

Innovative Strategies in Revitalizing Islamic Education: Case Studies in Pesantren as a Model of Community Empowerment

Muhamad Rikza Saputro¹, Sukiman²

UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Central Java, Indonesia^{1,2}

Email: rikzasaputro1995@gmail.com¹, sukiman@uin-suka.ac.id²

Keywords

Innovative Strategies, Revitalizing, Islamic Education, Pesantren, Community Empowerment.

ABSTRACT

This research delves into the pressing challenges faced by Indonesia's education system in preparing the younger generation for global demands, amidst issues like lawlessness and social conflicts. Focusing on the revitalization of Islamic Religious Education, particularly within pesantren (Islamic Boarding Schools), the study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology to analyze existing literature. The findings underscore the need for holistic development in faith, morals, ethics, intelligence, and skills within Islamic education. The study identifies innovative strategies, including personnel standardization, contextualized learning materials, positive habitat creation, and cultivating students' passion for learning. These insights contribute to the enhancement of Islamic education within pesantren, aiming to equip the younger generation with the skills and knowledge necessary to confidently face global challenges in the future.

INTRODUCTION

All levels of society, parents, educators, and religionists, are currently facing a big problem in education, namely about how to educate the younger generation and prepare them to face global challenges (Chou et al., 2023; Ji et al., 2023). Some try to answer by sending their children abroad, while others choose to lock their children in Islamic boarding schools. However, behind all that, everyone really wants the certainty of quality education to prepare the next generation who are brilliant and brilliant.

The problem faced by society in general is not decreasing and disappearing, but quite the opposite, increasing and worrying every day. This can be shown, among others, by the increase in unlawful practices, such as drug abuse, having sex outside marriage, corrupt practices, collusion and nepotism, brawls between students, social conflicts, thuggery, acts of violence, murder, and so on. Such a situation causes human life to become more uncomfortable, causes anxiety and fear, and increasingly worries about the nation's future (Liu, 2023; Mansur et al., 2022; Wawan, 2021).

Several studies have been conducted to address the challenges faced by various levels of society in providing quality education, especially in the context of religious education. Rakhmat (2005) emphasized the need for religious education to integrate with general education programs to address weaknesses and shortcomings. However, the existing literature reveals a significant gap in understanding the innovative strategies required for revitalizing Islamic religious education, particularly in the context of pesantren as a model of community empowerment (Meiriki et al., 2020; Yusak et al., 2021).

On the one hand, various efforts have been made by families, schools, and communities to overcome these problems. Still, they seem unable to produce maximum results, even losing their strength. The role of Islamic religious education, especially in learning in Islamic boarding schools, is highly demanded to fortify the younger generation and equip it with the strength of faith and piety, the depth of knowledge, and the height of akhlakul karimah, without having to drift in the flow of globalization (Ahid & Haq, 2023; Fauzi et al., 2022; Rumainur et al., 2022; Supriyanto et al., 2022; Tabroni et al., 2022). Maintaining good Islamic traditions and taking better modern values (almuhafazhah 'ala al-qadi ash-salih wa al-akhzdu bi al-jaded al-ashlar).

The existing studies often focus on general challenges in education and the need for integration between religious and general education. However, there is a lack of in-depth exploration of innovative strategies specifically tailored for revitalizing Islamic religious education within the unique context of pesantren. The gap lies in the absence of comprehensive studies that delve into the effectiveness of specific strategies in addressing the contemporary issues faced by the younger generation within Islamic boarding schools.

This research aims to bridge the identified gap by exploring and elaborating on innovative strategies for revitalizing Islamic religious education, using pesantren as a model of community empowerment. The study will investigate how these strategies can contribute to preparing a brilliant generation capable of facing global challenges while maintaining Islamic traditions. The overarching purpose is to provide insights that can guide educational practitioners, policymakers, and community leaders in enhancing the quality of religious education within the pesantren system. By doing so, the research seeks to contribute to the overall development of Indonesian human resources in alignment with national education goals.

