

Tradition to Adaptation: Analysis of Opportunities and Obstacles for Islamic Boarding Schools in Equipping Students with Hard Skills at Al Hikmah 02

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Abstract: Islamic boarding schools, which have two aspects, namely religion and education, certainly cannot avoid adaptation in the form of transformation if they want to remain relevant to the needs of society at large. The prevalence of Islamic boarding schools that only focus on teaching religious knowledge certainly has an impact on the jobs pursued by students after completing their education at the boarding school. Another impact is that many Islamic boarding school alumni are confused about finding work or are unemployed because they lack practical skills that can be used as bargaining power in the world. This research aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges of Islamic boarding schools in equipping students with hard skills. This research is categorized as qualitative research with a field type. Data was collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The main sources in this study were Islamic boarding school leaders/caretakers and skills teachers, while the supporting sources were students. The results of the study show that there are seven opportunities for Islamic boarding schools to equip students with hard skills. On the other hand, there are six challenges that can be solved by the Islamic boarding schools themselves.

Keywords: Santri Employability Skills, Santri Hard Skills, Islamic Boarding School Transformation, Adaptive Islamic Boarding Schools.

Abstrak: Pesantren yang memiliki dua aspek sekaligus yakni agama dan pendidikan tentu tidak bisa mengelak dari adaptasi dalam bentuk transformasi jika eksistensinya ingin tetap terjaga dan relevan bagi kebutuhan masyarakat secara luas. Masih maraknya pesantren yang hanya berfokus pada pengajaran ilmu agama saja tentu berdampak pula pada pekerjaan yang digeluti oleh santri pasca selesai menempuh pendidikan pesantren. Dampak lain yang terjadi adalah banyaknya alumni pesantren yang kebingungan mencari kerja atau menganggur karena tidak ada keahlian praktis yang bisa menjadi daya tawar di dunia. Riset ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peluang dan tantangan adaptasi pesantren dalam membekali santri *Hard Skill* di pondok pesantren. Riset ini dikategorisasikan sebagai riset dengan

pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis lapangan. Data digali melalui wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Sumber utama dalam penelitian ini adalah Kiyai/pengasuh Pesantren dan Guru Keterampilan sedangkan sumber penunjangnya adalah santri. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat tujuh peluang pesantren yang muncul dalam membekali hard skill santri. Di sisi lain, terdapat enam tantangan yang muncul yang notabene bisa ditemukan solusinya oleh pesantren itu sendiri

Kata Kunci: Employability Skill Santri, Hard Skill Santri, Transformasi Pesantren, Pesantren Adaptif.

Introduction

The Industrial Revolution is always accompanied by a wave of disruption that covers many aspects, including social, political, educational, and religious aspects.¹ Islamic boarding schools, which have two aspects, namely religion and education, certainly cannot avoid adaptation in the form of transformation if they want to remain relevant to the needs of society at large. This certainly has consequences in terms of equipping students with employability skills in the form of *numerical skill*,² *life skill*,³ and *speaking skill*.⁴ Furthermore, communities that hope their children will have jobs or greater access to the world of work are naturally aligned with the expectation that educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools, will equip their students with employability skills (the abilities and skills that enhance the ability to obtain employment).

These skills are actually mandated by law, as stated in the explanation of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, Article (26) Paragraph 3, which states that life skills education is education that provides personal skills, social skills, intellectual skills, and vocational skills for work or independent business⁵.

Rifqi Syarif Nasrulloh found in his research that there are several Islamic boarding schools that no longer only teach students subjects related to religious studies, but have also transformed into educational institutions

¹ Hatta Fakhurrozi, "Pesantren Virtual: Dinamisasi Atau Disrupsi Pesantren?," *Paedagogia: Jurnal Pendidikan* 10, no. 1 (2021): 153–68, <https://doi.org/10.24239/pdg.vol10.iss1.154>.

² (Tsani et al., 2020

³ As'ad & Hakim, 2022

⁴ Holandiyah et al., 2022)

⁵ Semiono Raharjo, "Pendidikan Kecakapan Hidup (Life Skill) Di Pondok Pesantren Dalam Meningkatkan Kemandirian Santri," *Edusiana: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 2, no. 2 (2024): 30–42, <https://doi.org/10.70437/edusiana.v2i2.676>.

that teach various life skills (Nasrulloh & Sutyono, 2022). On the other hand, the majority of Islamic boarding schools in many regions are still traditionally focused on equipping students with religious lessons without attempting to prepare them to be able to compete in the ever-evolving world of work through the teaching of practical skills⁶ provides information and facts that their Islamic boarding schools never teach the technical skills that they need after graduating from the boarding school. This certainly has implications for the inability of students to compete in the job market, which requires hard skills proven by certificates.

