Progressive of Cognitive and Ability

Pesantren Curriculum: A Case Study of Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School

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Info Artikel	ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji implementasi manajemen kurikulum pada tingkat Tafaqquh di Pondok Pesantren Al-Bahjah, sebuah lembaga pendidikan Islam non-formal yang berorientasi pada penguatan akhlak dan penguasaan ilmu pengetahuan tentang syariat Islam, khususnya bahasa Arab. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis dilakukan dengan menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman untuk memahami proses pembelajaran dan evaluasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tingkat Tafaqquh memiliki kurikulum berbasis bahasa Arab yang khas dengan metode pembelajaran klasikal seperti ceramah, latihan berbicara, menulis, dan penggunaan media audio visual. Evaluasi terhadap siswa dilakukan secara berkesinambungan melalui ujian formatif dan sumatif untuk memastikan pencapaian kompetensi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kendala utama adalah rendahnya pemahaman santri terhadap materi bahasa Arab yang disampaikan oleh guru. Namun, strategi seperti kegiatan muhadhoroh dan pendekatan komunikatif mampu meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa santri. Penelitian ini menegaskan relevansi pesantren sebagai pusat pendidikan karakter dan pengembangan ilmu agama yang mampu beradaptasi dengan tantangan zaman.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of curriculum management at the Tafaqquh level at Pondok Pesantren Al-Bahjah, a non-formal Islamic education institution oriented towards strengthening morals and mastering the knowledge of Islamic law, especially Arabic. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's interactive model to understand the learning and evaluation process. The research found that the Tafaqquh level has a distinctive Arabic-based curriculum with classical learning methods such as lectures, speaking practice, writing, and the use of audio-visual media. Students are evaluated continuously through formative and summative exams to ensure competency achievement. The findings show that the main obstacle is the santri's low understanding of the Arabic material delivered by the teacher. However, strategies such as muhadhoroh activities and communicative approaches are able to improve santri language skills. This study confirms the relevance of pesantren as a center for character education and the development of religious knowledge that can adapt to the times' challenges.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools are non-formal educational institutions that play an important role in conveying religious messages and moral and moral formation in the younger generation. Its existence is also expected to be able to produce religious experts who are soothing because of their understanding of religion and culture. This is because boarding schools function as religious propagators to form scholars who are religious experts (*mutafaqqih fiddîn*), intelligent (*mutakallimîn*), and independent (*mutaqawwimin*) (Hakim & Herlina, 2018).

The existence of Islamic boarding schools as a place to study religious knowledge has existed long before Indonesia's independence. The establishment of pesantren as a place to educate and galvanize students began with a recitation institution founded by Syaikh Maulāna Mālik Ibrāhīm, also known as Sunan Gresik (Putri et al., 2023). Hundreds of years later, Islamic boarding schools are able to survive in the modern era, of course, this is because Islamic boarding schools have things that are needed by the community. Pesantren is often described as a place that is closed off from the outside world. Santri are quarantined in the pesantren so that they are not influenced by the outside world, which is feared to disrupt their education process (Fiandi et al., 2023). However, the rapid development of the times has had a huge influence on boarding schools, especially in the variety of systems that exist in boarding schools in Indonesia.

The development of pesantren from salaf pesantren (bandongan and sorogan) to modern pesantren is very rapid thanks to a clear education system and a well-designed curriculum (Muhammad Yusron Maulana El-Yunusi, 2023). The curriculum is a reference for an educational institution, especially boarding schools, which are oriented towards guaranteed quality. Implementation of the curriculum in boarding schools in order to realize the vision, mission, and goals that have been set requires very careful management. According to Makinuddin (Fika et al., 2023) the entire education system, the curriculum is a fundamental element that has strategic value in determining the success of education.

The scope of planning to evaluation of the curriculum is a must carried out by the boarding school in ensuring that the boarding school continues to meet the needs of the community in accordance with the times but does not leave Islamic law. The success of educational institutions in implementing the school curriculum optimally needs to be

supported by a capable principal management in managing the curriculum, considering that the principal is the driving force for the resources owned by the institution (Syafruddin, 2021).

