Curriculum Development Management in Islamic Boarding Schools: Effective Strategies in Countering Radicalism

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Submitted: 18-05-2023  Revised: 11-04-2024  Accepted: 01-05-2024

ABSTRACT. This research analyzes effective managerial strategies in developing Islamic boarding school curricula to prevent radicalism. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach focusing on two Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province: Al-Mizan Cikole and Daar Falah Mandalawangi. Data was collected through interviews, observation, and document analysis with stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion. The results show that the curriculum implemented is integrative, comprehensive, and independent, fostering positive interactions between students, teachers (ustadz), and religious leaders (kyai) in the Islamic boarding school community. Kyai and their administrators serve as role models, and mosques act as centers of activity where no radical ideology is taught or spread. Curriculum planning and content reflect collective efforts to prevent radicalism, providing significant benefits to the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools. The management program for curriculum development to prevent internal and external radicalism has been implemented and carried out systematically from primary education to higher education. It is recommended that the integrative and comprehensive curriculum approach be maintained and continuously improved. Regular training and workshops for teachers and kyai should improve their anti-radicalism education skills. Collaboration with experts and external institutions must be fostered to enrich the curriculum with diverse perspectives. A continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanism must be established to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum in preventing radicalism and make necessary adjustments.

Keywords: Educational management, integrative education, Islamic boarding school curriculum, prevention of radicalism

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools, as one of the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, have a central role in shaping the students’ character, morals, and religious understanding (Syafe’i, 2017; Fatayan et al., 2019). Amid increasing global and national concerns about radicalism, Islamic boarding schools are strategically positioned in prevention efforts through education (Fathurrochman & Kristiawan, 2019; Ferdian & Mustofa, 2019). The curriculum taught in Islamic boarding schools not only functions as a medium for transferring knowledge (Syae’i, 2017) but also as a tool for building moderate and tolerant attitudes among the younger generation. Given the importance of this role, developing an effective curriculum is crucial. Nevertheless, Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia face various challenges in designing curricula that can effectively ward off the influence of radicalism (Kusmanto et al., 2015; Suryadi & Mansur, 2017; Auzai et al.,...
These challenges include limited resources, the involvement of diverse stakeholders, and complex social and political dynamics.

Radicalism, including Indonesia, has become an increasingly accurate and complex threat to global society (Githens-Mazer, 2012; Crone, 2016; Ruggiero, 2017; Adams, 2017). Islamic boarding schools are anticipated to function as an efficient barrier against the spread of radical ideology since they are religious educational establishments crucial to the development of moral and spiritual values (Mery, 2019; Widyaningsih et al., 2019). However, Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia often need help in this effort. One of the main challenges is how to design and implement a curriculum that is not only based on Islamic principles but can also proactively ward off radicalism. The existing curriculum often needs more dynamics and fully responds to the socio-political dynamics that influence potential radicalization (Raihani, 2012; Asrori, 2016; Al-Aharish, 2017; Franklin, 2017; Birchok, 2019). Additionally, there needs to be more resources, a lack of training for educators, and a lack of coordination with other stakeholders, which also hamper the effectiveness of these efforts. The case study at the Islamic boarding school, which is the focus of this research, highlights the specific and real problems faced in developing a responsive and preventive curriculum against radicalism.

Although various studies have been conducted to understand the role of Islamic boarding schools in education and preventing radicalism (Raihani, 2012; Franklin, 2017; Suharto, 2018; Birchok, 2019), there are still significant gaps in the existing literature. Many studies focus on the theological and pedagogical aspects of the Islamic boarding school curriculum (Kirana, 2018; Rochmat, 2018; Hayati, 2019), but few highlight the importance of a managerial approach in its development. This approach is crucial considering the complexity of challenges Islamic boarding schools face, including limited resources, variability in students’ needs, and external social and political pressures. In addition, in-depth empirical research on curriculum management strategies in Islamic boarding schools still needs to be improved, leaving a knowledge gap that needs to be filled. This research analyzes effective managerial strategies in developing Islamic boarding school curricula to prevent radicalism.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative-naturalistic approach, an in-depth research technique that involves speaking with information sources directly in a natural setting to gather the necessary data. The descriptive method was also employed in this study. This descriptive approach aims to offer a methodical explanation of the features and precision of the data. The Daar Falah Mandalawangi Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Mizan Cikole Islamic Boarding School hosted the research. In this study, observation, documentation studies, and interviews are the methods used to acquire data. Three steps comprised the data analysis technique used in this study: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In order to arrive at results that can be independently verified, data must be filtered, grouped, compiled, and organized at the data reduction step of the analytical process. In order to aid comprehension, researchers offer material in a structured narrative framework throughout the data presentation stage. In the meantime, analysis is done at the conclusion drawing stage by searching for connections, patterns, meanings, and potential hypotheses.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The study's findings emphasize curriculum development, tactics used, issues and contributing variables, attempts to manage issues with managing the creation of curricula for Islamic boarding schools, and the successes attained in creating curricula that deter radicalism.
Curriculum Development