This is as stated by Latif, who emphasized the importance of the role of education evolving to keep pace with the demands of the modern job market and technological developments.⁷ The prevalence of Islamic boarding schools that only focus on religious knowledge certainly has an impact on the jobs pursued by students after completing their education at the boarding school. On the one hand, students are not particularly concerned about the world of work and are often found working in all sectors. This situation also indicates that students lack practical skills acquired from pesantren.⁸ Another impact is that many pesantren alumni are confused about finding work or are unemployed because they lack practical skills that can be used as bargaining power in the job market, which requires certified practical skills.⁹

In the context of the urgency of Islamic boarding schools in equipping their students, Al Hikmah 02 Islamic Boarding School is an important object for case study. The reason is that for more than two decades, this boarding school has presented a fairly adaptive face of Islamic boarding school education in line with the developments of the times by teaching various practical skills for the world of work.¹⁰ This means that this pesantren can be used as a role model for other pesantren that want to transform themselves into pesantren that are responsive to the needs of the community. This study aims to examine Al Hikmah 02 Islamic Boarding School, which can be used as a model for other pesantren in providing practical skills/hard skills, especially in terms of integrating skills teaching into the pesantren curriculum. Through this research, it is hoped that a clearer picture will

⁶ Fahdir, "Wawancara" (2023)

⁷ Latif, Wahyu Utama Putra, and Nanny Mayasari, "Kurikulum Berorientasi Karier Di Perguruan Tinggi Jawa Barat: Menghubungkan Pendidikan Dengan Tuntutan Dunia Kerja Melalui Pembelajaran Praktis Dan Keterampilan Industri," *Jurnal Pendidikan West Science* 1, no. 08 (2023): 528–37, <https://doi.org/10.58812/jpdws.v1i08.599>.

⁸ Fachdir Syahputra, "Wawancara" (2023).

⁹ Sigit, "Wawancara" (2023).

¹⁰ Slamet Riyadi, "Wawancara" (2023).

emerge of how Islamic boarding schools, in this case Al Hikmah 02 Islamic Boarding School, adapt and transform their educational approach by paying attention to the teaching of hard skills to students.

Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia have become Islamic educational institutions that have undergone a long process.¹¹ Previous studies, such as that by Mujammil Qomar, have explained that in the current era, Islamic boarding schools no longer only teach students religious knowledge, but there are also Islamic boarding schools that equip their students with practical skills applicable in the world of work.¹² Endar Evta Yuda Prayogi focuses more on the management aspect, which is one of the factors that makes a Islamic boarding school visionary and applicable.¹³ On the other hand, research focusing on Al Hikmah 02 itself has been conducted several times, including by Waidi, who focuses on the management aspect ¹⁴ and Nurlaeli, who focuses on bi'ah lughowiyah.¹⁵ Furthermore, previous studies have also discussed aspects of character education,¹⁶ literacy,¹⁷ and teachers' perceptions of bullying.¹⁸ Based on previous studies, the researcher attempted to fill the gap in terms of pesantren adaptation by focusing on the aspect of teaching hard skills at Pesantren Al Hikmah 02, which had never been done before.

Research examining adaptation presents several focuses, including Rahmadani, who highlights the adaptation of students themselves,

¹¹ Rifqi Syarif Nasrulloh and Sutiyono Sutiyono, "Life Skills Education Management of Muslimah Islamic Boarding School in Sleman Yogyakarta during COVID-19 Pandemic," *International Journal of Health Sciences*, August 17, 2022, 12039–49, <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS5.11825>.

¹² Mujammil Qomar, *Pesantren Dari Transformasi Metodologi Menuju Demokratisasi Institusi* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007).

¹³ Endar Evta Yuda Prayogi et al., "Management of Madrasa-Based Education Quality Improvement at the Tahfidz Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Metro City," *Review of International Geographical Education Online* 11, no. 7 (2021): 480–91, <https://doi.org/10.48047/rigeo.11.07.52>.

¹⁴ Waidi Waidi, Didin Saefudin, and E. Mujahidin, "Pembaharuan Pengelolaan Pesantren Tradisional," *Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 30, no. 2 (2019): 372–92, <https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v30i2.855>.