Al-Bahjah boarding school is one of the educational programs in Al-Bahjah Foundation in addition to formal education that offers education from elementary to high school levels. The boarding school has two levels of education that fully study religion, namely Tahfidz and Tafaqquh. Despite only studying religion without any general science learning, every year there is never a shortage of enthusiasts. This existence is inseparable from the community's expectation that Islamic boarding schools are the guardians of the morals and morals of the nation's generation. In line with Ali (2024), pesantren education can be an alternative solution in overcoming the current moral crisis. Researchers revealed that pesantren is the main center and fortress in building character (morals). This is reflected in the organized and in-depth learning methods, as well as direct practice of the knowledge learned.

There are several previous studies that discuss curriculum in pesantren, such as Alam and Maulana's research (2021), which explains curriculum management at the Darul Falah "Amtsilati" Jepara Islamic boarding schools, which is unique compared to other salaf pesantren because it focuses on learning Arabic grammar. In addition, research by Hakim and Herlina (2018) discusses the function of integrated curriculum management at Darul Huda Banjar modern Islamic boarding school which includes planning, curriculum structure, and integrated curriculum implementation. Meanwhile, this research was conducted at Al-Bahjah Islamic boarding school, which has six levels and two levels, namely the first 3 levels for the Tahfidz level and the second 3 levels for the Tafaqquh level. This research focuses on the curriculum of the Tafaqquh level as the last level in Al-Bahjah boarding school.

Referring to the explanation above, this study focuses on the implementation of the Tafaqquh level curriculum at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School. The research was conducted to provide an overview of the implementation of curriculum management at the Tafaqquh level, which has proven to be able to survive in the modern era, proven by the continued demand for this pesantren program despite competing with formal education programs that also have many enthusiasts.

METHOD

This research is qualitative research because this research wants to examine how the implementation of the curriculum management of Al-Bahjah Islamic boarding school at the Tafaqquh level. This certainly requires data and information that is a process rather than the result of this research. In conducting qualitative research, a factual description is needed that includes activities, stages, various considerations, and reciprocal relationships that take place in an environment at a certain period of time when the process occurs (Salim & Haidir, 2019). The approach taken is a case study approach that explores the object under study as a case that needs to be revealed comprehensively. In

line with Cresswell's statement regarding case study research, research is carried out intensively and comprehensively on the case that is the focus of the study (Rukin, 2021).

The research was conducted at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School which is located in Sendang District, Cirebon Regency. This pesantren is under the care of a national preacher, Buya Yahya. The boarding school, which has only been operating since 2010, already has approximately 50 branches spread throughout Indonesia, Malaysia, and Hong Kong. This boarding school program includes six classes, namely grades 1-3 are Tahfidz level and grades 4-6 at are Tafaqquh level. This research is focused on the Tafaqquh level, especially Arobiyah.

Data collection was done through observation, interviews, and documentation. In the observation process, researchers were directly involved in observing the implementation of curriculum management. This observation gave the researcher insight into how the curriculum was carried out in the tafaqquh-level boarding school. In addition, interviews were also conducted with various parties, such as pesantren administrators and asatidz to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of curriculum management. This interview used a semi-structured format to be more flexible in exploring information in more depth. Data collection through documentation enriches previously obtained data and becomes additional evidence that can support data obtained from observations and interviews.