By fostering an understanding of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah—the two leading Islamic organizations in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul 'Ulama (NU), which are acknowledged by the community as organizations that understand Islam correctly—the management of Islamic boarding school curriculum development at the Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School aims to prevent radicalism. The leadership of the boarding school currently holds positions on the PCNU Lebak Mustasyar board. It is involved in the Islamic Boarding School Friendship Forum, which includes representatives from Salafi and modern boarding schools. Using kyai and asatidz as models, children learn about tolerance, adaptability, and strong ideals through this method, practiced in real life under constant supervision.

Meanwhile, at the Daar Falah Islamic Boarding School, the implementation of curriculum development management includes several aspects: 1) The Islamic Boarding School implements well-organized total quality control in extracurricular and curricular activities, which is monitored directly by the core management committee (KMI), who pays special attention to the role of teachers go through a series of steps such as teaching preparation, increasing competence, learning, supervision, and evaluation. 2) Teaching materials remain adapted to the established KMI curriculum. 3) The extracurricular curriculum is managed by the students' care in a scheduled, structured, and directed manner. It focuses on self-development and the implementation of boarding school values through student organizations such as the Muhammadiyah-Daar Falah Student Organization (Organisasi Pelajar Muhammadiyah-Daar Falah = OPM-DF) and the Scout movement coordinator, which lasts 24 hours a day. 4) The boarding school administration oversees KMI performance and cares about preserving consistency and unity in executing the Islamic boarding school curriculum.

Strategies and Methods Applied

Efforts to overcome problems in curriculum development to ward off radicalism involve several steps: a) in the curriculum, three materials have the potential for radical understanding, namely aqidah, fiqh, and tafsir. However, the Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School prepares balanced lessons by adding tasawuf (morals) for aqidah, usul fiqh for fiqh, and asbabul nuzul for interpretation; b) The selection of teachers and educational staff is carried out by prioritizing those who have an understanding of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah and are not inclined towards radicalism; c) Protection of students is carried out through the influence of the social environment and access to information. The values that develop in Islamic boarding schools are the result of designs from the Kyai or caregivers, so the religious character and character of the students originate from the views of the Kyai.

Meanwhile, at the Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School, to ward off radicalism among the santri, they implement strategies through the example of caregivers, curriculum, and daily habituation practices, which include: 1) Exemplary is an ideal example that must be followed in the santri community, where the behavior of a kyai is a reflection of his students and the process of self-identification with that figure; 2) The curriculum provides learning of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah values through book study and understanding of national insight to ensure students' understanding of their country; 3) Habitual practices include Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah traditions, Islamic holiday celebrations, and local activities.

Problems and Supporting Factors

Problems in managing curriculum development in preventing radicalism include a lack of literature as student reading material, variations in students' levels of understanding, and students' need for more attention to the material, causing uneven understanding among students. Ummah (2012) traces the roots of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia, while Baidhowi (2017) emphasizes that Islam is neither radical nor terrorist. The habit of religious activities based on Ahlus Sunnah wal
Jama'ah aims to prevent radicalism. Other supporting factors include a) Guidance of students, which can be carried out intensively for 24 hours in Islamic boarding schools under the supervision of aside, allowing for direct evaluation and correction of deviations; b) The vision, mission, and rules of the boarding school are the basis for education and teaching for all boarding school residents.

The independence of the Islamic boarding school curriculum remains oriented towards spiritual, social, scientific, and Islamic values. The boarding school system controls students’ experiences and practices of the curriculum that has been developed. Curriculum integration continues to prioritize Islam and the moderate character of Islamic boarding schools in responding to national and international issues. Through the curriculum, three materials have the potential for radical understanding (aqidah, fiqh, and tafsir). However, Islamic boarding schools provide balancing lessons such as Sufism for aqidah, applicable fiqh for fiqh, and babul nuzul for tafsir. Teachers and educational personnel are recruited from those who understand Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah. Student protection is sought through healthy social interactions and controlled access to information. The values that develop in Islamic boarding schools are influenced by the views of kyai or caregivers who design the religious character of Islamic boarding schools.

Efforts to Overcome Problems

Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School tries to manage and develop the curriculum to ward off radicalism by adding literature based on the understanding of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah as reading material for students. They also continue to strive to provide a comprehensive understanding of tolerance-based teachings and explain the dangers of radicalism. As an additional step, Islamic boarding schools invite professionals in related fields to become resource persons in religious activities held in the Islamic boarding school environment.

Various efforts have been made to overcome challenges in managing curriculum development, including: 1) implementing fun learning by applying quantum learning and quantum teaching techniques and approaches so that students feel actively involved in the learning process, 2) arrangement of activities outside the classroom in a recreational atmosphere, 3) implementation of a strict evaluation system, 4) continuous coaching by inviting tutors who are experts in their fields, 5) developing students’ character until they reach a spiritual level in both psychomotor and moral aspects, 6) provide intensive direction and assignments, and 7) we are maintaining traditions while adapting to modernization.

Results achieved

The results of this curriculum development include several things: 1) santri can differentiate teachings that positively and negatively impact society, especially in Indonesia, 2) santri deeply understands the teachings of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah through the guidance of kyai, asatidz, and professionals in their fields, 3) santri can protect themselves from radicalism based on their understanding of the correct teachings, and 4) santri has a broad understanding of Islamic teachings that apply in society.

In addition, the following outcomes are attained: a) alumni can favourably influence society because they have a strong foundation in knowledge that is bolstered by their piety and faith, 2) develop into scholars possessing intellectual intelligence, wisdom, and good manners, 3) santri has a religious character that is sincere, disciplined, independent, responsible, and self-assured, 4) education aims to form characters in line with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, emphasizing the value of noble morals, 5) santri receives an education that encompasses all facets of Islamic teachings (belief, worship, muamalah), which is grounded in good morals and steers clear of radicalism, and 6) capable of communicating effectively with Allah and with other people. In addition, the following outcomes of creating this curriculum are noteworthy: In order to support harmonious living in the nation and society, Islamic boarding schools that have
a national outlook and respect the values of diversity are able to: a) help santri think more moderately, protecting them from radicalism; b) help santri maintain traditions and culture that are in line with Islamic teachings that live in society; and c) maintain the boarding school environment.

Discussion

Islamic boarding schools are educational institutions that combine two polarizations in their teaching patterns, namely Islamic boarding school education and formal education. In Islamic boarding school education, students study material sourced from classical and contemporary Islamic books, such as Arabic grammar, fiqh, usul fiqh, hadith, tafsir, tausid, Islamic history, and balagah. The dominant learning method is the rote method, where students memorize specific texts under the guidance and supervision of the ustadz. Material that must be memorized includes mahfudzot, al-Qur'an, hadith, and siroh nabawiyah. Meanwhile, in formal education, the general and religious education curriculum designed by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion and the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture is implemented, including subjects such as English, mathematics, science, social studies, and others. Support for formal education in Islamic boarding schools is also reflected in research by Halik (2016), Daulay and Tobroni (2017), Tamin (2018), and Prabowo (2016). At the Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School, formal education is provided from junior high school to Madrasah Aliyah with science and social studies study programs.

In the context of Islamic boarding school curriculum development, several aspects need to be considered. First, curriculum development content which includes aspects of adab, which is the introduction and recognition of the correct position and place for everything. This adab becomes a philosophical basis that is actualized in individuals and communities, creating a situation of 'justice' in social life. Second, skills in creating just conditions are a reflection of wisdom, which is considered transcendental knowledge given by Allah to understand the truth and the correct position for everything. Third, the Islamic boarding school curriculum also covers the totality of the lives of the students, and it is designed based on social, scientific, and Islamic values. Fourth, in terms of teaching materials, the curriculum is designed with a substantial integration method, which includes material considered Islamic, language, science and humanities sciences. Fifth, the wisdom that is reflected in the Islamic boarding school is reflected in the five souls of the Islamic boarding school, which is the value system and axis of all educational activities in the Islamic boarding school (Masduqi, 2013).

Curriculum development in Islamic boarding schools is an essential strategy in preventing radicalism among students. At the Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School, overcoming radicalism is carried out by strengthening the fundamental values of Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah. The moderate character that is characteristic of this Islamic boarding school is based on the values of Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, which emphasizes tawasut, tawacun, and tasamuh. First, the concept of tawasut describes a moderate attitude by taking a middle path between two extreme poles of thought. Second, tawacun refers to a balanced and harmonious religious attitude in various aspects of society's social life. Third, tasamuh reflects an attitude of tolerance that recognizes the various thoughts that have existed throughout the history of Muslims. By integrating these values into the curriculum, Islamic boarding schools make a significant contribution to forming a moderate understanding of religion and preventing radicalism among students.

In efforts to manage Islamic boarding school curriculum development, several strategies have been proposed. First, the teacher council will be directed to focus curriculum content on the concepts of adab, justice, wisdom, totality and substantial integration. Second, increasing teacher competence and performance, especially in the religious field, is the primary focus. Third, a proportional allocation of time will be allocated to teaching religious and general subjects. Fourth, ongoing supervision of curricular and extracurricular implementation is carried out. Fifth, local wisdom values will be considered in curriculum development. Sixth, the wasathiyah approach will
be adopted in the preparation of teaching materials by excluding khilafiyah material in the selection of learning materials and resources, especially in the field of Islamic teachings.