METHODS

The method used is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is a term for identifying, evaluating, and interpreting all relevant research available to formulate the problem or topic area under study (Calderón & Ruiz, 2015). SLR research is conducted to identify, evaluate, and interpret all relevant research results related to certain research questions, topics, or phenomena of concern (Xiao & Watson, 2019). The purpose of this SLR or Systematic Literature Review research is to find strategies that will help overcome the problems faced, identify different perspectives related to the problem being studied, and reveal theories relevant to the case in this study, which examines more deeply Innovative Strategies in Revitalizing Islamic Religious Education: Case Studies in Pesantren as a Model of Community Empowerment.

This study collected data from various sources, including books, empirical studies, and articles published in various access technologies today (Cillo et al., 2019). The collected data was used to identify research materials focused on Innovative Strategies in Revitalizing Islamic Religious Education, with case studies in pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) as a community empowerment model. The keywords taken involve the concepts of "Revitalization of Islamic Religious Education," "Innovative Strategies," "pesantren," and "learning in pesantren." To support the analysis, the databases used include Google Scholar, Crossref, and Scopus, with the application of Publish or Perish.

During the research process, data analysis and evaluation were carried out using descriptive data analysis methods, as explained by Miles and Huberman (2014, p. 14). The stages of data analysis and evaluation involve data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification, which interact with each other to gain a deep understanding of Innovative Strategies in Revitalizing Islamic Education in pesantren.

RESULTS

Innovation

Epistemologically, innovation comes from the Latin word *innovatio*, which means renewal and change. The verb is *innovo* which means to update and change. Innovation is a new change towards improvement; others or different from those that existed before, which were done deliberately and planned. (Ihsan, 2003:191). Likewise, the term innovation, according to Ibrahim in Nurul Zuriah and Hari Sunaryo, contains meaning;

An idea, practical things, methods, ways, or man-made goods that are observed or perceived as something new to a person or group of people (society). What is new can be the result of an invention or discovery used to achieve a specific goal or solve a problem (Nurul and Hari, 2009:12)

It can be understood that innovation has two meanings, namely the discovery of new things that are completely new and different from those that have existed before and renewal, namely the development of something or things that already exist. So when we talk about innovation in learning techniques, the target of discovery and renewal is related to learning techniques. The learning techniques referred to here are the efforts, efforts, and methods educators use to carry out learning in class face-to-face to present and solidify learning materials to achieve learning objectives at that time. That is, the technique is implemented and occurs at the stage of implementing learning. Learning techniques are ways that an educator implements a specific media or method. If you pay attention to educators teaching in class, then learning techniques appear in the activities of educators and students. Put, learning techniques are strategies or ways carried out by educators in carrying out learning activities to be able to obtain optimal results. Thus, learning techniques are closely related to two important things interconnected in the learning process: learning methods and media.

While educational innovation according to Fullan (2018) suggests that "Educational innovation is innovation in the field of education or innovation to solve educational problems". So, educational innovation is an idea, item, or method that is perceived or observed as new to a person or group of people (society), either in the form of intervention results (new discoveries) or discovery (newly discovered people), which are used to achieve educational goals or solve national education problems. Innovation (renewal) related to invention and discovery. Invention is an invention of something completely new, meaning the result of human creation. The discovery of something (thing) that had never existed before, then held with a new form of creation. Discovery is an invention (thing) that has actually existed before, but all is not yet known to people. So, innovation is an effort to find new objects through activities (business), both invention and discovery.

Talking about innovation (renewal) reminds us of two terms: invention and discovery. Invention is the invention of something completely new, meaning it is man's work. At the same time, discovery is the discovery of something (an object that has actually existed before. Thus, innovation can be interpreted as finding new objects by inventing and discovering.

