

Curriculum Innovation for the Excellent Madrasah Aliyah Program Based on Pesantren

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ABSTRACT

This research examines curriculum innovations in Islamic boarding school-based madrasahs. Holistic learning, which integrates religious education (Islamic boarding school, also called pesantren) and formal education, is a powerful instrument for school admission to attract more students. Thus, Islamic boarding school-based madrasah curriculum needs to develop innovation to meet the needs of society consistently and adapt to the evolving educational landscape. This research aims to review the curriculum innovations carried out by pesantren-based Madrasah Aliyah to ensure relevance and effectiveness. This research employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach. It established a complex picture of excellent-based madrasa curriculum innovation by examining expressions, detailed reports, and conducting studies in natural situations with various stakeholders. This research concludes that pesantren curriculum innovation is implemented through some stages, including 1) doing needs analysis, 2) formulating and answering philosophical questions, 3) determining the curriculum design, and 4) creating a master plan: development, implementation, and assessment or evaluation for sustainable improvement.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education within the autonomous age faces large and complex challenges that must be responded to positively to improve the quality of education. These challenges include conducting comprehensive research and studies, increasing additional values (*added value*), and developing Islamic educational institutions.¹

A contention in educational organizations is characterized by the development of new organizations and technological advances, making the contention more ferocious than ever. Organizations that have no competitive advantage will not be able to survive in the increasingly fierce competition. To have a competitive advantage, organizations must be able to seek breakthroughs. Hence, it can be said that the survival of an organization depends on how quickly and responsively it faces the existing dynamics.²

The importance of technology and innovation in improving a company's performance, positioning, and earnings in the face of changing market conditions has been acknowledged.³ Creating or sustaining competitiveness and responding appropriately to dynamic market changes can be achieved through innovation. "Innovation is an almost obligatory survival strategy," according to Drucker. Businesses that can generate innovation and creativity through well-thought-out and successful strategies are the ones that can establish a competitive edge.⁴ The newest and most innovative techniques are required to create and produce new items or make advances (physical or intangible) by raising the productive competence of institutions or organizational members.

Educational paradigm discourse between investment-based and outcome-based has had imperative implications for education management, including in *Pesantren* in the regional autonomous setting where the output resulting from education is required to meet determined standards. Even within this framework, the management of educational institutions also needs to be organized in a democratic, creative, effective, efficient, and mutually beneficial manner between stakeholders and components of academic institutions, especially internal customers.⁵ The function of education needs to be reorganized. It should not only carry out routine teaching tasks but should cover more aspects to realize the educated man with high-quality life skills.⁶ Therefore, the capacity to develop the quality of graduates needs to be strengthened. One of the supporting elements in the implementation to enhance the quality of graduates is well-managed curriculum innovation that reflects novelty and uniqueness.

Generally, *Pesantren* has the foremost characteristics within its objective, which is to

¹ Muhammad Hakim Azizi, Syamsul Bakri, and Siti Choiriyah, 'Implementation of Total Quality Management in the Ministry of Religion-Based Education', *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (26 March 2023): 125–36.

² Genevieve Aglazor, 'The Role of Teaching Practice in Teacher Education Programmes: Designing Framework For Best Practice', *Global Journal of Educational Research* 16, no. 2 (2017): 101–10.

³ Babun Suharto and Erma Fatmawati, 'Digital Learning Transformation at Islamic Boarding Schools: Digital-Based Learning Patterns in Salaf and Modern Islamic Boarding Schools in Jember', *Journal of Positive School Psychology* 6, no. 2 (2022): 5319–29.

⁴ Ahmad Royani, 'Establishing a Moderate Religious Academics in Pesantren-Based Higher Education', *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 19, no. 1 (2021): 1–19.

⁵ Zainul Arifin et al., 'An Innovation in Planning Management for Learning Arabic at Islamic Boarding Schools', *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (2023): 77–89.

⁶ Hans de Wit and Philip G. Altbach, 'Internationalization in Higher Education: Global Trends and Recommendations for Its Future', *Policy Reviews in Higher Education* 5, no. 1 (2021): 28–46.

realize Islamic boarding schools as educational institutions that establish religious values in students through classical books.⁷ *Pesantren* education only emphasizes content or *maddab*, purely from Islamic teachings deeply codified from *al-Qur'an* and *al-Hadist*, which were then described in these classical books.⁸ Such a statement is strengthened by the Ministry of Religion managing thousands of *pesantren*. Still, only a few *pesantren* are handled professionally and produce students who can participate in developing society when they return to their respective regions.

Pesantren management must address this trend by raising educational standards and meeting the expectations of *Pesantren* customers.⁹ According to the Total Quality Management (TQM) model, one of the dimensions of quality improvement is managerial activity.¹⁰ According to Tjiptono and Chandra, services are highly variable due to their non-standardized output, which means that their form, quality, and kind can vary based on the person providing the service, the time it is provided, and the location.¹¹

From this description, it appears that the quality of *pesantren* education services cannot be standardized as each *pesantren* has various characteristics, which means there are no particular Islamic boarding school standards that can be applied to all *pesantren*.¹² The implementation or establishment of *pesantren* institutions has always been motivated by *da'wah*.¹³ A *da'wah* motive in establishing an educational institution gives rise to consequences such as *pesantren* being founded naturally and without careful planning to meet its various components.¹⁴ Like a *da'wah* movement that always starts from the bottom, the concept approach of *lillahi taala* sometimes might burden human resource management by ignoring employee welfare and accepting all applicants or students without having a proper admission test.¹⁵

The reality of the *pesantren* establishment nowadays is related to quality development, which is still proceeding naturally, meaning that it has not been managed scientifically, theoretically, and practically.¹⁶ Therefore, the quality of *pesantren* development in general cannot yet be felt in its role and existence, and it is even considered to have not yet carried

⁷ M. Iswanti, 'Signifikansi Inovasi Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Era 4.0', *An-Nabdhlab: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 3 (2024): 234–41.