After the data was collected, the next stage was the analysis process using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman. This model consists of three components of analysis that are carried out simultaneously and continuously (Miles et al., 2014). First is data reduction, which involves selecting, simplifying, and transforming raw data obtained from field notes. Second, data presentation which involves systematically organizing information to enable conclusion drawing. Third, verification or conclusion drawing which is the stage of interpreting the meaning of the data that has been organized (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

This analysis model was chosen because it allows researchers to process data systematically and in-depth, in accordance with the characteristics of qualitative research, which emphasizes a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study (Yin, 2018). The analysis process is carried out on an ongoing basis throughout the research, allowing the researcher to continuously verify the findings and develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Type of Pesantren Based on Curriculum

According to Usman (2013), based on the curriculum or education system used, pesantren have three types: Traditional *Pesantren (salāf).* Salafiyah pupils still use a typical boarding school education system, including the curriculum and educational methods. Teaching materials include sciences related to the Islamic religion, and classical Arabic books are used, adapted to each student's level of ability. Salafiyah pesantren are

known as traditional pesantren, and their students are called salafiyah santri (Noor, 2015). According to Fithriah (2018) salaf means "old", "ancient", or "traditional". Salaf pesantren are pesantren that provide learning with a traditional approach since its establishment. Islamic religious education is taught individually or in groups, with a focus on classical Arabic books.

Khalafiyah Islamic boarding schools are Islamic boarding schools that follow the madrasah or school system, and the curriculum is in line with the national curriculum of both the Ministry of Religion and the Ministry of National Education. Khalafiyah boarding schools are also called modern boarding schools and their students are called kholafiyah students (Noor, 2015). Salah satu karakteristik kurikulum pesantren kontemporer adalah penggabungan pendidikan kitab kuning dengan mata pelajaran umum yang berbasis kompetensi (Khalim, 2021). According to Fithriah, N (2018), Khalaf means "later" or "later," while "ash" means "now" or "modern." A khalafiyah pesantren is a pesantren that organizes educational activities with a modern approach through formal education units such as madrasahs (MI, MT, MAK) and schools (SD, SMP, SMA, SMK).

Comprehensive Pesantren combines two different systems, namely the salafiyah and khalafiyah systems. education is carried out through the teaching of yellowclassical books using the sorongan, bandongan, or wetonan methods, which are usually taught in the afternoon after Maghrib prayer and after Fajr prayer. The classical system learning process takes place from morning to noon, as in madrasahs/schools in general (Usman, 2013). According to Marzuki et al (2022), the form of pesantren can be classified into four types, namely:

a) Salafi huts teach classical books and do not provide general knowledge. Their teaching model is slogan and wetonan.
b) Khalafi pesantren. This is a pesantren that implements the classical teaching system, which teaches both religion and general science as well as general skills.
c) Quick boarding school, which provides training in a relatively short period of time and is usually conducted during school holidays.
d) Integrated pesantren. This is a pesantren with an integrated program emphasizing vocational or honesty education, such as a vocational training center.

Pesantren Education Methods

Methods in education are ways, steps, or procedures for implementing education. Therefore, this method is one of the important things that needs to be formulated. According to Ahmad Syalabi in Musthofa (2018), Ibn Sina explained the method of education or teaching, namely, students must focus on moral education. First, students must avoid feelings of anger, sadness, and fear and get enough sleep. Secondly, students' desires and joy must be considered. According to Ibn Sina, both are very beneficial for the soul and body. Through the above methods, students can acquire noble morals according to their good tendencies. Good inclinations produce good morals. Similarly, bad morals arise from bad inclinations.

According to Sagala (2015), there are several teaching methods used since the establishment of pesantren to explore and study the books in pesantren, namely as follows:

a) Sorogan method. Sorogan comes from the word sorog (Javanese), which means thrusting, because each santri thrusts his book in front of the kiai or his assistant (badal, kiai assistant). The sorogan system is an individual learning system, where a santri faces a teacher, and there is a mutual interaction between the two. This sorogan system is proven to be the first step for a student who aspires to become an alim (scholar). Maulana (Maulana, 2020) added that with the sorogan learning method, students can study the classical books thoroughly with direct guidance from the kiai.

b) Wetonan method. The wetonan method or also called the bandongan method is carried out by a kiai or ustadz with a group of santri. Santri listens and pays attention to what the Kiai reads from a book. Kiai reads, translates, explains, and often reviews Arabic texts without harakat (gundul). Santri pays attention to the book and takes notes (both meaning and explanation) of the words spoken by the ustadz / kya. In this method, the cleric or ustadz is surrounded in a circle to form a halaqoh or circle. In translation, kiai or ustadz can use various languages that are the main language of the students, for example, Javanese, Sundanese, or Indonesian (Laili & Lailah, 2018).

c) The muhawarah method. The muhawarah method involves Arabic-speaking activities that students in pesantren must do during their stay. Some pesantren require their students to speak Arabic every day, but others only do it during certain activities. The advantage of using this method is that it creates an environment where students can communicate with each other in Arabic and inadvertently increase their vocabulary, or *mufradat*, without memorization. Language comprehension always improves in pesantren that apply this approach intensively.

d) Mudzakarah method. The *mudzakarah* method is a scientific meeting that specifically discusses diniyyah issues such as aqidah, worship, and religion in general. The intellectual spirit of santri can be developed and raised by using this technique. By using reasoning based on the Qur'an and As-Sunnah, as well as classical Islamic books, they are invited to think scientifically. However, when Santri talks about aqidah, in particular, they are always limited to certain madhhabs, so this method cannot be used properly.

e) The majelis ta'lim method. The majlis ta'lim method is a method of conveying Islamic religious lessons that are general and open and are attended by congregants who have knowledge backgrounds, age levels, and gender. This method involves not only the santri mukmin and santri kalong (students who do not stay in the dormitory but only study at the pesantren) but also the community around the pesantren who do not have the opportunity to attend the recitation every day. The recitation of majelis ta'lim is free and can establish a close relationship between the pesantren and the surrounding community (Sagala, 2015).

Curriculum of Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School Tafaqquh Program

Al-Bahjah Foundation, commonly called Al-Bahjah Da'wah Development Institute (LPD), is a forum for everyone to participate in struggling and contributing to the prosperity of Al-Bahjah institutions as a way of da'wah, either with their energy,

property, thoughts, or knowledge. The foundation has a function to oversee the divisions within it. The boarding school program includes pre-tahfidz, equivalent to elementary school, then tahfidz, which is from 10 years to 15 years, and tafaqquh. Tafaqquh is divided into several levels: I'dad, Miftah, Arobiah, and Tahqiqul Mutun. In Tahqiqul Mutun, there are two levels, namely Tahqiqul Mutun One and Tahqiqul Mutun Two. After graduating from Tahqiqul Mutun, the students can continue to the internal college level, namely the Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Al-Bahjah. There are additional programs in the boarding school, namely the regeneration program and the *takhossus* da'wah program, which are intended and prepared for students who want to struggle in taking care of their students. In addition to the boarding school program, there are formal programs, namely pre-school, elementary, junior high, high school, and Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Al-Bahjah.

Formal education aims to produce a generation that excels in all fields but still knows Allah SWT. At the same time, the boarding school program aims to produce children who know and memorize the Koran and produce cadres of scholars who are the successors of the Prophet's da'wah. Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School is an educational institution for boys and girls under the care of Buya Yahya with educational and learning activities to produce Ulama/ Juru Dakwah. With the provision of memorization of the Qur'an from an early age and a deepening program of learning sharia science, namely Arabic, Nahwu, Shorof, etc. The Tafaqquh level has a vision of prioritizing Akhlaq and developing the Da'wah of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The Tafaqquh level has many levels, one of which is the Arobiah level which is placed in Subang and is specifically occupied by female students.

The organizational structure of Pesantren Al-Bahjah Tafaqquh Arobiyah Subang is as follows:
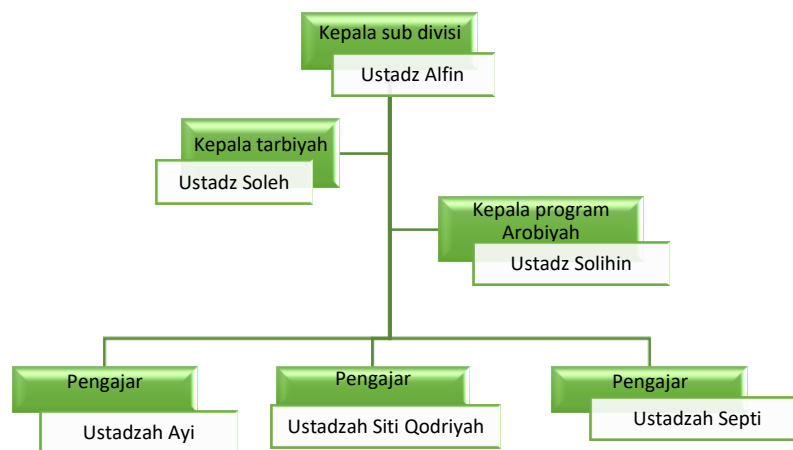

Figure 1. Organizational structure of Al-Bahjah pesantren for Tafaqquh Arobiyah level

The Tafaqquh Arobiyah level is inseparable from the curriculum which is at the heart of the educational process. In an interview with one of the teachers, Ustadzah Siti Qodriyah said that the education curriculum at Tafaqquh Arobiyah uses the pesantren curriculum by combining several subjects, including:

a) Arabic language. Arabic as core learning is a subject that teaches Arabic, including reading, writing, speaking, and understanding. It focuses on the linguistic and communication aspects. Nurkholis (Nurkholis, 2017) explains that Arabic language learning in Indonesia has been done for a long time, even starting when Islam was introduced in Indonesia by the Saudi Arabians around the 13th century.

b) Insya'. A subject that teaches how to write essays or essays with correct grammar and structure. Insya' is a branch of Arabic that focuses on writing.

c) Nahwu. Nahwu is the study of Arabic grammar, especially sentence structure and the function of words in sentences.

d) Shorof. The study of Arabic word forms and word changes.

e) Fiqh. The study of Islamic laws. Fiqh covers various aspects of Muslim life, namely worship, muamalah (social relations), and others.

f) Aqidah. The study of basic beliefs in Islam. Such as belief in Allah SWT, angels, books, the last day, and destiny.

Then, in an interview with another teacher, Ustadzah Ayi said that the curriculum used is only the pesantren curriculum and does not use the government curriculum. At the Tafaqquh Arobiyah level, the system applies up and down. The Tafaqquh Arobiyah level is basically taken for one year, but if there are students who have not reached the target or objectives of the existing curriculum, the students will repeat the learning the following year. Students who graduate will continue to the next program, namely the Tahqiqul Mutun program.

The system of ascending and not ascending levels in Tafaqquh Arobiyah can prevent santri who have not mastered the curriculum from going to the next level, which has a higher level of difficulty. This is relevant to Hotimah's statement (2020), which states that one way to measure a student's success in the teaching and learning process at school is by looking at his learning outcomes. The purpose of the curriculum of Pesantren Al-Bahjah Tafaqquh Arobiyah level is to produce students who have good morals and master the basic knowledge of Islamic law, and the most important goal is to make students able to speak Arabic and understand it because the main focus of the learning itself is learning Arabic from *maharotul kalam*, *kitabah*, and *maharotu takalum*. Based on the explanation above, this boarding school familiarizes students to be able to master Arabic both verbally and non-verbally. Learning activities and daily activities emphasize the application of Arabic knowledge. This is not necessarily found in traditional boarding schools. As explained by Sanah et al. Sanah et al. (2022) that one of the unique characteristics of modern boarding schools that distinguishes them from traditional boarding schools is the habituation and training of students to use Arabic in daily communication. Thus, modern boarding schools are one of the educational institutions that successfully create a language environment (*bi'ah lughawiyah*). The Arabic language environment (*bi'ah lughawiyah*) is implemented to strengthen the language capacity of all elements of the madrasah. Through the habituation of active communication orally and in writing, the learning of both languages in the language-based madrasah can achieve the target effectively, dynamically, and meaningfully (Muzammil & Jannah, 2021).