In this connection, Fullan (2018) says that innovation is an invention that can be an idea, item, event, or method observed as something new to a person or group of people (society). Innovation can be the result of invention or discovery. Innovation is carried out with a specific purpose or to solve a problem. The process and stages of change are related to the problems of development, dissemination, dissemination, planning, adoption, application and evaluation (Ramírez-Montoya & Lugo-Ocando, 2020)

The Purpose of Innovation in Education

The planned goals should be clearly detailed about the goals and results to be achieved. The purpose of innovation is efficiency and effectiveness, regarding the target number of students as many as possible with the maximum educational results (according to the needs of students, society, and development) using resources, money, tools and time (Mutia et al., 2020). Learning innovation in education is carried out to solve educational problems and meet the direction of development in the world of education that provides more hope for faster progress. More detail about the purpose of this learning innovation is a new response to educational problems and improvement of education's quality, efficiency, effectiveness and relevance (Daryanto, 2012).

In this century, the purpose of learning is to form and train a person in a certain pattern of behavior according to predetermined standards. The education results are graduates with behavior according to the demands of the routine production process, namely those who behave statically, and their behavior patterns can be predicted in advance. However, the world of work described today almost no longer exists. In the global era, what is certain is that uncertainty. Therefore, the task of education and training is to prepare human beings who can think, behave, and act creatively to face unexpected changes. From the description above, it is clear that the role of education in the future is to prepare human resources in the global era who have hard competencies and soft competencies in an integrated manner to be able to think, behave, and act creatively in situations that cannot be predicted. In an effort to meet these demands, several countries have taken various approaches to their education in response to changing demands for labor quality (Mykhailyshyn et al., 2018).

Awareness of the importance of changing the orientation of education will only become rhetoric if the operational implementation is not followed by the stability of the implementation strategy, in this case, learning. For this reason, it is necessary to study the learning approach that will be used so that the compatibility of this vision and strategy together ushers in achieving the mission to prepare human resources who can succeed in the global era. Learning is the essence of education. Therefore, solving educational problems must focus on the quality of learning. Quality learning requires all learning components to be good and integrated into a system. The search for new approaches or strategies causes the realization of various kinds of innovations in learning. These forms, forms, and innovation efforts vary. Still, all have the same general goal, namely the realization of a quality learning process to improve graduates' competence, ability, skills, and competitiveness. Innovation aims to make changes in a positive direction. If innovation is successfully adopted, there will be various changes, renewals, and quality improvements in the field of education. To innovate well, we need to understand the relationship between innovation and the nature of change, which often has to deal with various cultures, practices, and habits in society (Suyanto, 2003).

Innovative Strategies in Revitalizing Islamic Education: Case Studies in Pesantren as a Model of Community Empowerment

Santri is a "raw material," or raw material, in the transformation process in education in Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, parents and teachers have an important role in children's education. At home, the child is the responsibility of the parents. Still, if the child is in an Islamic boarding school, the child is handed over directly by the parents to the teacher, which becomes a big responsibility. Referring to Piaget's cognitive theory, the thinking of children aged (6-12 years) enters the stage of operational concrete thinking, this means that children already have the ability to think through a sequence of cause and effect and begin to recognize the many problems they face (Nikmatullah et al., 2023; Ramdhani, 2024) So that education must be aimed at creating a balance of overall human personality growth by training the soul, human mind, feelings, and physical reason. In this case, the teacher will be a model for students so that the

ultimate goal of education lies in carrying out full devotion to God both at the individual, group, or human level as wide as possible (Sholikhin, 2023).

Religious education taught in Pesantren, which consists of the subjects of Al-Qur'an Hadith, Fiqh, Aqidah Akhlaq, SKI, Aswaja, and local content materials, must be able to touch the very basic essence of children, especially in terms of values, attitudes, or religious experiences. Therefore, learning Islamic Religious Education in Islamic Boarding Schools needs to be revitalized. The need for innovation strategies in revitalizing character building in preparing a brilliant generation of students in Islamic boarding schools are:

Standardization of Islamic Boarding School Personnel

Teachers who teach in these institutions must be standardized to revitalize religious education in pesantren, meaning they have professional, pedagogic, social, and personality competencies. Teachers with professional competence will understand the material to be delivered to students so that when students do not understand, the teacher can explain logically and systematically and not cause multi-perception understanding. Without pedagogic, personality, and social competence, professional competence will not be effective. With a teacher having pedagogic competence, the teacher will recognize the psychology of students so that they can determine the models and methods to be used in a learning activity. Pedagogic competence will be supported by personality and social competence, so students will easily understand what the teacher conveys.

