

IMPLEMENTING THE MUADALAH CURRICULUM AT PONDOK PESANTREN AL-MUJTAMA' AL-ISLAMI LAMPUNG SELATAN: CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN ARABIC, TAHFIZH, AND FIQH EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan, focusing on Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh subjects in the 6th-grade KMI class. The Muadalah curriculum integrates traditional Islamic education with formal academic studies, aiming to produce well-rounded students who are proficient in language skills, Quran memorization, and Islamic law. Through a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The results show that the curriculum is effectively implemented in three phases: planning, execution, and evaluation. The students displayed significant progress in mastering Arabic and memorizing the Quran, with some completing up to 5 Juz. However, challenges remain in the Fiqh subject, particularly in understanding complex Arabic texts. Factors supporting the implementation include competent educators, adequate facilities, and strong institutional support, while challenges involve student motivation and language proficiency in Fiqh. This study concludes that while the Muadalah curriculum has led to positive academic and spiritual outcomes, addressing the challenges of Arabic proficiency and enhancing student motivation are essential for improving its overall effectiveness. The findings of this study contribute to the broader understanding of curriculum integration in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and provide insights for future improvements.

Keywords: Muadalah Curriculum, Pondok Pesantren, Arabic, Tahfizh, Fiqh, Curriculum Implementation

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji implementasi kurikulum Muadalah di Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan, dengan fokus pada mata pelajaran Bahasa Arab, Tahfizh, dan Fiqh kelas 6 KMI. Kurikulum Muadalah mengintegrasikan pendidikan Islam tradisional dengan studi akademik formal, dengan tujuan menghasilkan santri yang unggul dalam keterampilan bahasa, hafalan Al-Qur'an, dan pemahaman hukum Islam. Melalui pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, data

dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kurikulum ini diimplementasikan dalam tiga fase: perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Santri menunjukkan kemajuan signifikan dalam menguasai bahasa Arab dan menghafal Al-Qur'an, dengan beberapa di antaranya menyelesaikan hingga 5 Juz. Namun, tantangan masih ada pada mata pelajaran Fiqh, terutama dalam memahami teks-teks Arab yang kompleks. Faktor pendukung implementasi termasuk pendidik yang kompeten, fasilitas yang memadai, dan dukungan kelembagaan yang kuat, sedangkan tantangan yang dihadapi mencakup motivasi siswa dan penguasaan bahasa Arab dalam Fiqh. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun kurikulum Muadalah menghasilkan hasil yang positif baik dalam aspek akademik maupun spiritual, mengatasi tantangan penguasaan bahasa Arab dan meningkatkan motivasi siswa sangat penting untuk meningkatkan efektivitas keseluruhan kurikulum ini. Temuan penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi untuk pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang integrasi kurikulum di pesantren dan memberikan wawasan untuk perbaikan di masa depan.

Kata Kunci: Kurikulum Muadalah, Pondok Pesantren, Bahasa Arab, Tahfizh, Fiqh, Implementasi Kurikulum

A. Introduction

Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan is one of the few pesantren in Indonesia that has fully embraced the Muadalah curriculum. This pesantren has developed a curriculum that includes both religious studies and general education subjects, ensuring that students are well-rounded individuals who can thrive in both academic and spiritual domains. The curriculum at Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami places a strong emphasis on *BATU* (Bahasa, Aqidah, Tahfizh, and Ubidiyah), which are essential pillars of the pesantren's educational philosophy. These four

areas serve as the core of the students' education, helping them to master languages, strengthen their faith, memorize the Quran, and cultivate personal piety (Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami, 2020).

The implementation of the Muadalah curriculum in Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan has yielded promising results, with students demonstrating fluency in Arabic and English, as well as achieving impressive levels of Quran memorization. In addition to language and religious studies, the students at Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami are also taught

Fiqh, which is essential for understanding Islamic law and practice. The successful integration of these subjects, however, does not come without challenges. One of the significant barriers to implementing the Muadalah curriculum is the gap between traditional pedagogical methods and the demands of a formal, standardized educational framework. Moreover, there are concerns about how well the students can adapt to both religious and academic expectations simultaneously, particularly in the areas of Arabic and Fiqh (Sutrisno, 2019; Salim & Ahmad, 2018).