⁸ Muftia Fitri Fajriani, 'Manajemen Kurikulum Pesantren Sains', *Inovasi Kurikulum* 18, no. 1 (2021): 18–37.

⁹ Rekno Juminten, Sulistya Rusgianto, and Moch Imron Isro'i, 'Drivers of Purchase Intention Behavior on Islamic Boarding School (Pesantren) Product at Java Island', *IQTISHODUNA* 20, no. 1 (2024): 1–18.

¹⁰ Richard M. Hodgetts, Fred Luthans, and Sang M. Lee, 'New Paradigm Organizations: From Total Quality to Learning to World-Class', *Organizational Dynamics* 22, no. 3 (1994): 5–19.

¹¹ Arief Dermawan, 'The Effect of Service Quality, Product Excellence and Promotion on Consumer Satisfaction CV. Primajaya Sarana', *Strategic Management Business Journal* 2, no. 01 (2022): 50–56.

¹² Mamik Setyani et al., 'Exploring the Influence of Self-Competence and Islamic Boarding School Regulations on Student Character: The Mediating Role of Islamic Boarding School Culture', *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 22, no. 1 (2024): 140–54.

¹³ Achmad Farid and Martin Lamb, 'English for Da'wah? L2 Motivation in Indonesian Pesantren Schools', *System* 94 (2020): 1–31.

¹⁴ Deni Zam Jami and Illa Susanti, 'Implementation of Transformative Da'wah Its Implications on Character Education in Marginal Children', *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 43, no. 1 (2023): 231–48.

¹⁵ Muhammad Ronaydi and Cecep Castrawijaya, 'Stages in Human Resource Development in Da'wah Institutions', *International Journal of Social Service and Research* 3, no. 4 (2023): 947–51.

¹⁶ Ahmad Mukhtar B et al., 'The Role of Quality Human Resources in Developing Missions of Future Universities in Indonesian Higher Education', *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (2023): 49–59.

out quality development.¹⁷ For this reason, *Pesantren* needs to innovate to create quality graduates.¹⁸ Curriculum innovations must constantly adapt to current developments. So that students can quickly adapt to the existing developments.¹⁹

In its journey, *Pesantren* has transformed into an Islamic educational institution loved by society.²⁰ This cannot be separated from the educational model offered. The article by Ahmad Royani explains that the existence of *Pesantren* education in the current changes must be able to see the dynamics of the development.²¹ In his research, Abd. Aziz also explained that integrating the *Pesantren* curriculum with the formal curriculum, specifically for the madrasa, provides substantial input in improving the quality of students with top-quality achievement and good manners.²²

Nurul Islam is an educational institution that aims to improve quality. The Pesantren model is employed at the top-notch Madrasah Aliyah (MA) institution, where all students must reside and remain in dorms. The religious curriculum for the Nuris MA outstanding school was developed at MPKiS NURIS (Management for the Development of the *Santri kitab kuning*). It uses the book of Fathul Qorib for the subject of Fiqh and the book of Alfiah for the subject of Nahwu. In the meantime, it uses Imam Haramain al-Juwaini's al-Waraqat on the topic of *Usbul Fiqh*, *Mandlumah Baiquniyah* on the topic of *Ulumul Hadist*, and Kyai Muhyiddin Abdusshomad's al-Hujjaj al Qath'iyyah on the topic of Aswaja.

To ensure that every student at the top-notch Nuris MA school can read the yellow book correctly, MPKiS NURIS is also responsible for overseeing each student's growth. The great school M-SAINS (Madrasah SAINS) of Nuris, MA, was also established to enhance students' scientific abilities. It helps students better understand biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and robotics. Meanwhile, the organization has started a program called "Go International" to raise Madrasah Aliyah's caliber. This specific program moved several outstanding Nuris MA school alums overseas. In the context of scientific and cultural exchange, this program continues to send NSEP (Nuris Student Exchange Programme) participants regularly. Madrasah Huffadzul Qur'an, or the MHQ Al-Qur'an Tahfidz Program, aims to improve the standard of religion at this institution.

Efforts to innovate and develop the curriculum in *Pesantren* are considered very urgent, especially when facing the challenges of changing times and anticipating all the consequences that go along with them. Thus, *Pesantren*-based madrasahs have great potential to become ideal educational institutions that can be used as an alternative for Indonesian society. For this potential to truly be actualized into real potency, *Pesantren* must improve themselves in carrying

¹⁷ Hotni Sari Harahap and Muhammad Riduan Harahap, 'The Role of Dakwah On The Development Of Islamic Education In Sosor Ladang Village Toba Samosir District', *Jurnal Scientia* 10, no. 1 (2021): 117–24.

¹⁸ Ruhayat et al., 'Pesantren Concepts for Producing Quality Graduates', *International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences* 5, no. 1 (2024): 116–26.

¹⁹ Romina Ifeoma Asiyai, 'Best Practices for Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Implications for Educational Administration', *International Journal of Leadership in Education* 25, no. 5 (2022): 843–54.

²⁰ Siti Aimah and Muhammad Nasih, 'Transformation of Pesantren as Humanistic and Futuristic Educational Institutions', *Journal of Research in Educational Management* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–10.

²¹ Ahmad Royani, 'Eksistensi Pendidikan Pesantren dalam Arus Perubahan', *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan dan Kemasyarakatan* 16, no. 2 (2018): 375–92.