So teachers who already have the four competencies above will tend to be authoritative, and with their authority, can be an example for students who display a Muslim personal figure, honest, clean and neat dress, humble, compassionate, disciplined, friendly, helpful, democratic, and charismatic.

Contextualization of PAI Material Learning

In addition to improving religious teachers, religious materials given to students must also be a matter of attention because, so far, the facts have proven that learning materials do not answer the challenges of the times. As explained in the learning and learning book, materials or materials are a medium to achieve teaching goals consumed by students. Teaching materials or materials are materials that continue to develop dynamically in accordance with the times and society (Faturrahman et al., 2012, p. 45). During this time, the development of Islamic education discourse that is indoctrinated in nature that prioritizes the content and content of material rather than the methodological process, transformation in Islamic education goes as it is through the path of formality so that students in Islamic boarding schools become rigid and closed to changes and developments of the times (Nasrul et al., 2022). This requires a teacher to be able to attract the attention of students in Pesantren to be more motivated to learn, especially teachers in religious education. In addition, facts like this require teachers to carry out contextual learning, namely bringing real life into the classroom so that students' thinking is not rigid and children can be sensitive to the current times (Hariandi et al., 2021).

This approach will make the teaching and learning process more concrete, broad, actual, real, realistic, fun, and meaningful. The learning outcomes of students in pesantren increase because with a contextual approach, all five senses are activated and utilized simultaneously in the learning process so that they can foster creativity, reasoning, curiosity, and experimentation to find new possibilities.

Positive Habitat in Pesantren

To form behavior is not as easy as turning the palm of the hand. Still, there must be habituation that must be given to children, even if it is necessary to hold punishment, meaning that if there is reinforcement, then there must also be punishment so that there is a deterrent effect on children, or in Islam called *targhib wa tarhib* (Jono et al., 2019).

Building Ghirah Santri in Learning

The word *ghirah* is also interpreted as motivation or spirit, where the meaning of motivation comes from the Latin "*movere*" which means to move, based on this understanding, the meaning of motivation develops, woldkowski explained that motivation is a condition that causes or causes certain behaviors that give direction and resistance to these behaviors (Alfadla et al., 2023).

Problems like this are the teacher's task to solve; this can be overcome in the first two ways: a teacher must be able to understand and be able to apply learning models and methods so that students are enthusiastic again to follow learning in the pesantren. Second, teachers must be able to make students aware of the importance of religious education both in the world and the hereafter, and third, teachers must be able to master the class to create a conducive class and always up to date with the times.

So, to build *ghirah santri* in religious learning in Pesantren, a teacher must understand the psychology of students at their level so that they can apply the right models, strategies, and methods for students. Teachers can use the *pakem* learning model (active, creative, effective, and fun) so that students in Pesantren are not only active but creative, so it will make students motivated to learn because the teacher has done a learning activity with fun (Mughtar et al., 2021).

Fun learning is not a learning process that requires students to laugh but a learning process in which there is strong cohesion between teachers and students without feeling pressured. In other words, what is meant by fun learning is the existence of a good relationship pattern between teachers and students in the learning process. Teachers are considered and positioned as learning partners of students in pesantren, so there is no burden for students in the learning process (Kusumawati, 2022). In simple terms, it can be said that this *Pakem* model must be understood as an integral and integral part of an effort to create a learning process that prioritizes the activities and creativity of students in learning. Thus, the quality and ability of graduates / competitive community empowerment can be achieved by welcoming the future of students in the Islamic Boarding School.