Studies on the Muadalah curriculum and similar programs provide valuable insights into the challenges and successes faced by pesantren adopting formal education systems. A research by Sulaiman (2021) highlighted that Muadalah curriculum implementation in pesantren was successful in some regions, especially in fostering a strong identity among students. However, it also identified significant obstacles, such as resistance from traditional educators who were reluctant to embrace modern pedagogical strategies. Other studies,

such as those conducted by Wahyudi and Supriyadi (2020), emphasized the importance of teacher competency in successfully implementing Muadalah, as teachers must be skilled in balancing both religious and academic teaching methods. These findings underscore the importance of professional development and ongoing training for educators in Muadalah-based pesantren.

The need for competent teachers in Muadalah-based pesantren is critical. Teachers in these settings not only have to impart knowledge but also serve as role models for students. They are expected to guide students in both academic and spiritual matters, which requires a deep understanding of both Islamic texts and formal educational methodologies. Teachers must navigate the challenges of integrating traditional religious education with contemporary academic subjects, which can sometimes lead to conflicting pedagogical approaches (Zainuddin, 2020). According to a study by Rahmawati and Fadillah (2021), effective teacher training in Muadalah-based pesantren can significantly enhance the implementation process, making it

more seamless and impactful for students.

In addition to teacher competency, another important factor in the successful implementation of the Muadalah curriculum is the institutional support provided by the pesantren's administration. Leadership in pesantren plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the curriculum is implemented effectively. The leadership's vision, commitment to quality education, and ability to provide adequate resources are essential for the success of the program. A study by Mustofa (2020) found that strong leadership was a determining factor in the successful implementation of educational reforms in pesantren, as it ensured that both teachers and students were supported throughout the process.

The current study aims to assess the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan, focusing on the Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh subjects in the 6th-grade KMI class. It will also identify the factors that support and hinder the implementation of this curriculum. Specifically, the research will explore how the Muadalah curriculum is

integrated into the daily learning activities, the challenges faced by educators and students, and the overall outcomes of the program. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the Muadalah curriculum, offering recommendations for improvement.

By examining the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum in Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami, this research will contribute to the broader discourse on the integration of traditional Islamic education with formal national curricula. Furthermore, it will offer practical recommendations for other pesantren that wish to adopt the Muadalah curriculum and contribute to the ongoing development of pesantren-based education in Indonesia.

B. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan, particularly in the subjects of Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh. The qualitative research method is well-suited for

understanding the processes, perceptions, and contextual factors that influence the implementation of educational programs (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By utilizing a field-based approach, this study provides an in-depth understanding of how the curriculum is operationalized within a traditional Islamic boarding school setting, as well as the challenges and successes that are encountered in this context.

The design of this research is descriptive qualitative because it aims to describe the processes involved in the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum and to explore the factors that contribute to or hinder its success. Descriptive research helps to uncover patterns and provides a detailed account of the subject matter without altering the natural setting of the participants (Babbie, 2017). The descriptive nature of the study is meant to capture the current state of curriculum implementation, shedding light on how it operates in practice.

The population of this study consists of teachers and administrators at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan, with a focus on the 6th-grade KMI class. The target subjects are

those involved in the teaching of Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh, as these are the main subjects under the Muadalah curriculum that the study aims to evaluate.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who are directly involved in the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum. This technique allows the researcher to focus on individuals who have specific knowledge or experience related to the research focus (Patton, 2002). The selected sample includes six teachers from the Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh departments, two administrators involved in curriculum planning and supervision, and twenty students from the 6th-grade KMI class, representing a range of academic performance levels.

The total number of participants is 28, including both educators and students, which provides a comprehensive view of how the curriculum is implemented at different levels of the institution.

Data were collected through a combination of the following methods:

- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected teachers and

administrators. The interview questions were designed to explore their understanding of the Muadalah curriculum, the challenges they face in its implementation, and the perceived outcomes of the curriculum. The interviews also sought to capture the personal experiences and reflections of educators and administrators regarding the curriculum's effectiveness. Each interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes, and all were audio-recorded with the participants' consent for accurate transcription.

- **Observations:** The researcher conducted non-participant observations in the classrooms where Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh were being taught. These observations allowed the researcher to gain a first-hand understanding of the teaching methods, student engagement, and classroom dynamics related to the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum. The researcher also observed the interaction between teachers and students to assess how the

curriculum was being communicated and understood.