¹⁵ R Nurlaeli, *Urgensi Asrama Bahasa Dalam Pengembangan Bi'Ah Lugawiiyyah Bagi Siswa Program Bahasa Arab Di Madrasah Aliyah Program ...*, 2023, [https://eprints.uinsaizu.ac.id/19492/1/Nurlaeli Rokhmah_Urgensi Asrama Bahasa Arab dalam Pengembangan Bi'ah Lugawiiyyah Bagi Siswa Program Bahasa Arab di MA PK Al Hikmah 2 Benda.pdf](https://eprints.uinsaizu.ac.id/19492/1/Nurlaeli%20Rokhmah_Urgensi%20Asrama%20Bahasa%20Arab%20dalam%20Pengembangan%20Bi%27ah%20Lugawiiyyah%20Bagi%20Siswa%20Program%20Bahasa%20Arab%20di%20MA%20PK%20Al%20Hikmah%20Benda.pdf).

¹⁶ (Ulfah, 2018

¹⁷ Mubarak et al., 2019

¹⁸ Siswa & Benda, 2017)

particularly in the new academic environment experienced by freshmen, who inevitably feel an academic atmosphere different from their school days.¹⁹ Of course, this research can be used as a comparison in examining the adaptation of Islamic boarding schools in teaching practical skills in the world of work because, based on Rahmadani's findings, students are required to meet several academic, behavioral, and affective demands. Furthermore, the adaptation process also requires support from various parties, such as universities, study programs, and academic advisors. This is also in line with Taufiqurrahman's research, which focuses on the sustainability of Islamic boarding schools, which requires the adaptation of the organizational structure of Islamic boarding schools.²⁰ This is because Islamic boarding schools are defined as organizations, which means a group of people who have common goals. Adaptive Islamic boarding schools, according to Rifki's research, are Islamic boarding schools that provide Islamic education using the *bandongan* and *sorogan* methods when studying classical books (*kitab kuning*) written by scholars in the Middle Ages, while modern Islamic boarding schools are institutional systems that are run in a modern way in terms of administration, teaching systems, and curriculum.²¹ Based on this definition, adaptive Islamic boarding schools can be categorized as modern Islamic boarding schools.

Furthermore, articles in Scopus journals discuss skills, including Tsani, who examines the impact of group investigation learning on numerical skills in Islamic boarding schools, where the researcher concludes that the numerical abilities of students are influenced by the learning method, where the Group Investigation (GI) method is far better than conventional methods in developing these skills.²² On the other hand, Sutiyono tends to use demonstration and practice methods in teaching life skills.²³ In addition to the urgency of numerical skills, Mahrus As'ad said that there are life skills that

¹⁹ Anisa Rahmadani and Yuliana Rahmawati Mukti, "Adaptasi Akademik, Sosial, Personal, Dan Institusional: Studi College Adjustment Terhadap Mahasiswa Tingkat Pertama," *Jurnal Konseling Dan Pendidikan* 8, no. 3 (2020): 159, <https://doi.org/10.29210/145700>.

²⁰ Kholilur Rahman, "KEJURUAN BERBASIS PESANTREN DI KABUPATEN BANYUWANGI Kholilur Rahman" 6, no. 2 (2018): 225-52.

²¹ Rifqi Silfiana, "A Traditional and Modern Education System of Pondok Pesantren in Perspective Philosophy of Education," *Islamadina: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 2020, 43, <https://doi.org/10.30595/islamadina.v0i0.6894>.

²² Tsani et al., "The Impact of Group Investigation (GI) Learning Models on Sequence and Series: A Study Case Numerical Skills Analysis in Islamic Boarding School."

²³ Nasrulloh and Sutiyono, "Life Skills Education Management of Muslimah Islamic Boarding School in Sleman Yogyakarta during COVID-19 Pandemic."

are very necessary for students, including aspects that need to be developed, such as personal skills, social skills, and vocational skills, which can be explored by carrying out projects and internships.²⁴ Holandyah stated in the conclusion of her research that learning skills will face challenges in terms of language limitations,²⁵ which can be used as a reference, especially because the diction used in Islamic boarding schools tends to be different from that used in learning hard skills. Broad language proficiency supports the mastery of skills. It can also be said that soft skills have been discussed more by previous researchers than hard skills.

Research focused on the AL Hikmah 02 Islamic boarding school is not new as several researchers have already studied it, such as Ayuningtyas, who focused on the verbal communication of Islamic boarding school,²⁶ Husnayain, who discussed the visionary leadership of Kiyai,²⁷ Ulfah who explored character education,²⁸ Nurlaeli who focused on Arabic language skills,²⁹ and Fikri, who focused on English.³⁰ Based on several previous studies, this research presents a different focus, emphasizing the aspect of hard skill learning as a form of adaptation by Al Hikmah 02 Islamic boarding school to the changing times and community needs, thereby increasing the employability of students. This research aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges of Islamic boarding school adaptation to the world of work through the teaching of hard skills at Al Hikmah 02 Islamic Boarding School.

²⁴ As'ad and Hakim, "Nurturing Life Skill Education in an Environment-Based Pesantren."

²⁵ Holandyah et al., "Speaking Challenges in a Life Skill Program for Islamic Boarding School Students: A Case Study."

²⁶ R Ayuningtyas, "Makna Komunikasi Non Verbal Santri Dalam Tradisi Ta'Dzim Kepada Kyai Di Pondok," *Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta*, 2021.

²⁷ Muhammad Faizul Husnayain, "Kepemimpinan Visioner Kiai Dalam Pengembangan Lembaga Pendidikan Islam: Studi Multisitus Di Pondok Pesantren At-Taujeh Al-Islamy 02 Banyumas Dan Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikmah 02 Brebes Jawa Tengah" (Universitas Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2021).

²⁸ Ulfah, "Pendidikan Karakter Islami Di Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikmah."

²⁹ Nurlaeli, *Urgensi Asrama Bahasa Dalam Pengembangan Bi'Ah Lugawiyah Bagi Siswa Program Bahasa Arab Di Madrasah Aliyah Program*

³⁰ Fikri Ahmad Kamalul Fikri, "COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION (CBE) CONCEPT IMPLEMENTED IN ENGLISH LEARNING IN PONDOK PESANTREN AL - HIKMAH 02 BREBES" (Diponegoro University, 2018), <http://eprints.undip.ac.id/62705/>.

Method

This research is categorized as qualitative research with a field approach. In this type of research, researchers go to the field to obtain data related to phenomena that occur naturally.³¹ The qualitative approach in this research falls under the category of case studies, which, according to Sugianto, means that in case studies, researchers conduct in-depth exploration of programs, events, processes, and activities involving one or more people.³² In this case, the researcher went directly to the Al Hikmah 02 Islamic Boarding School.

This research has two sources, namely primary and secondary. Primary sources are the main data in a study. Primary sources are data sources that directly provide data to data collectors. Primary data is also referred to as original data from its primary source or as the main reference.³³ The main sources in this study were the Kiyai/Islamic boarding school leaders and three skills teachers because they were directly related to the data needed, especially regarding the challenges and problems of teaching hard skills.

Secondary data is supporting data in a study. Secondary sources are sources that do not directly provide data to data collectors, for example, through other people or documents. Secondary data is data obtained by researchers from various relevant sources such as books, journals, magazines, and others. Secondary data is also called supporting data to add to the researcher's references and insights.³⁴ This data is often referred to as supporting data that serves to add to the researcher's insights and references.³⁵ The secondary data consists of five students from each hard skill, which is done to represent each learning process so that the data can be said to be sufficiently representative. Other complementary data includes lesson plans, the pesantren website, and written records at the Al Hikmah 02 pesantren. Data collection is the first step that must be taken in a research project. Data collection techniques are the methods used by researchers to obtain data for their research needs.³⁶ The data collection techniques used by the author in this study are interviews, observation, and documentation.³⁷ The

³¹ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2017).

³² Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kombinasi* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2018).

³³ Sandu Siyoto, *Dasar Metodologi Penelitian* (Yogyakarta: Literasi Media Publisng, 2015).

³⁴ Sandu Siyoto dan Ali Sodik, *Dasar Metodologi Penelitian* (Yogyakarta: Literasi Media Publisng, 2015).

³⁵ Siyoto, *Dasar Metodologi Penelitian*.

³⁶ Evanirosa, *Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Bandung.: Media Sains Indonesia, 2022).

³⁷ Mamik, *Metodologi Kualitatif* (Zifatama Publisher, 2015).

interviews chosen are non-participant interviews, while the observation is conducted through non-participatory observation.

A researcher will search for, sort, and compile data using data analysis techniques. These techniques will organize, describe, and compile data in such a way that it is easy to understand and analyze. It is necessary to compare, evaluate, and explain the data. Then, the material from these available documents is combined after analysis and evaluation into a contextual form.³⁸ After the researched data has been collected, the next step is to analyze the data. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching for and compiling data that has been obtained through interviews, field observations, field notes, and documentation by organizing the data into categories, describing the units, synthesizing, compiling patterns, selecting what is important and what will be studied, and drawing conclusions so that it is easy to understand for oneself and others.

Data validation is carried out through triangulation. According to Wiersma in Sugiyono's book, triangulation in credibility testing is defined as checking data from various sources in various ways and at various times. Thus, there are three types of data triangulation, namely source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation. However, this study only uses the first type, technique triangulation, in which data obtained from interviews with informants is compared with data obtained from direct observation and documents. The second type is source triangulation, in which the data we obtained from the Kiyai is compared with the data we obtained from the skills teacher and students.

Results and Discussion

Opportunities for Islamic Boarding Schools to Improve Students' Employability Skills Through the Implementation of Hard Skills Teaching

a. Support from Kiyai/Pesantren Leaders

Leaders are one of the keys to whether an idea can be implemented or not. Kiyai, as the leader of a pesantren, is a figure who is obeyed and emulated by the community he leads, partly because he has high personal integrity in terms of truth, honesty, and justice. Kiyai's support is one of the fundamental factors why hard skill learning can run well. According to the caretaker, when the idea of providing hard skills training was first proposed, Abah Kiyai Haji Masruri Abdul Mughni was

³⁸ Haryoko Sapto, *Analisis Data Penelitian Kualitatif (Konsep, Teknik, Dan Prosedur Analisis)* (Makassar: Badan Penerbit Universitas Negeri Makassar, 2020).

very supportive and approved of the idea, even though there were still obstacles to its implementation at the Islamic boarding school.³⁹

Furthermore, the Kiyai did not sit idly by but also actively contributed, among other things, by looking for talented individuals to become skills instructors, one of whom was a welding skills instructor. This was conveyed by the welding instructor, who is an alumnus of the pesantren who took welding skills, that:

"Kebetulan saya mengajar di pengelasan ini, Abah (Pengasuh Pondok) yang meminta saya, mengetahui saya alumni dan saya orang Benda (Desa benda), rumah saya didatangi dan saya disuruh di pengelasan)."

The support of the Kiyai is a central factor in the adaptation of Islamic boarding schools, where the classical teaching method of teaching by example⁴⁰ and the curriculum of⁴¹ (teaching by rote) can only change if there is support from the Kiyai as the highest decision maker. Mahlil Nurul Insan states in his writing that *Each Islamic boarding schools has a different cultural climate because it is caused by the policies of the kiyai*⁴² which means that each Islamic boarding school has a different cultural climate caused by the policies of its Kiyai. An adaptive pesantren leader will result in an adaptive pesantren, and vice versa.

b. Alumni (Human Resources)

Pesantren, where students mainly study religious knowledge, including teachers at madrasahs, schools, and universities under the auspices of pesantren foundations, certainly do not have any skills. Therefore, pesantren s target alumni who are considered capable and willing to learn to send them to training or courses.⁴³ The training is conducted at vocational training centers (BLK), for example, for computer skills, where alumni are sent to Jombang and Yogyakarta.

³⁹ "Wawancara Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah 02 Brebes" (n.d.).

⁴⁰ Z C Kirana, "Adaptasi Tradisi Kearifan Pesantren Dalam Pendidikan Modern," *Salimiya: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Keagamaan Islam* 2 (2021), <http://ejournal.iaifa.ac.id/index.php/salimiya/article/view/476%0Ahttp://ejournal.iaifa.ac.id/index.php/salimiya/article/download/476/440>.

⁴¹ Andit Triono et al., "Transformasi Pendidikan Pesantren Di Era Globalisasi: Adaptasi Kurikulum Yang Berwawasan Global," *Al-Tarbawi Al-Haditsah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (2022): 72, <https://doi.org/10.24235/tarbawi.v7i1.10405>.

⁴² Mahlil Nurul Ihsan et al., "Islamic Boarding School Culture Climate in Forming The Religious Attitude of Islamic Students in Modern and Agrobusiness Islamic Boarding Schools," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 2 (2021): 362-82, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v4i2.1492>.

⁴³ "Wawancara Kepala Sekolah MA Al Hikmah 02."