CONCLUSION

Religious education needs to be directed to develop faith, morals, conscience, ethics, and aspects of intelligence and skills to realize balance. Innovation is an invention that can be in the form of an idea, item, event, or method observed as something new for a person or group of people (society). The purpose of innovation is efficiency and effectiveness, regarding the target number of students as many as possible with the maximum educational results (according to the needs of students, society, and development) using resources, money, tools and time. In Pesantren, Santri is a "raw material," or raw material, in the transformation process in education. Therefore, parents and teachers have an important role in children's education. At home, the child is the responsibility of the parents. Still, if the child is in an Islamic boarding school, the child is handed over directly by the parents to the teacher, which becomes a big responsibility. Religious education taught in Pesantren, which consists of the subjects of Al-Qur'an Hadith, Fiqh, Aqidah Akhlaq, SKI, Aswaja, and local content materials, must be able to touch the very basic essence of children, especially in terms of values, attitudes, or religious experiences. Therefore, learning Islamic Religious Education in Islamic Boarding Schools needs to be revitalized. As for what needs an innovation strategy in revitalizing character building in preparing a brilliant generation of students in Pesantren, namely: (1) Standardization of Pesantren Personnel, (2) Contextualization of PAI Material Learning, (3) Positive Habitat in Pesantren, (4) Building Ghirah Santri in Learning.