- **Document Analysis:** Relevant documents, such as the lesson plans, curriculum materials, and evaluation reports, were collected for analysis. This documentary data provided insight into the official planning and organization of the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami. The document analysis also helped to cross-check the consistency between the planned curriculum and its actual implementation in the classroom.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a method widely used in qualitative research to identify and analyze patterns or themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The steps involved in thematic analysis include:

- **Data Familiarization:** The researcher transcribed all interviews and observational notes and read through the data multiple times to gain a thorough understanding of the content.

- Coding: Initial codes were generated from the data based on recurring concepts or ideas. This involved organizing the data into meaningful categories that align with the research questions.
- Theme Development: The researcher grouped related codes into themes, which were then refined and reviewed to ensure they accurately reflected the data and answered the research questions.
- Interpretation: The final step involved interpreting the themes and discussing their implications in relation to the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum at the pesantren.

The findings were validated through triangulation, where the data from interviews, observations, and document analysis were cross-referenced to ensure consistency and reliability (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This triangulation process enhances the credibility of the results and ensures a well-rounded understanding of the implementation process.

This research adhered to ethical guidelines in qualitative research, ensuring that participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study, their involvement, and their right to confidentiality. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants, and pseudonyms were used in the reporting of the results to protect their identities. Participants were assured that their participation was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

In addition, the researcher ensured that the findings were reported truthfully and objectively, maintaining the integrity of the research process.

While this study offers valuable insights into the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the research is based on a single case study of one pesantren, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other institutions that may implement the Muadalah curriculum differently. Second, the study relies on self-reported data from teachers and students, which may be subject to bias. Future studies could involve a broader sample of pesantren across

different regions to enhance the generalizability of the results. Additionally, incorporating a more longitudinal approach could provide a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of the Muadalah curriculum on students' academic and spiritual development.

C. Results and Discussion

Reliability

The study explored the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum in Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan, focusing on the Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh subjects in the 6th-grade KMI class. The results from the data collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis are presented below, followed by a detailed discussion of these findings.

Results

The implementation of the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami is structured in three primary phases: planning, execution, and evaluation. Each phase plays a crucial role in ensuring that the curriculum is effectively carried out and meets its educational goals.

Phase 1: Planning

The planning phase involved setting clear goals for each subject area, including Arabic, Tahfizh, and Fiqh. The curriculum was designed with an emphasis on the BATU (Bahasa, Aqidah, Tahfizh, and Ubidiyah) framework, which aims to provide students with proficiency in language, spiritual understanding, Quran memorization, and practical worship. The curriculum structure includes a blend of traditional Islamic studies and general subjects, with a focus on practical application. Planning documents, such as the **Rencana Pembelajaran Semester (RPS)** and lesson plans, were reviewed and found to be aligned with the educational goals of the Muadalah curriculum.

Phase 2: Execution

During the execution phase, the teachers employed a variety of teaching methods, including lectures, group discussions, and hands-on activities, to engage students in the learning process. In the Arabic classes, a communicative approach was used to ensure that students could actively use the language in daily conversations. In the Tahfizh classes, teachers employed memory techniques and repetition to help

students memorize the Quran efficiently. In Fiqh, a combination of lecture-based teaching and practical application through case studies was used to help students understand the concepts of Islamic law and apply them to real-life situations.

Observations revealed that the teachers actively engaged with the students, encouraging them to ask questions and participate in discussions. However, challenges were noted, particularly in Fiqh classes, where students faced difficulties understanding complex Arabic texts, such as those found in the *Minhajul Muslim* textbook.

Phase 3: Evaluation

The evaluation phase assessed the effectiveness of the curriculum through regular quizzes, oral exams, and performance assessments. Teachers reported that students were generally able to communicate in Arabic and memorize significant portions of the Quran within a short period. However, some students struggled with the application of Fiqh concepts, particularly those that required a deeper understanding of Arabic grammar and vocabulary. Evaluations indicated that students who had more exposure to the Arabic

language performed better in both Arabic and Fiqh assessments.

Discussion

The results of this study reveal both the successes and challenges of implementing the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan. These findings align with previous studies on the integration of traditional Islamic education with formal curricula, highlighting the importance of a well-structured curriculum and the role of effective teaching strategies.