Furthermore, the curriculum development management plan incorporates tactics that centre on comprehensive understanding in the context of countering radicalism. First, the genuine meaning of jihad will be explained, making a distinction between *jihad fillalah* (the effort to better oneself in accordance with religious principles) and *jihad fi sabillah* (the struggle in Allah's way). Secondly, the intention is to foster the growth of attitudes of mutual respect and tolerance amongst religious adherents as well as inside and between religious groupings. Third, a thorough explanation of the idea of the caliphate will be provided, with particular reference to the caliphate model that existed during the time of the Prophet and not the model that aimed to alter the State’s fundamental principles.

In an effort to manage the development of the Islamic boarding school curriculum as a step in preventing radicalism, the approach applied is to instil an understanding of *Ahlusunnah wal Jama’ah*. The primary references in this case are the two large Islamic organizations in Indonesia, namely Nahdatul ‘Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, which are widely recognized by the public as organizations that maintain the correct understanding of Islam. The importance of this understanding is strengthened by the presence of the Islamic boarding school leadership, which is also on the mustasyar board of PCNU Lebak and is active as the praeidium of the Islamic boarding school friendship forum, where members include not only modern boarding schools but also Salafi boarding schools. Through this approach, students are equipped with an attitude of tasamuh, flexibility and solid principles, which are realized in daily life with intensive guidance and supervision for 24 hours. Support for this approach can also be seen from research conducted by Pamito et al. (2018).

The implementation of managing curriculum development at the Daar Falah Islamic Boarding School shows an organized and quality approach. Islamic boarding schools adopt total quality control, which is directly monitored by the KMI. This system pays special attention to the role of teachers through steps such as teaching preparation, competency improvement, learning processes, supervision, and evaluation. The development of teaching materials continues to refer to the established KMI curriculum. The extracurricular curriculum is managed regularly and directed by the santri, with a focus on self-development and instilling boarding school values through the santri organization. The leadership of the boarding school oversees KMI performance and care, guaranteeing consistency and unity in the boarding school curriculum’s execution.

Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School employs techniques that focus on the example of caregivers, curriculum, and everyday habituation methods in an effort to prevent radicalism among students. First of all, the santri community may learn a lot from the caregivers' example. Second, by ensuring that students have a thorough awareness of their nation through a learning process that incorporates teaching the values of *ahlusunnah wal jama’ab* (aswaja) through book study and national insight education. Third, through customs that have been established throughout time, like preserving aswaja customs, celebrating Islamic holidays, and organizing neighbourhood events. By using this strategy, Islamic boarding schools are able to establish a learning environment that fosters moderation and keeps students away from radicalism in addition to providing academic instruction.

In the context of managing curriculum development to ward off radicalism, several problems faced include the need for book literature as student reading material, differences in students’ levels of understanding, and students’ lack of interest in the discussion, causing uneven understanding among students. Therefore, it is essential to implement religious activity habits that are based on the understanding of *Ahlusunnah wal Jama’ab*. However, there are supporting factors that support efforts to ward off radicalism. First, the presence of students who live in the boarding school allows coaching to be carried out 24 hours under the supervision of the asatidz, so that irregularities can be evaluated and straightened out directly. Second, the vision, mission, and rules of the boarding
school serve as guidelines for all Islamic boarding school residents and as a basis for education and teaching.

The curriculum development that has been carried out has produced several significant results. First, the students show a religious, sincere, disciplined, independent, responsible and self-confident character. It is in line with the aim of education as a process of character formation that reflects the message of the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, which emphasizes the importance of developing morals and aqidah that are in accordance with abhusunnah wal jama'ah. Second, the education implemented includes all Islamic teachings, both in the dimensions of faith, worship, and muamalah, which are practised on the basis of noble morals and beliefs and distance themselves from radicalism. Third, the results can also be seen from the student's ability to communicate well, both in relationships with God and with fellow humans, both in the context of worship and muamalah. This phenomenon has received appreciation from Syafe'i (2017) and Ali (2019), confirming the success of the curriculum approach in producing a generation with noble character and distancing themselves from radicalism.

CONCLUSION

The ability of Islamic boarding schools to develop new curricula that maintain traditions that are considered valuable and are able to integrate new values needed by students is unique and valuable, especially in the context of countering the increasingly widespread flow of radicalism. Understanding radicalism that influences the younger generation through mass media, such as television and social media, is a challenge that must be faced. Therefore, the Islamic boarding school community needs to become pioneers in developing national character towards a better life in the new average era. The recommendation that can be given is to continue to increase cooperation between Islamic boarding schools in sharing experiences and best practices in countering radicalism, as well as strengthening character education based on national values and tolerance.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