REFERENCES

- Ahid, N., & Haq, F. Z. Q. (2023). Religious Education Curriculum Development: Between Islamic Boarding Schools, Schools, and Madrasahs. *Al-Abshar: Journal of Islamic Education Management*, 2(1), 101–118.
- Alfadla, M. T., Riva, R., & Darwis, A. A. (2023). The Meaning of Ghirah Learning (Study Phenomenology of Mahasantri at Islamic Boarding School-Based University). *Shibghoh: Prosiding Ilmu Kependidikan UNIDA Gontor*, 1, 460–466.
- Calderón, A., & Ruiz, M. (2015). A systematic literature review on serious games evaluation: An application to software project management. *Computers & Education*, 87, 396–422.
- Chou, C. M., Shen, T. C., Shen, T. C., & Shen, C. H. (2023). The impact of CIE education integrated with the BIG 6 teaching strategy on students' innovative motivation, creativity, metacognition, and self-perceived employability. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TSC.2023.101287>
- Cillo, V., Petruzzelli, A. M., Ardito, L., & Del Giudice, M. (2019). Understanding sustainable innovation: A systematic literature review. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 26(5), 1012–1025.
- Daryanto, M. R. (2012). Model pembelajaran inovatif. *Yogyakarta: Gava Media*.
- Faturrahman, I. K., Ahmadi, S. A., & HA, S. (2012). Pengantar pendidikan. *Jakarta: PT. Prestasi Pustakaraya*.
- Fauzi, M. I., Fahrudin, F., & Abdussalam, A. (2022). Pesantren and Islamic Religious Education (IRE): The Role and Implication of Islamic Boarding School for IRE in Schools. *TARBAWY: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education*, 9(2), 143–154.
- Fullan, M. (2018). Research into educational innovation. In *The management of educational institutions* (pp. 245–261). Routledge.
- Hariandi, A., Umar, H., & Us, K. A. (2021). The Organizational Culture of the Khalafiyah Islamic Boarding School in Batanghari Regency in Providing Job Satisfaction for Teachers. *International Journal of Educational Review*, 3(2), 228–244.
- Ji, M., Jiao, Y., & Cheng, N. (2023). An Innovative decision-making scheme for the high-quality economy development driven by higher education. *Journal of Innovation and Knowledge*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JIK.2023.100345>
- Jono, M., Firman, F., & Rusdinal, R. (2019). PERANAN PROF. DR. H. RAMAYULIS DALAM PENGEMBANGAN PENDIDIKAN ISLAM DI SUMATERA BARAT 1945-2015. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 3(3), 1380–1384.
- Kusumawati, E. (2022). School Committee Participation In Realizing The Quality Of Education. *Infokum*, 10(5), 880–886.
- Liu, Y. (2023). An innovative talent training mechanism for maker education in colleges and universities based on the IPSO-BP-enabled technique. *Journal of Innovation and Knowledge*, 8(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JIK.2023.100424>
- Mansur, M., Sugianto, B., Harafah, L. M., & Alim, N. (2022). Problems of Islamic Education in Public Senior High Schools in Kendari City. *KnE Social Sciences*, 445–452.
- Meiriki, A., Rahayu, E., & Resnawaty, R. (2020). A Community Empowerment Model through Pesantren-Based Family Empowerment Post (POSDAYA). *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Development*, 3(02), 183–196.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. 3rd. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Muchtar, N. E. P., Suprayogo, I., & Supriyatno, T. (2021). Educational values of religious tolerance and nationalism in Lamongan Islamic boarding school. *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 16(1), 111–126.
- Mutia, L., Gimin, G., & Mahdum, M. (2020). Development of blog-based audio visual learning media to improve student learning interests in money and banking topic. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, 4(2), 436–448.
- Mykhailyshyn, H., Kondur, O., & Serman, L. (2018). *Innovation of education and educational innovations in conditions of modern higher education institution*.
- Nasrul, N., Iswantir, M., & Zulmuqim, Z. (2022). Islamic Boarding School Reform and Multicultural Education. *Literatus*, 4(1), 381–390.
- Nikmatullah, C., Wahyudin, W., & Fauzi, A. (2023). Digital Pesantren: Revitalization of the Islamic Education System in the Disruptive Era. *Al-Izzah: Jurnal Hasil-Hasil Penelitian*, 1–14.
- Rakhmat, J. (2005). Metodologi penelitian komunikasi. *Remaja Rosda Karya, Bandung*.
- Ramdhani, R. (2024). Development of Islamic Boarding Schools Through Local Wisdom-Based Community Economic Empowerment: An Innovative Offer. *Madania: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman*, 27(2), 249–258.
- Ramírez-Montoya, M.-S., & Lugo-Ocando, J. (2020). Systematic review of mixed methods in the framework of educational innovation. *Comunicar*, 28(65), 9–20.
- Rumainur, R., Fauzan, U., & Malihah, N. (2022). Characteristics of Islamic Religious Education in Boarding School Curriculum. *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education*, 4(2), 197–207.
- Sholikhin, A. (2023). Innovation of Islamic Education (Multisite Study at Madrasah Aliyah Pesantren Al-Amin and Madrasah Aliyah Darul Hikmah, Mojokerto Regency). *Journal of World Science*, 2(1), 75–88.
- Supriyanto, S., Amrin, A., & Rifa'i, A. A. (2022). Islamic Education Paradigm on Religious Understanding in Indonesia (A Case Study at Islamic Boarding School of Al-Muayyad Surakarta). *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 27(1), 31–46.
- Suyanto, M. (2003). *Multimedia alat untuk meningkatkan keunggulan bersaing*. Penerbit Andi.
- Tabroni, I., Fatimah, D., & Hidayat, M. F. (2022). ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BASED ON BOARDING SCHOOL OF MTS AL-FATAH TEGALWARU. *Education: Jurnal Sosial Humaniora Dan Pendidikan*, 2(1), 10–13.
- Wawan, I. D. (2021). Character Education to Respond to The 21st Century Skills Challenges: A Review. *Jurnal Evaluasi Pendidikan*, 12(2), 51–59.
- Xiao, Y., & Watson, M. (2019). Guidance on conducting a systematic literature review. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 39(1), 93–112.
- Yusak, N. M., Madrah, M. Y., & Ardi, M. N. (2021). Islamic Education for a Resilient Faith Communities: A Study of Religious Literacy Practices in Pesantren. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society*, 6(2).

Copyright holder:

Muhamad Rikza Saputro, Sukiman (2024)

First publication rights:

International Journal of Social Service and Research (IJSSR)

This article is licensed under:

