accessed 30 January 2023, https://www.aqobahinternational.sch.id/page/program-spesialisasi.

Hidayat, S.H., is one of the breakthroughs in the world of Islamic boarding schools, which have been considered traditional, conservative, backward, and old-fashioned. Innovation and modernization of Islamic boarding schools are essential steps to improve, empower, and develop scientific methodologies, Islamic scientific institutions, and human resources to achieve the goals of Islamic Education.[16]

The background of establishing AIS was the desire for an international standard Islamic boarding school-based institution that adhered to the values of Islamic boarding schools. AIS has two formal education units, namely SMP (junior high school) and SMA (high school), by implementing bilingualism, namely English and Indonesian, as the languages of instruction. KH. Ahmad Kanzul Fikri, M.Pd.I, as the caregiver, conveyed:

> AIS is a development of the Al-Aqobah Islamic boarding school system, which has been around for a long time and has advantages equal to international standard education. So AIS is here to open up space for the development of Islamic boarding school students according to their potential.[17]

Therefore, AIS is designed as a madrasa of life that focuses on optimizing the potential of each student by leading them to become the generation of *basthatan fil ilmi wal jismi* and *dzu qolbin salim*. The future generation has a strong character and a dedicated soul. Islamic boarding school management is closely related to the management of students from the start of entering Islamic boarding schools to graduation. Regarding Islamic boarding school management, al-Aqobah International School (AIS) has several strategies. Islamic boarding school management is closely related to the management of students from the start of entering Islamic boarding schools to graduation. Al-Aqobah International School (AIS), concerning Islamic boarding school management, carries out several strategies, including:

Students Equity

Every child is unique and has the right to a relevant educational process that follows his uniqueness. It is because every child is born with unique and superior talents and potential. Appreciation for the uniqueness of these students is realized at the Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) Islamic boarding school in the form of accepting all new students who register. KH. Junaidi Hidayat, S.H., S.Ag, the founder of AIS, emphasized this by saying:

> Every child has different talents and advantages. So educating is not forming but preparing them to be the best in their intelligence. Therefore, it is necessary to show trust and appreciation, and then creativity will grow and develop without limits. Just focus on their respective intelligence.[18]

It is realized through a boarding school philosophy: every child is special and can

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[16] Muhammad Hasan, 'Inovasi Dan Modernisasi Pendidikan Pondok Pesantren', *Karsa: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Keislaman* 23, no. 2 (2015): 301.

[17] Interview with KH. Ahmad Kanzul Fikri, M.Pd.I, caretaker of Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) on 22 May 2022.

[18] Interview with KH Ahmad Junaidi Hidayat, SH, founder of Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) on 22 May 2022.

become a champion. It is motivated by the belief that every student has potential and talent and excels in their respective fields without being forced to master the same area as other students. It is exemplified by the fact that fish don't need to fly and vice versa, and birds don't need to swim to be great. Kania Putri Aldini dan Gita Widya Laksmini Soerjoatmodjo[19] emphasizes that every child has academic and non-academic differences. Every child has an advantage in one particular field and needs to get attention in the right educational environment to develop optimally.

Management of Students Based on Research and Data

The manager of the Islamic boarding school said that student management was not trial and error but based on research and data from professional institutions. Ustadz Masrul Hidayatullah conveyed it as the director of AIS:

> Our steps require that everything be based on knowledge and data, not just trial and error. Therefore, we first conducted a psychological test with a team of psychologists from Surabaya. We asked psychologists to design a test according to what the boarding school wanted, namely, a test that could map out the strengths and weaknesses of students and how they could develop according to their character.[20]

This statement broadly aligns with the opinions of Dhea Ariani and Syahrani.[21] It emphasizes three essential things to be mastered by Islamic boarding schools: first, data literacy in the form of the ability to read, analyze and utilize information (big data) in the digital world; secondly, technological literacy in the form of the ability to understand how machines work and technology applications; the third human literacy in the form of humanity, communication, and design. To realize this, Islamic boarding schools work with universities to conduct psychological tests to discover students' potential and talents, their strengths and weaknesses, and suggestions that teachers, parents, and students should take. The supporting activities so that the potential and skills of students develop optimally are held, among others:

1. Student Showcase. Performance of students' work in the FFG (Fantastic Final Grade) program—an event for each student to show their talents.
2. Leadership. Provision of practical students with leadership and social skills by being active in cottage and committee organizations.
3. Strong English and Arabic Environment. Habituation of the use of English and Arabic in communication between boarding residents in daily life and learning in the classroom.

Developing student talents in a structured manner provides opportunities for each skill to develop appropriately. The management of students in a structured way by the religious disciplines opens space for the development of each outstanding student according to their talents.

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[19] Kania Putri Aldini and Gita Widya Laksmini Soerjoatmodjo, 'Kenali Anak Berbakat', *Bunga Rampai Psikologi Pendidikan*, 2022, 14.

[20] Interview with Ustadz Masrul Hidayatullah as director of AIS on 23 May 2022.

[21] Dea Ariani and Syahrani Syahrani, 'Manajemen Pesantren Dalam Persiapan Pembelajaran 5.0', *Cross-Border* 5, no. 1 (2022): 618.

Standardization of Teaching Staff

Teachers have an essential role in student management. Professional teachers are the main prerequisite for supporting and realizing the goals of national education, as stipulated in articles 8 and 9 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers.[22] Both relate to academic qualifications and competence. In addition, professional educators must have the principles of commitment to the organization, educational qualifications, competencies, and responsibilities as their basis for carrying out work effectively and efficiently.[23] To realize this, PP AIS conducts a strict selection of prospective teachers as a form of quality standardization as conveyed by ustadz Masrur Hidayatullah below:

Here are the high standards. The teachers here must be from State Universities. Minimum GPA of 3.0, not more than 30 years old, must be able to speak English for all subjects. It is because learning and exams use English. Teachers have the will to improve themselves. Every month must develop a new idea for the institution's development.[24]

It illustrates that realizing the quality of Islamic boarding schools begins with accepting competent and professional teachers with the standard provisions determined by Islamic boarding schools.

Standardization of Infrastructure

Infrastructure management includes procurement and utilization of direct and indirect components in the learning process to achieve educational goals effectively and efficiently. It is to meet international Islamic boarding school standards with the term Exclusive Educational Facility. It is as conveyed by KH. Ahmad Junaidi Hidayat, S.H. follows: "We prepare supporting facilities for the development of children's potential such as swimming pools, representative learning rooms, and sports centers."[25]

The standardization of infrastructure is realized in the form of exclusive, clean, and complete boarding and learning facilities with waste management and environmental management facilities that are planned in a structured manner. Classes are designed with a small class pattern of a maximum of 20 students. Other facilities include a sports center, laboratory, clinic, swimming pool, and mini market to meet students' needs. Management of facilities and infrastructure in a professional and standard manner is vital to support the success of the learning process.[26] Infrastructure facilities have a significant effect on the quality of education.[27] It shows that the standardization of infrastructure facilities at AIS Islamic Boarding Schools is a strategic step to realize the quality of students.

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[22] Setjen DPR RI, 'Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen', accessed 28 February 2023, https://www.dpr.go.id/jdih/index/id/56.

[23] Sumarto Pohan, 'Manajemen Sekolah: Wujudkan Guru Profesional', *Tarbawi: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 14, no. 2 (2018): 58.

[24] Interview with Ustadz Masrul Hidayatullah as director of AIS on 23 May 2022.

[25] Interview with KH Ahmad Junaidi Hidayat, SH, founder of Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) on 22 May 2022.

[26] Irjus Indrawan, *Pengantar Manajemen Sarana dan Prasarana Sekolah* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2015), 9.

[27] Tri Adi Muslimin and Ari Kartiko, 'Pengaruh Sarana Dan Prasarana Terhadap Mutu Pendidikan Di Madrasah Bertaraf Internasional Nurul Ummah Pacet Mojokerto', *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2020): 75–87.

Personal Service Standardization

Personal service for students at the AIS Islamic Boarding School is carried out by *mustahiq*. This is as explained by Ustadz Masrur Hidayatullah:

> Our strategy is the *mustahiq* strategy. So the teacher is responsible for so many children. One teacher holds 5-6 children and is adjusted according to gender. If the son gets the father, if the daughter gets the mother. *Mustahiq* controls all potential, emotional, social, and child achievements like parents. We have counseling once a week to listen to the child's progress in one week and anticipate various possibilities to find the right solution.[28]

Mustahiq is a teacher who is responsible for 1-6 students. They are responsible for knowing and understanding in detail the students' day-to-day potential and talents and acting like parents. Counseling is carried out weekly by mustahiq to students responsible for ensuring that each student can participate in optimal learning, solving student problems individually or socially.

Syamsu Yusuf LN, as quoted by Weti Susanti, explains that grouping students based on ability is termed cluster grouping. This pattern is realized by identifying gifted students and grouping them into groups of 5 or 8. A professional and highly skilled teacher guides each group. This description indicates that treating each student differently in educational activities is necessary. This treatment is based on differences in individual abilities intellectually, socially, and personally.

Realization of Continuous Improvement to Realize Superior Islamic Management at Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang

The essence of quality sustainability in Islamic boarding schools is continuous improvement. Improvement in all aspects and every activity is ongoing to increase the capacity and ability of Islamic boarding schools to meet the demands and needs of students and society.[29] It is because Islamic boarding school education with theocentric philosophical values views all activities in Islamic boarding schools as worship, teaching, and learning not as a tool but as a goal.[30] Therefore, continuous improvement is related to improving the organization of Islamic boarding schools, educational processes, learning processes, and others. Islamic boarding school management of Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) realizes continuous improvement by doing the following things:

Integration of School and Islamic Boarding School Learning

Learning activities at the Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) Islamic boarding school are integrated between schools and Islamic boarding schools. Because all students live in Islamic boarding schools, learning activities can be combined and intensified to maximize student potential. Practically delivered by Ustadz Masrur Hidayatullah:

We apply joyful learning, which is fun learning for students. The model is with

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[28] Interview with Ustadz Masrul Hidayatullah as director of AIS on 23 May 2022.

[29] Shinta Nisaus Syuroya, 'Continuous Improvement : Alternatif Strategi Pondok Pesantren dalam Mempertahankan Eksistensinya di Era Post pandemic', *Progressive of Cognitive and Ability* 1, no. 2 (October 2022): 137.

[30] Arief Efendi, 'Model Pengelolaan Pendidikan Multikulkural Di Pondok Pesantren Tradisional Dan Modern', *El-Idare: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2017): 3.

mobile class, changing class hours and places according to the child's request. Children must be comfortable. Not many theories and learning use Bloom's taxonomy, so education is coherent. The challenge is the learning process.[31]

Learning patterns are carried out with Joyful & Challenging learning—student-centered learning with a fun and challenging learning atmosphere. Udi Fakhruddin[32] argues that integrating school and Islamic boarding school learning has made Islamic boarding schools relevant to real needs in the Islamic education community. Integrating the learning system is a step to combine and unify general and religious subjects' learning in one learning frame to improve student achievement.

Specialization Program

Islamic boarding schools are designed to contribute to the development of the whole human being in harmony with national development goals. It is intended that it is necessary to prepare excellent human resources balanced between physical and spiritual development, between material and spiritual fields, as provisions for living in society. Islamic boarding school graduates are expected to be able to contribute significantly in all areas of community and state life by mastering areas of expertise or specialization. In realizing student specialization programs, the Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) Islamic boarding school has developed several specialization programs. It is as conveyed by KH. Ahmad Kanzul Fikri, M.Pd.I, as AIS caretaker, do as follows:

> We have specialization programs. This specialization is intended to prepare students to face various possibilities in the future according to their talents and potential. Students can choose their discipline to become experts in that field.[33]

Specialization programs for students prepare them to face global challenges and lead them to become a golden generation. Thus, the need for specialization and standardization of student quality both in the form of cognitive quality in the form of learning values, affective quality in the form of ethical, aesthetic, tolerance, and democratic values based on piety, and psychomotor attributes in the form of communication skills, life skills, and adapting to the environment.[34] Specialization programs include Muslim scholars, science and technology experts, professional development and leadership, and diplomatic and social classes. First, the Muslim scholar specialization program is designed to prepare students who can preach rhetoric as well as writing and the ability to analyse various Islam-related issues. Second, the diplomatic and social class specialization programs are focused on learning organizational management, strategic management, decision analysis, analysis of social phenomena, and negotiating competencies. Learning patterns by compiling mini research related to social phenomena, presenting solutions to social problems and others. Third, the science and technology specialization program is designed to prepare students to

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[31] Interview with Ustadz Masrul Hidayatullah as director of AIS on 23 May 2022.

[32] Udi Fakhruddin, Ending Bahrudin, and Endin Mujahidin, 'Konsep Integrasi Dalam Sistem Pembelajaran Mata Pelajaran Umum Di Pesantren', *Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2018): 216–17.

[33] Interview with KH. Ahmad Kanzul Fikri, M.Pd.I, caretaker of Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) on 22 May 2022.

[34] Durroh Yatimah, 'Manajemen Pendidikan Pesantren Dalam Upaya Peningkatan Mutu Santri', *El-Hikmah* 9, no. 1 (2011): 76.

have science and technology expertise. The pattern of project learning is carried out through observation and mini research on scientific theory and applications in everyday life and writing scientific papers related to the study of the scientific approach.

Intensive coaching of gifted students needs to be done in a button-up manner. It facilitates the development of interests and talents in a conducive environment. In the next stage, superior talent will grow with continuous coaching.[35] The support of the school, family, and boarding school environment can encourage talent's proper growth and development.[36]

Checkpoint Examination & IGCSE, Cambridge Curriculum

AIS Islamic boarding schools to carry out continuous quality improvement using the Cambridge UK curriculum. It was conveyed by Ustadz Masrur Hidayatullah as the director of AIS as follows:

> The curriculum is of international standard and has been recognized by universities and companies worldwide. The curriculum is designed for students' academic abilities and is recognized internationally. Thus, the IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) was held, an international institutional exam by CIE (Cambridge International Examination) and Checkpoint Examination.[37]

The benefits of implementing the Cambridge curriculum are that students get an international curriculum with global ability standards, the complexity of critical and creative thinking, and increased student language skills.[38] The Cambridge curriculum is a progressive step from an educational institution to improve quality and efforts to standardize graduates internationally to provide opportunities and space to continue to the next level of education without taking an equivalence exam.[39] Thus the curriculum of international Islamic boarding schools integrates the national, international, and *mu'ada* curriculum; b). TOEFL scoring.[40]

CONCLUSION

The strategy of international Islamic boarding schools in realizing superior Islamic boarding school management at Al-Aqobah International School (AIS) Jombang can be summed up as follows: first, acceptance of all new students by not selecting students. Every student has the opportunity to get a quality education and respect for their superior potential with the philosophy that every child is special and can be a champion; second,

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[35] Kalihputro Fachriansyah, dan Catur Wulandar, 'Manajemen Talenta Riset Dan Inovasi Indonesia: Formulasi Kebijakan Menuju SDM Unggul', 2022, https://workingpapers.bappenas.go.id/index.php/bwp/article/view/115/79.

[36] Nurdiana Saputri and Nurrus Sa'adah, 'Pengembangan Minat Dan Bakat Peserta Didik Melalui Kegiatan Ekstrakurikuler', *Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam* 2, no. 2 (2021): 172–87.

[37] Interview with Ustadz Masrul Hidayatullah as director of AIS on 23 May 2022.

[38] Ahmad Bayu Abdulloh and Imam Makruf, 'Manajemen Implementasi Perpaduan Kurikulum Cambridge Dan Kurikulum Nasional Di SMP Islam Alabidin Surakarta', *ISLAMIKA* 5, no. 1 (2023): 403.

[39] Nuhla Fauziyatun Nafisah, 'Implementasi Kurikulum Cambridge Di Sekolah Dasar Internasional Al Al-Abidin Surakarta Dan Sekolah Dasar Integral Walisongo Sragen', *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam* 19, no. 2 (2018): 156.

[40] Novi Wulandari and Supriyanto, 'Implementasi Kurikulum Madrasah Bertaraf Internasional Amanatul Ummah Pondok Pesantren Nurul Ummah Pacet Mojokerto', *Inspirasi Manajemen Pendidikan* 6, no. 2 (2018): 1.

research and data-based student management; third, standardization of teacher qualifications and international standard infrastructure, fourth, personal service for each student so that their potential and talents develop optimally. While the realization of continuous improvement to achieve superior student management includes: first, the integration of school and Islamic boarding school learning; second, specialization programs based on specialization; and third, Checkpoint Examination & IGCSE, Cambridge Curriculum.

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