Ustadzah Siti Qodriyah added that the learning methods applied at Tafaqquh Arobiyah during teaching and learning activities in the classroom are classical methods, namely the teacher explaining and students listening, then practical training methods including speaking, writing, and analyzing texts. As for learning methods outside the classroom, using audio-visual, namely shahadah, which means giving Arabic spectacles. And istima' which is listening to students related to Arabic audio and the *mukhawaroh* method. Hidayat (Hidayat, 2022) found that using audio-visual methods in Arabic language learning improved students' understanding of the material taught significantly. The use of audio-visual media in learning at the Tafaqquh Arobiyah level can support the smooth running of teaching and learning activities, especially language learning which is expected to make students more quickly proficient in Arabic. In line with Raudatussolihah (2022) states that audio-visual is used in the learning process as a source or tool to support the written and spoken word in disseminating ideas, attitudes, and knowledge. Using media, teachers can enhance students' experiences and improve their understanding of the material or subject matter (Ulfa, 2023).

The author assumes that the teaching method or a way to explore the knowledge or books studied used in the Tafaqquh Arobiyah pesantren is one type of traditional pesantren method that is still commonly used, namely the classical method which is none other than the lecture method. Because learning in the pesantren is Arabic-based, the learning method focuses on language practice, speaking and writing Arabic, and developing Arabic sentences through analyzing Arabic texts.

Furthermore, Ustadzah Ayi mentioned that the evaluation and assessment system used to assess students' progress in Arabic is a written and oral exam carried out regularly. In one semester there are three exams, namely the first monthly exam, the second monthly exam, and the final semester exam. The data generated from each exam will be evaluated to see each student's progress in Arabic. Joint evaluations between teachers and program leaders are also held either once a month or after the first and second exams depending on the instructions from the head of the Tafaqquh Arobiyah level. The type of test used can be said to have comprehensively assessed his ability to write Arabic, communicate, and answer all questions in Arabic. This aligns with Sutedi (2019), who states that two types of testing are needed to evaluate language skills. Speaking skills can be measured through oral tests, while other skills, such as letter recognition, grammar comprehension, reading, and writing, can be assessed using written tests.

Based on the interview results, it can be said that the evaluation and assessment system in the context of Arabic language teaching among santri includes several stages of examinations, both written and oral, which are carried out periodically in one semester. The system at Tafaqquh Arobiyah involves:

a) Three exams in one semester, namely Monthly Examination One, Monthly Examination Two, and End of Semester Examination.
b) Data from the exams, namely the results of each exam, are evaluated to assess the development of each student's Arabic language skills.

c) The teachers and program leader conduct progress evaluations regularly, either monthly or after the first and second monthly exams, in accordance with the direction of the head of the Tafaqquh Arobiyah level.

The interview statements make it clear that the system implemented at Tafaqquh Arobiyah aims to ensure that each student receives comprehensive monitoring and assessment of their Arabic language skills throughout the learning process. The evaluation system used in Tafaqquh Arobiyah emphasizes the importance of formative, summative, and continuous evaluation as follows:

a) Formative and summative assessment.

To monitor student progress, a step-by-step evaluation known as formative assessment is conducted. These assessments generate useful feedback for students as they go through the learning process in the classroom. In this case, monthly exams one and two conducted during the semester serve as formative assessments. This evaluation helps teachers identify students' progress as well as areas that require improvement. This is relevant to Sari (2023) that the main purpose of formative assessment is more than just measuring students' level of knowledge, but rather to get a more in-depth picture of their abilities. Through this assessment, teachers can analyze students' level of understanding of the learning material and see how they apply the concepts in appropriate situations.

Summative assessment is an evaluation conducted at the end of a learning period to determine the extent to which learners have achieved the learning objectives. At the end of a learning program, an evaluation called summative assessment is conducted to measure overall learning outcomes. This evaluation serves as the basis for awarding by recording and classifying the achievements that students have made during structured learning (Adinda et al., 2021). At the Tafaqquh Arobiyah level, the summative evaluation carried out is the end-of-semester exam which serves to measure the overall progress of students in Arabic during one semester.

In pesantren, formative and summative evaluations are essential to ensure that all students understand the subject matter before moving on to the next level (Zahra, 2021).

b) Continuous assessment-based learning

Evaluation should not only occur at the end of the process but should be ongoing throughout the learning process to provide immediate feedback that helps learners develop their skills. In the system described, the monthly periodic evaluations, as well as the meetings between teachers and program leaders, reflect this approach. Continuous evaluation ensures that any development and constraints of the students can be addressed in a timely manner. This is in line with Syarnubi (2023) that evaluation of learning outcomes is carried out on an ongoing basis so that people who assess (teachers, lecturers, etc.) can gain certainty and stability in determining steps or making recommendations about what to do to achieve teaching objectives.

Supporting resources in learning Arabic include textbooks and digital media such as laptops and speakers to watch and listen to Arabic audio. In addition to conducting learning programs in the classroom, additional programs are also carried out that

support learning outside the classroom, namely memorizing mufrodat or Arabic vocabulary, Arabic muhadhoroh, and tahfidzul Qur'an to strengthen memorization of the Qur'an. An educator in running the curriculum will definitely encounter challenges. The challenge obtained in running the curriculum at the Tafaqquh Arobiyah level is how a teacher conveys material using Arabic that is short, concise, clear, and understood by students, while the ability of students to understand the language conveyed by the teacher is still quite low, students understand the language spoken by the teacher only about 50% and have not reached 70% and above. As a result, santri scores are low in the learning that is carried out.

Difficulties in delivering material to gain a full understanding of students can also be caused by the lack of skill of the teacher in providing learning that is fun and in accordance with their level or level. Because, in essence, the ability of students cannot be equated with other students, it is necessary to master the delivery of material in accordance with their level of understanding even though it is carried out in the same class. This was also found in Umam & Chodijah's research (Umam & Chodijah, 2022), so according to them, there are some unique students who like to write or draw, speak or tell stories, criticize, and analyze. Educators are less aware of these things, but if they can realize them, they can definitely process them along with the existing learning materials. It is very important for educators to understand the situation of their students, master the classroom well, apply approaches, understand learning models, and optimize instruction.

However, the management of this level always tries to find a way out of these problems. The solution to overcome these challenges is to hold various kinds of activities such as Arabic *muhadhoroh* activities to train them to understand Arabic and listen or *istima'* Arabic so that the students' language skills can develop. In line with Adama & Mufidah's research (2022) through Muhadharah Arabic activities, students can practice vocabulary pronunciation in Arabic. This routine speaking practice allows them to develop their Arabic language skills naturally.

The challenge of understanding the language being delivered is a problem often encountered in foreign language teaching. The solution found above refers to the *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT) approach. This approach emphasizes using language to communicate in a real context, allowing students to practice their language skills through active practice, listening, speaking, and interacting. Mubarok et al. (2024) stated that the implementation of the communicative approach is able to present a more dynamic and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Learning with this approach focuses on activities that encourage active interaction between teachers and students. The students are not only passive listeners but participate directly in various learning activities, which in turn increases their learning motivation. This interactive and collaborative learning atmosphere creates a conducive environment where students feel more relaxed and enthusiastic in following the learning process.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the effectiveness of curriculum management at Pondok Pesantren Al-Bahjah, especially at the Tafaqquh level, which combines traditional approaches with innovations in evaluation and learning methods. This pesantren has maintained its relevance as an educational institution based on Islamic morals and sharia amid the challenges of the modern era. The use of classical methods such as lectures, sorogan, and additional activities such as muhadhoroh and istima', has been proven to improve the students' Arabic language skills significantly. Although there are obstacles in understanding Arabic, an adaptive learning system and continuous evaluation are the keys to the success of this program. This study makes an important contribution in enriching insights into the management of pesantren curriculum relevant to contemporary Islamic education's needs. The results can be a reference for the development of other pesantren curricula to remain competitive and meet the needs of modern society without setting aside the values of Islamic law.

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