²² Abd Aziz et al., 'Islamic Integrated Curriculum Model to Strengthen Santri's Religious Character: A Case Study at Islamic Boarding School in Blitar', *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 21, no. 1 (2023): 63–79.

out their educational functions, primarily related to the development/innovation of the *Pesantren* education curriculum. One of the *Pesantren* curriculum development models that can be used is based on objectives, developing learning materials, improving the learning process, and developing a comprehensive assessment system. Therefore, this article discusses curriculum innovations by *Pesantren's* excellent-based Madrasah Aliyah in developing a curriculum for learning activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach that seeks to understand the phenomenon of Islamic education management, especially regarding Madrasah Curriculum Innovation.²³ This research aims to create a complex picture of *pesantren-based* madrasa curriculum innovation by examining expressions, detailed reports, and conducting studies in natural situations.²⁴

The data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation.²⁵ The observations were made in more specific ways in implementing curriculum innovation activities.²⁶ Interviews were conducted with *Kyai* to obtain data about *Pesantren's* philosophy in integration with formal education. Apart from that, interviews were conducted with the principal of Madrasah Aliyah and the teacher council to determine how curriculum innovation was carried out. Meanwhile, the documentation of the collected data is related to the schedule of curriculum innovation activities developed at Nuris MA, an excellent school.²⁷ The informants in this research were *Kyai*, madrasa heads, teachers, and *ustadz-utadzah*. Other informants who understand the sources of *Pesantren* curriculum innovation

Moreover, data were analyzed using credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability.²⁸ The credibility of the research was achieved by using a triangulation of sources, techniques, and theories, as well as discussions with curriculum lecturers. Next, for transferability, the author prepares a detailed research report.²⁹ Dependability in this research used research audits through research results review activities. Confirmability in this research was revealed from interview recordings, transcripts, field notes during observations, photos, and some relevant certificates.³⁰

²³ Feyisa Mulisa, 'When Does a Researcher Choose a Quantitative, Qualitative, or Mixed Research Approach?', *Interchange* 53, no. 1 (2022): 113–31.

²⁴ Abderahman Rejeb et al., 'The Big Picture on The Internet of Things and The Smart City: A Review Of What We Know and What We Need to Know', *Internet of Things* 19 (2022): 100565.

²⁵ Eungoo Kang and Hee-Joong Hwang, 'Ethical Conducts in Qualitative Research Methodology: Participant Observation and Interview Process', *Journal of Research and Publication Ethics* 2, no. 2 (2021): 5–10.

²⁶ Najmeh Behnamnia et al., 'The Effective Components of Creativity in Digital Game-Based Learning Among Young Children: A Case Study', *Children and Youth Services Review* 116 (2020): 105227.

²⁷ Julie Thompson Burdine, Sally Thorne, and Gurjit Sandhu, 'Interpretive Description: A Flexible Qualitative Methodology for Medical Education Research', *Medical Education* 55, no. 3 (2021): 336–43.

²⁸ Oko Chima Enworo, 'Application of Guba and Lincoln's Parallel Criteria to Assess Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research on Indigenous Social Protection Systems', *Qualitative Research Journal* 23, no. 4 (2023): 372–84.

²⁹ Rebecca S. Natow, 'The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Studies Employing Elite Interviews', *Qualitative Research* 20, no. 2 (2020): 160–73.

³⁰ Sana Butti Al Maktoum and Ahmed M. Al Kaabi, 'Exploring Teachers' Experiences within the Teacher Evaluation Process: A Qualitative Multi-Case Study', *Cogent Education* 11, no. 1 (2024): 2287931.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Innovation management, or the management and organization of a process, is a technique that managers, organizations, or businesses use to generate goods and organizational innovation.³¹ In the educational context, madrasas require professional management; therefore, good management is needed. In this case, *Pesantren*-based madrasas require professional curriculum innovation management. Management is essential for managing a madrasah daily, which involves teaching and non-teaching staff, such as the administration, facilities, infrastructure, and so on.³² Managerial activities within an organization are always associated with systematic methods or systems through the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling process of various activities carried out by organization members through utilizing all the assets maintained.³³

In his book *Curriculum Reform in the Elementary School*, M. Francis Klein states that there are five substances in a curriculum innovation: 1) Establishing a plan. The plan must emphasize the desired changes and must be based on a set of school data and the vision that will be carried out regarding the reform. 2) Examining the curriculum comprehensively. The curriculum should be defined and comprehensively tested from various standpoints, including school institutions, school functions, and curriculum objectives. 3) Analysing the gap between theory and practice. Even though school seems to be a fun place for students to learn, many things still need improvement, such as what the school expects, which is not the same as what happens in the field. 4) Giving attention to implicit curriculum. In developing the constituent of the implicit curriculum, it is necessary to pay attention to things not explicitly found in schools, such as character, well-mannered language use, and good behavior. 5) Developing a systematic approach. One must use a systematic approach to improve the curriculum, as a small aspect of change will impact other aspects of schooling.³⁴

Need Analysis

After Nuris MT's Excellent School graduated its first batch in 2010/2011, an institution is needed to continue the excellent school curriculum designed by KH. Muhyiddin Abdusshomad, alongside his son Gus Robith Qoshidi, Lc, graduated from Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt. The objective is to establish a Madrasah Aliyah institution that excels in the yellow book subject and science and where all students master the concept of *Aswaja's* beliefs and practices. This driving force established the Nuris MA Excellent School in 2011 under the Nurul Islam Jember Islamic Boarding School Institute. The first principal of the madrasa was Hodaifah and was prolonged by the second principal, Balqis al-Humairoh.

The Nuris MA Excellent School operates as a boarding school, requiring all its pupils to live in the dorm. A thorough discussion of the Nuris MA Excellent School's religious curriculum occurred within MPKIS NURIS (Management for the Development of the Santri

³¹ M. Syafiq Humaisi et al., 'Pesantren-Based Transformational Leadership in the Development of International Madrasah Innovation', *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 22, no. 1 (2024): 1–15.

³² Ahmad Royani and Hepni, 'The Survival and Continuity of Islamic Boarding School in the Era of Changes', *Jurnal Penelitian* 19, no. 2 (2022): 129–38.

³³ Muhammad Thohri and Harapandi, 'Transformative Education Curriculum: Developing Nahdlatul Wathan Warriors in Maulana II's Era', *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 22, no. 1 (2024): 16–28.

³⁴ Martha Montero-Sieburth, 'Models and Practice of Curriculum Change in Developing Countries', *Comparative Education Review* 36, no. 2 (1992): 175–93.

Yellow Book). The book of Alfiyah is used in the discussion of Nahwu, and the book of Fathul Qorib is used in the debate of Fiqh. Meanwhile, it uses al-Hujjaj al Qath'iyah by Kyai Muhyiddin Abdusshomad on the topic of Khwaja, al-Waraqat by Imam Haramain al-Juwaini on the topic of ulumul most complex, and Mandlumah Baiquniyah in the subject of Ushul Fiqh.

Based on the documentation, the Madrasah's vision is "Creating a Generation implementing *Akhlauqul Karimah*, Excelling in both religious and scientific subjects." Meanwhile, the mission of the madrasahs is as follows: *First*, encourage students always to implement Akhlauqul Karimah in their behavior. *Second*, it provides students with corresponding religious and scientific insight. *Third*, Islamic education should be created with the concept of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jam'ah, and fourth, students' knowledge of yellow books should be deepened. *Fifth*, the academic quality of students should be improved to have the basic competence to compete globally. *Sixth*, developing students' appreciation and practice of Islamic religious teachings and disciplined and caring habits. *Seventh*, implementing professional and meaningful learning with the PAKEM approach can maximally create students' potential on a religious basis, discipline, and love. *Eighth*, the guidance program should be implemented effectively so that each student develops optimally according to their potential to become religious human beings, disciplined, and self-aware to be accepted at their desired college. *Ninth*, madrasa management should be carried out with a participatory management model involving all madrasah members and interest groups based on religious values, discipline, and care. *Tenth*, carrying out extracurricular learning through talent development unit activities and interests so that each student excels in various non-academic competitions based on religious values, discipline, and care.

In addition to obtaining and utilizing the new raw resources through creative organizational strategies, Schumpeter's idea of innovation encompasses product, process, and market innovation. In this sense, Schumpeter has established the theoretical underpinnings for future studies on innovation.³⁵ After that, many scholars began concentrating on a more micro-level understanding of innovation instead of the macro-level one. Whereas micro innovation refers to innovation conducted by businesses, macro innovation is associated with innovation conducted at a macro level related to economic growth.³⁶

Researchers propose two distinct perspectives on the notion of innovation as the methods businesses use to generate innovation, based on research emphasizing development inside innovation employing macro innovation.³⁷ The first strategy, called "innovation as a process," emphasizes how businesses innovate and the social processes that lead to innovation, such as human creativity, organizational culture, environmental context, and socioeconomic issues.³⁸

³⁵ Mert Gürlek and İlker Kılıç, 'Conceptualization, Measurement and Theorization of Green Innovation in Hospitality and Tourism: Looking Back to Move Forward', *The Service Industries Journal*, n.d., 1–59.

³⁶ Francesco Paolo Appio et al., 'Digital Transformation and Innovation Management: A Synthesis of Existing Research and an Agenda for Future Studies', *Journal of Product Innovation Management* 38, no. 1 (2021): 4–20.

³⁷ Manoj Palsodkar, Gunjan Yadav, and Madhukar R. Nagare, 'Integrating Industry 4.0 and Agile New Product Development Practices to Evaluate the Penetration of Sustainable Development Goals in Manufacturing Industries', *Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology* 22, no. 4 (2023): 1351–92.

³⁸ Veronica Scuotto et al., 'The Impact Of Innovation Failure: Entrepreneurship Adversity Or

The second approach is “innovation as an outcome,” where it is said that innovation is a product created within its establishment that has added value. From the perspective of innovation as an outcome, innovation is divided into radical and incremental. Radical innovation is a technology that encourages innovation (technology push) in creating something new for the company and the market or customers.³⁹ Meanwhile, incremental innovation is usually categorized as market-oriented innovations (market pull) because the ideas obtained in creating new products originate from the market, so they are often referred to as market-oriented or marketable.⁴⁰

Thus, the fundamental analysis carried out within the learning program at Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Islam shows a distinctive model compared to other formal institutions as the learning process at Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School has implemented an integrative approach that combines the national curriculum and Islamic boarding school curriculum for the learning activities in madrasas and Islamic boarding schools; as well as between planning, implementing, and evaluating process. The Madrasah’s quality assurance team designs the learning policy. For instance, Arabic learning process is generally taught based on the level at the formal madrasah. The material obtained is deepened at the Islamic boarding school level, under predetermined classifications, and developed through extracurricular programs of Yellow Book and Arabic Language Development.

Formulating and Answering Philosophical Questions

The main objective of the Nurul Islamic boarding school is to provide educational facilities to the people in Jember with a characterized religious atmosphere. In the record of formal institutional education, within its first establishment year, less than twenty students stayed and studied there. They only learn religious practice directly from the Kyai. One day, when he was walking around in the city center of Jember, Muhyiddin Abdusshomad saw many Muslim students studying in Christian schools from various regions ranging from the Silo sub-district and others. Such conditions were terrible and concerning for Muslims. Because of this reason, he dreamed of establishing a formal Islamic Boarding School that is professionally managed.

In Nurul Islam's documentation, it is also explained that to strengthen the establishment objectives of this institution, following up on this desire, he asked for advice from several major *kiai* in East Java, such as KH. As'ad Syamsul Arifin (the chief of the Sukorejo Situbondo Islamic Boarding School), KH. Ahmad Siddiq (the chief of Talangsari Jember Islamic boarding school), KH. Hasyim Zaini (the chief of the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school in Probolinggo). These *kiai* have agreed upon KH Muhyiddin Abdusshomad's vision. Then, he discussed these ideas with the students at that time who were studying at Jember University, Muhammadun, Achmad Nur Salim, and several other students. He also gathered principals of elementary schools around the Islamic boarding school to ask for suggestions and input

Opportunity?’, *Technovation* 131 (1 March 2024): 102944.

³⁹ Alberto Gabriel Ndekwa and Elizeus John Kalugendo, ‘Social Media Use and Organization Knowledge Sharing: Marketization of Innovation Ideas’, in *Managerial Perceptions: Models of Organizational Effectiveness*, ed. Marco Valeri (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 23–41.

⁴⁰ Kaidong Feng and Ziyang Jiang, ‘Centralized Regime Gaining Information Capacity: Can China Approach Innovation Frontiers?’, *Journal of Contemporary China* 33, no. 147 (2024): 392–416.

regarding establishing the public school. They were enthusiastic and supportive; even the principal of SDN Antirogo 4 at that time provided several rooms for the formal school to be used. KH Muhyidin Abdussomad also discussed establishing a general education institution with Abu Bakar Bakhtir, owner of the Al-Furqon Foundation. Hearing the ideas and rationale of this vision, Abu Bakar Bakhtir strongly supported KH Muhyiddin Abdusshomad's disposition. The formal institution was expected to be a place not only to gain religious knowledge but also to become experts in general knowledge.

Pesantren are educational institutions that emphasize moral values that emphasize spirituality in everyday life. KH. Muhyidin explained that it was essential to have a strong commitment to always promoting Islamic boarding schools for the benefit of society. Especially the formal institutions within the Islamic boarding schools themselves. It can be seen that competition between Islamic boarding schools and educational institutions is increasing. Apart from that, the effectiveness of managing formal institutions with Islamic boarding school characteristics encourages competitive order, which causes most academic institutions to experience difficulty controlling their institutions, mainly formal education, such as Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, Islamic boarding school institutions must be able to transform and adapt quickly to compete with other educational institutions. Improving the quality of institutions and good services must become a top priority to meet stakeholder demands. Academic institutions need to implement appropriate marketing strategies, one of which is positioning to secure the competition in the world of education.

The main objective of the institution was to instill Islamic values in students. Integrating Islamic boarding school values with formal institutions should be carried out in this Institution. Institutionally, almost all formal institutions under The Islamic boarding school institute have been accredited well. Apart from that, strengthening the Islamic boarding school values has remained the top priority by providing a typical learning process for Islamic boarding schools.

The formal Nuris Institute curriculum combines the Al-Azhar Cairo Egypt curriculum and the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs curriculum. This curriculum is designed so that Nuris students excel in learning religious-based practice from the Yellow Book and master science and technology and comprehend the basic concept of the beliefs and practices of *Ablussunnah Wal Jama'ah*.

The concept of mapping curriculum needs at the Nuris MA Excellent School Jember was based on the vision, mission, and goals of the Islamic boarding school as well as the vision and mission of the madrasah because Historically, every Islamic boarding school has a long historical basis with various dynamics and the problems experienced by principals including in the forms of concern about the condition which develops in the Islamic boarding school environment, community development, and the progression of time.

The idea behind Nuris MA Excellent School is a boarding school where all of the students must live in dorms. A thorough discussion of the Nuris MA Excellent School's religious curriculum took place within MPKiS NURIS (Management for the Development of the Santri Yellow Book). The book of Alfiyah is used in the discussion of Nahwu, and the book of Fathul Qorib is used in the discussion of Fiqh. Meanwhile, it uses Imam Haramain al-Juwaini's *al-Waraqat* in the Ushul Fiqh topic, Mandlumah Baiquniyah in the Ulumul Hadist

subject, and Kyai Muhyiddin Abdusshomad's al-Hujjaj al Qath'iyyah in the Aswaja subject.

Curriculum needs mapping carried out at Nuris MA Excellent School shows the importance of Needs Assessment which is the basis for curriculum development. This theory suggests that the curriculum be designed by first identifying the needs of students, society, and the educational environment. This mapping focuses on the dynamics that develop in the community around the Islamic boarding school and the changing times that schools must face.

A curriculum based on needs analysis will be more relevant and adaptive to social changes occurring around the school. In this case, school principals play an important role in understanding evolving needs, both academic and non-academic, and how the curriculum can be adapted to respond to these challenges.⁴¹

The initial outlook of the institutional establishment was in line with the outlook of Islamic boarding schools. This outlook is reflected in the vision where the focus is to produce students with superior achievements based on faith and piety. The indicator of this vision is to be excelled in the religious construction of Islam with distinctive characteristics of Islamic boarding school (*aswaja*), to be excelled in improving within the National Assessment, to be excelled in language achievement in both English and Arabic, to excel in the mastery of the book and *tahfidz*, to be excelled in the mastery science and non-science. From this, it can be said that the fundamental philosophy in the development of the curriculum emphasized an integrative pattern between general learning and religious learning.

Determining Curriculum Design

Nuris MA Excellent School is an educational institution that is open to accepting input both from within the system (teachers or madrasah members) and from outside the system (external). Hence, every plan and policy for institutional innovation needs to be adjusted based on several aspects including analyzing the developments or dynamics of technological advancement of the time, reconsidering supporting aspects (sources) as well obstacles that may arise both from within and from outside of the system (community), establishing proper coordination with various parties, including the chiefs of institute, and teachers to find solutions for the arisen obstacles in realizing the innovation.

The curriculum design for Nuris MA Excellent School can be combined with Systems Theory by William W. Charters and Constructivism Theory by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky to create a curriculum that is holistic, adaptive, and responsive to technological developments and societal dynamics. Based on Systems Theory, the curriculum must be designed by considering the interplay between internal and external elements, such as teachers, students, technology, and community.⁴² Collaboration between various parties, such as madrasa heads, teachers, and parents, is very important to formulate solutions to the obstacles that arise. Meanwhile, with Constructivism Theory, the curriculum must emphasize active and problem-based learning, where students build knowledge through experience and social interaction,

⁴¹ Julie Canfield and Eugenia Weiss, 'Integrating Military and Veteran Culture in Social Work Education: Implications for Curriculum Inclusion', *Journal of Social Work Education* 51, no. sup1 (2015): 128–44.

⁴² Jay L Lemke and Nora H Sabelli, 'Complex Systems and Educational Change: Towards a New Research Agenda', *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 40, no. 1 (2008): 118–29.

supported by technology as a tool.⁴³ This approach allows students to develop 21st-century skills, such as creativity, problem-solving, and digital skills and ensures the curriculum is always relevant to current developments and societal needs.

The educational curriculum at Nuris MA Excellent School is designed to cope with various challenges, such as globalization, regarding ethical and moral cultural subjects. In this case, it can be said that there are no educational problems immediately separated from the axiological anchor of the curriculum designed to produce competent students. Therefore, an integrated curriculum has become an alternative for developing students' potential according to the educational objective: to develop students' capability (*tarbiyah*) to become noble human beings (*fitriah*). In other words, the educational process designed in the curriculum at Nuris MA Excellent School focuses on humanizing humans. They assume that the integrated curriculum can develop all the potential of students and avoid any misbehaving in their personality. Students are expected to be both an intellectual and spiritual person.

The curriculum operationalization policy at the Nuris MA Excellent School still needs approval from the Islamic boarding school caretaker, who will deliver the policy at the meeting later by a principal of the madrasah. Further activities in the learning process, which include strengthening skills at MA Nurul Islam, can be seen from the Curriculum design as the documentation as follows:

Table 1. Science Extracurricular Curriculum Design

No	Mentoring Type	Members
A. Contest		
I. Olimpiade Senior		
1	Mathematics A	Boys and girls
	Mathematics B	Boys and girls
2	Physics	Boys and girls
3	Astronomy A	Boys and girls
	Astronomy B	Boys and girls
4	Biology A	Boys and girls
	Biology B	Boys and girls
5	Chemistry A	Boys and girls
	Chemistry B	Boys and girls
II. KIR Senior		
6	Robotics	Boys
7	Technological Innovation	Boys
8	Health – Biochemistry	Girls
B. Specialization		
III. Specialization Senior		
9	Mathematics Specialization	Girls
10	Biology Specialization	Girls
11	Economy Specialization	Girls
12	KIR Specialization A	Boys
	KIR Specialization B	Girls

(Nuris MA Excellent School Documentation)

⁴³ Amirudin Siahaan, Rahmat Hidayat Rambe, and Abd Mukti, 'Managerial Competence of School Principals in Improving Teacher Performance', *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (14 August 2024): 490–502.

The above data is the recapitulation of extracurricular science activity. Meanwhile, Nuris MA Excellent School provides a learning process based on science and technology.

Table 2. Non-science Extracurricular Curriculum Design

No	Mentoring Type	Members
A. Contest		
1	Senior Creative Writing	Boys-Girls
2	Performing Arts	Boys-Girls
3	Advanced Calligraphy	Boys-Girls
4	Graphic design	Boys-Girls
5	Enforcer Scouts	Boys
	Scout Raider	Boys
6	Advanced Journalism	Boys-Girls
7	Chess	Boys
8	Futsal Senior	Boys
B. Specialization		
9	Broadcasting A	Boys
	Broadcasting B	Girls
10	Basic Journalism A	Boys
	Basic Journalism B	Girls
11	Basic Calligraphy A	Boys
	Basic Calligraphy B	Girls
12	Choir	Girls
13	Paskibra A	Boys
	Paskibra B	Girls
14	PMR A	Boys
	PMR B	Girls
15	Enforcer Scouts	Girls
16	Volleyball	Boys

(Nuris MA Excellent School Documentation)

The above table shows the non-science curriculum where the strength of the skills offered is in the psychomotor skills of students. This non-science curriculum activity is directed at students' sports skills and talents.

Table 3. Language Extracurricular Curriculum Design

No	Mentoring Type	Members
A. Contest		
I. SENIOR OLYMPIADS		
1	Basic TOEFL	Boys-Girls
	TOEFL Advanced	Boys-Girls
II. PUBLIC SPEAKING SENIOR		
2	Arabic Speech	Boys-Girls
3	Basic English Speech	Boys-Girls
4	Advanced English Speeches	Boys-Girls

No	Mentoring Type	Members
5	Indonesian Speech	Boys-Girls
B. Specialization		
I. PUBLIC SPEAKING		
10	English Conversation Junior A	Boys
	English Conversation Junior B	Girls
11	Arabic Conversation A	Boys
	Arabic Conversation B	Girls

(Nuris MA Excellent School Documentation)

The above table mentions the Nuris MA Excellent School innovation curriculum, which emphasizes aspects of Arabic and English language skills. The objective of this activity is to improve the student's language competence.