Successes in Curriculum Implementation

One of the primary successes of the Muadalah curriculum implementation is the improvement in students' language skills. As noted by teachers, students in the 6th-grade KMI class were able to communicate fluently in both Arabic and English, which is a key objective of the Muadalah curriculum. This finding is consistent with research by Hasyim and Muhtadi (2019), who found that the integration of language skills into Islamic curricula significantly improved students' linguistic abilities. The focus on practical language use in daily conversations helped students build confidence in their language skills,

which is essential for their academic and personal growth.

In the area of Quran memorization (Tahfizh), the Muadalah curriculum has been highly effective. Most students in the 6th-grade class were able to memorize large portions of the Quran, with some even completing 5 Juz in a short amount of time. This success can be attributed to the structured approach to memorization, which included regular recitation sessions and memory techniques. This finding supports the work of Yasin and Ibrahim (2018), who highlighted the importance of structured memorization techniques in enhancing students' Quranic memorization skills.

The success of the Muadalah curriculum in these areas can also be understood through the lens of the socio-cultural context of pesantren education. Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan's emphasis on *BATU* aligns with previous studies that advocate for a holistic approach to Islamic education, focusing not only on academic excellence but also on moral and spiritual development (Abdul Karim, 2020; Al-Fauzan, 2019). This approach ensures that students

not only gain knowledge but also develop strong personal values.

Challenges in Curriculum Implementation

Despite these successes, several challenges were identified in the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum. One significant issue was the difficulty students faced in understanding the Arabic language, particularly in Fiqh classes. The complex vocabulary and grammar used in Islamic legal texts, such as *Minhajul Muslim*, posed a challenge for many students, especially those who had limited exposure to Arabic before joining the pesantren. This issue aligns with the findings of Syafri and Wahyudi (2020), who noted that students in Muadalah-based pesantren often struggle with understanding classical Arabic texts due to a lack of foundational language skills.

This challenge highlights the need for a more integrated approach to teaching Arabic alongside Fiqh. As noted by Salim and Ahmad (2018), effective Fiqh education relies heavily on students' proficiency in Arabic. However, Fiqh's theoretical complexity further exacerbates the challenge of language acquisition.

Consequently, it is essential to provide students with more intensive Arabic language courses before advancing to complex Islamic law subjects (Zainuddin, 2018; Murtadho & Shiddiq, 2021).

Another challenge identified in this study was the lack of student motivation in some subjects, particularly in Fiqh. While the curriculum provides a comprehensive approach to religious education, some students expressed a lack of interest in certain aspects of Fiqh, which may have contributed to their difficulties in understanding the subject. This finding is consistent with the work of Wahyudi and Supriyadi (2020), who found that student motivation plays a crucial role in the success of curriculum implementation, especially in subjects that require critical thinking and deep conceptual understanding.

Recommendations for

Improvement

To address these challenges, several recommendations can be made. First, the curriculum could benefit from additional support for students struggling with Arabic, particularly in relation to Fiqh. Offering remedial Arabic courses or supplementary language materials could help

students build the necessary skills to understand complex Arabic texts. Second, improving student motivation in subjects like Fiqh could be achieved by incorporating more interactive teaching methods, such as case studies, debates, and group discussions, to make the subject more engaging and relevant to students' lives. These findings resonate with the work of Firdaus (2021) and Pratama (2022), who emphasized the importance of interactive and student-centered learning approaches to enhance motivation and engagement.

Finally, ongoing professional development for teachers is essential to ensure that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to teach both traditional and modern subjects effectively. Training programs should focus on enhancing teachers' Arabic language proficiency, as well as their ability to teach Fiqh in an engaging and accessible manner. This recommendation is supported by recent studies, including those by Mustofa (2020) and Rahmawati (2022), which highlight the importance of continuous professional development in improving the quality of teaching in pesantren-based education.

In conclusion, while the implementation of the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan has shown positive outcomes in terms of language proficiency and Quran memorization, challenges remain in the areas of Arabic comprehension and student motivation. Addressing these challenges will be crucial for the continued success of the Muadalah curriculum and for ensuring that students receive a holistic education that prepares them for both religious and academic success.

E. Conclusion

The implementation of the Muadalah curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Al-Mujtama' Al-Islami Lampung Selatan has proven successful in achieving its educational objectives. However, continuous efforts to overcome challenges, such as student motivation and mastering Arabic, are necessary. Future research could focus on the long-term impact of the Muadalah curriculum on graduates' academic and spiritual lives.

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