Table 4. Religious Extracurricular Curriculum Design

No	Mentoring Type	Members
A. Contest		
1	The Book of Basic <i>Fathul Qorib</i>	Boys-Girls
	The Book of Extended <i>Fathul Qorib</i>	Boys-Girls
2	Tafsir of the Koran in English	Boys-Girls
3	<i>Tabfiẓ</i> Quran A	Boys
	<i>Tabfiẓ</i> Quran B	Girls
4	Islamic Study Club	Boys-Girls
5	<i>Fabmil</i> Quran A	Boys
	<i>Fabmil</i> Quran B	Girls
6	Advanced Recitation Pa/Pi	Boys-Girls
7	<i>Musabaqoh Syabril Quran (MSQ)</i>	Boys-Girls
B. Specialization		
8	Tartil <i>Tabfiẓ</i> Class A	Boys
	Tartil <i>Tabfiẓ</i> Class B	Girls
	Tartil Quran A	Girls
	Tartil Quran E	Boys
9	Basic Recital A	Boys
	Basic Recital B	Girls

(Nuris MA Excellent School Documentation)

In the fourth data curriculum schedule above, Nuris MA Excellent School provides students with learning experiences in the Qur'anic knowledge subject. *Tabfiẓ* activities and Qur'an interpretation are discussed holistically in teaching and learning activities.

From the data above, it can be explained that the learning design activities highlight the aspects of integrative outlines. The continuity aspect of the *Diniyah curriculum with the national curriculum and* extra-curricular activities suggests that Nuris MA Excellent School Jember encourages students to benefit from integration between religious knowledge and general knowledge.

Creating a Master Plan: Development, Implementation, and Assessment

Curriculum Development: Curriculum Innovation Arrangement

Nuris MA Excellent School is an educational institution open to accepting input from both the system (teachers or madrasah members) and from outside the system (external). Hence, every plan and policy for institutional innovation needs to be adjusted based on several aspects, including analyzing the developments or dynamics of technological advancement of the time, reconsidering supporting aspects (sources) as good obstacles that may arise both from within and from outside of the system (community), establishing proper coordination with various parties, including the chiefs of the institute, and teachers to find solutions for the arisen obstacles in realizing the innovation.

The theory that can be taken from this explanation is the Theory of Educational Innovation Based on Open Systems and Dynamic Collaboration. This theory combines open systems, innovation, resource management, and organizational collaboration principles. In this theory, educational institutions are viewed as open systems that actively interact with their internal and external environments, receiving input from various parties, including teachers and madrasah members, as well as the community and technology. An analysis of technological developments, societal needs, and efficient resource management must drive innovation in education. Effective coordination between leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders is essential to identifying obstacles and formulating appropriate solutions. With this collaborative approach, educational innovation can be implemented sustainably, continuously adapting to existing dynamics and positively impacting institutional and societal development.⁴⁴

In its development, the Nuris MA Excellent School has two curriculum models: the core curriculum and the local curriculum. The core curriculum implemented at the Nuris MA Excellent School is similar to the madrasa education system in general. The difference lies within the featured programs designated as local specialties to support the national curriculum and facilitate the development of each student's talents. Nuris MA Excellent School's local curriculum includes the following: (1) M-Science (Madrasah Science); (2) Arts, Religion, and Sports program; (3) Arabic and English Language Development; (4) MHQ (*Huffadzul Qur'an Madrasah*); (5) MPKIS (Yellow Book Development Management); (6) Go International Program and NSEP (Nuris Student Exchange Program); and some programs that emphasize the internalization of *Ablussunnah Wal Jamaah* values in every subject taught at all educational levels.

The distinctiveness of the program at Nuris MA Excellent School, as documented in the curriculum design, is that it includes 80% of the design for religious programs. In comparison, 20% of the curriculum is designed for general science. The specificity of the local curriculum can be seen in the curriculum structure that teaches science and religion with a more significant portion than general science. Islamic-based religious lessons of the yellow book covering the subjects of *Aqidah Akhlak*, *Qur'an Hadith*, *Tafsir* science, *Hadith* science, *Fiqh*, *Ushul Fiqh*, *Tasawwuf*, History of Islamic Civilization, and Arabic. On the other hand,

⁴⁴ Alberto Bertello, Paola De Bernardi, and Francesca Ricciardi, 'Open Innovation: Status Quo and Quo Vadis - an Analysis of a Research Field', *Review of Managerial Science* 18, no. 2 (2024): 633–83.

general science includes Citizenship Education, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Indonesian, Mathematics, Physical Education, ICT, Arts, and English.

Implementation of Curriculum Innovation: Integration Model

Every Nuris MA Excellent School student is expected to live in a dorm as part of the boarding school model. Within MPKiS NURIS (Management for the Development of the Santri Yellow Book), a thorough discussion on the religious curriculum for Nuris MA Excellent School was held. The book of Fathul Qorib is used in the subject of Fiqh, and the book of Alfiah is used in the subject of Nahwu. It uses al-Waraqat by Imam Haramain al-Juwaini on the topic of Ushul Fiqh, Mandlumah Baiquniyah on the topic of Ulumul Hadist, and al-Hujjaj al Qath'iyah by Kyai Muhyiddin Abdusshomad on the topic of Aswaja.

Curriculum integration theory connects various disciplines to create a more relevant and comprehensive learning experience. This approach blends material from several subjects into a unified theme or project, enabling students to recognize the connections between different fields of study. Project-based learning (PBL) encourages students to collaborate in solving real-world problems that involve multiple disciplines. An integrated curriculum also offers flexibility, allowing students to pursue learning paths based on their interests while developing essential skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork. Furthermore, real-life, relevant teaching and project-based holistic assessments equip students with the practical skills needed for future challenges.⁴⁵

This theory is rooted in constructivism, emphasizing that knowledge is built through active engagement with the environment and context. By integrating various disciplines, students acquire facts and learn how to connect, analyze, and apply this knowledge in real-life situations. Additionally, social learning theory supports curriculum integration by highlighting the importance of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process, which can occur through cross-disciplinary projects that foster student teamwork.⁴⁶

Nuris MA Excellent School is an Islamic boarding school-based Madrasah that excels in developing students' *akhlakul karimah*, teaching the yellow book (*aswaja*), science, and technology, and initiating global competitiveness empowerment. Nuris MA Excellent School has outstanding characteristics in creating cadre development of *Aswaja*, being proficient in the yellow book practice and *tahfiz*, having proper competency in science and technology, and communicating fluently using foreign languages (Arabic, English, and Mandarin). The principal then manages this combination by forming a representative and focused environment. Teachers and employees are divided into their duties as facilitators and educational servants based on appropriate cultural instillation with potential and passion. In this way, each character will develop a routine. Further, the teacher council and principal employees have systematically handled the culture of excellence.

In transforming the culture, the principal of the Nuris MA Excellent School is making active attempts to communicate intensively with all madrasah members at any time. Every

⁴⁵ Theodore W. Frick, 'The Theory of Totally Integrated Education (TIE)', in *Learning, Design, and Technology: An International Compendium of Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, ed. J. Michael Spector, Barbara B. Lockee, and Marcus D. Childress (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023), 369–401.

⁴⁶ Megawati et al., 'Implications Of Falsification Theory and The Constructivism Paradigm in The Development Of Science Education And Learning', *ETUDE: Journal of Educational Research* 4, no. 1 (2023): 9–13.

time he instructs a program, the principal of Nuris MA Excellent School always starts by giving models/examples and initiating discussion through institutional meetings based on potential and facilities supporters and targets. Apart from being a supervisor, the principal of the Nuris MA Excellent School is always involved in ensuring the program's success. The principal of Nuris MA Excellent School always prioritizes small things and details when deciding clear targets within a designed plan or program.

Furthermore, in integrating the objective of institutional members (teachers, staff employees, and students) with the Nuris MA Excellent School's aim, the principal persuasively strives for all madrasah members to participate in every institutional activity.

Assessment or Evaluation: Maintaining Commitment

Regular evaluation and assessment of progress are essential to maintain commitment to achieving goals. According to the Goal Setting Theory proposed by Edwin Locke, setting clear and measurable goals can increase individual motivation and performance.⁴⁷ Regularly monitoring progress can ensure we are on the right track and identify obstacles preventing us from achieving our goals. Constructive feedback from oneself and others helps refine strategies and increase motivation. In addition, celebrating small achievements provides positive encouragement to keep going, as does the concept of Reinforcement Theory from B.F. Skinner emphasized the importance of rewards or reinforcement in maintaining behavior.⁴⁸ This ongoing evaluation strengthens commitment by maintaining focus, improving practical approaches, and ensuring goals remain relevant to current circumstances.

MPKIS NURIS has another function: to control the development of each Nuris MA Excellent School student so that all students can read the yellow book properly. Unsurprisingly, Nuris MA Excellent School students have won several provincial, district, and even national-level competitions. Meanwhile, to enhance students' science skills, M-SAINS (Madrasah SAINS) of Nuris MA Excellent School was formed to develop students' competency in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, and Robotics. These science development activities were carried out in the afternoon. The evaluation process in the curriculum at Nuris MA Excellent School was done through learning evaluations, including affective, motoric, and cognitive assessments. Since the daily life of students in Islamic boarding schools can be controlled and evaluated, the end-of-semester assessment also includes good morals in carrying out their daily routines. Thus, the emphasis on the curriculum assessment aspect at the Nuris MA Excellent School is focused on strengthening religious and general learning values. All of these activities are recorded in the Islamic boarding school institution's quality assurance program to monitor the development of students.

⁴⁷ Richard Cheruiyot, Williter Rop, and Raymond Kemboi, 'Goal- Setting Practices By Teachers And Service Delivery In Public Secondary Schools In Sotik Sub County, Kenya' 11, no. 5 (2023): 160–76.

⁴⁸ Morgan N. Giola, 'Problem Behavior in Early Childhood Special Education', *Culminating Experience Projects*, 2023, 1–57.

CONCLUSION

Curriculum innovation in *Pesantren* is considered to be crucial, especially when facing the challenges of changing times and anticipating all the consequences that are associated with it. Therefore, *pesanten-based* madrasas have great potential to become ideal institutions that can be used as alternative educational institutions for society. For this potential to be accurately actualized into real strength, *Pesantren* must improve themselves in carrying out their educational functions, especially related to curriculum innovation. One of the models of *pesantren* curriculum development that can be considered for implementation is based on objectives, learning materials, improving the learning process, and developing a comprehensive assessment system. The following are the functions of Nuris MA Excellent School Antirogo Jember's *Pesantren* curriculum innovation: 1) starting a needs analysis; 2) creating and responding to philosophical questions; 3) deciding on the curriculum's layout; 4) developing a master plan, which includes its creation, execution, and review or evaluation.

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