Furthermore, according to the Head of Madrasah Aliah, at the beginning of the program, there was no recruitment of hard skill teachers due to the lack of bargaining power, especially in terms of the pesantren's inability to provide welfare. Reflecting on this, it was decided to empower the alumni. After the training or courses, they will then become skills teachers in the pesantren environment.

Furthermore, regarding the recruitment of skills teachers, as stated by the Head of Madrasah Aliah:

"...pada akhirnya guru keterampilan juga diambil dari para siswa yang telah lulus dalam artian alumni pengelasan kelak direkrut menjadi guru keterampilan pengelasan, alumni perikanan direkrut menjadi guru keterampilan perikanan alumni komputer ngajar komputer..."⁴⁴

This was also conveyed by the welding skills teacher, who stated:

"...Saya diminta untuk bantu di sini ketika setelah lulus bahkan sebelum luluspun sudah sering dipasrahi untuk menggambar, disuruh untuk masang-masang..."⁴⁵

From the above statement, it can be concluded that there is a regeneration process in the recruitment of skills teachers for the next generation, where alumni who excel in skills are offered the opportunity to participate in teaching skills at the Islamic boarding school. Furthermore, if they are considered to have excellence in empowering students, this has been done even before they graduate from the Islamic boarding school. Speaking of the quality of teachers, fashion design students stated that it was very good due to the discipline possessed by the teachers. This was also reinforced by AA, a fisheries student, who said that the fisheries skills teacher was very knowledgeable about the material, taught to the best of his ability, and had a good and patient character. ARP, a language student, also said that the quality of language skills teachers is good, emphasizing full English learning using several fun methods with a variety of games.⁴⁶

According to adaptation theory, this stage can be described as Readjustment, where individuals are in the process of readjusting, focusing on developing various ways to continuously adapt to

⁴⁴ "Wawancara Kepala Sekolah MA Al Hikmah 02."

⁴⁵ "Wawancara Guru Pengelasan" (n.d.).

⁴⁶ "Wawancara Santri Bahasa Inggris" (n.d.).

existing circumstances.⁴⁷ In this context, alumni are adapted to the needs of the boarding school through preparatory training.

c. Collaboration with the Government

The government is a partner in the pesantren adaptation process, even though it began with opposition from the Ministry of Religious Affairs'. Gradually, this opposition turned into support and collaboration, which provided a breath of fresh air for the development of hard skills teaching at Pesantren Al Hikmah 02. After receiving the green light from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the pesantren administrators requested assistance in the form of human resources, namely teachers from the ministry.⁴⁸ In 1996, the Director General of Islamic Education was invited to a grand celebration, which also served as a platform to present the hard skills teaching program at the Islamic boarding school. This invitation was well received because at that time, the government, in this case the Director General of Islamic Education, was collaborating with the Islamic Development Bank to promote a skills workshop program, which eventually provided teachers (civil servants) with skills in tailoring, welding, and poultry-based agriculture. However, based on the considerations of the boarding school administrators at that time, poultry-based agriculture was replaced with fisheries-based agriculture due to the impact of the smell of poultry, which was quite disturbing.⁴⁹ This was done in consideration of the geographical conditions and the conditions of the community around the boarding school. Thus, since 1996, the government has been a partner of the boarding school, represented by three skills teachers. menjadi partner pesantren diwakili oleh tiga guru keterampilan.

As mentioned by the welding teachers:

*"...Dulu guru kami (di pengelasan) pak barnawi dan pak saiful dimana sekarang pak barnawi di Cirebon menjadi kepala sekolah, jadi yang masih bertahan di sini bu ida dan bu heri, kalau bu ida di tata busana dan bu heri di perikanan, adapun pak saiful pulang ke rumah menjadi pengawas sekolah sekarang..."*⁵⁰

This is also in line with what the Fashion Design teacher

⁴⁷ Nihayatur Rohmah, "Adaptasi Kebiasaan Baru Di Masa Pandemi Covid-19," *AL-MIKRAJ: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Humaniora* (E-ISSN: 2745-4584) 1, no. 2 (2021): 78–90, <https://doi.org/10.37680/almikraj.v1i2.767>.

⁴⁸ "Wawancara Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah 02 Brebes."

⁴⁹ "Wawancara Kepala Sekolah MA Al Hikmah 02."

⁵⁰ (Wawancara)

stated::

*"...Kalau yang keterampilan ini perikanan, pengelasan, tata busana itukan proyek ya, proyek IDB, itukan guru sampai sarprasnya itukan dari pusat..."*⁵¹

Collaboration with the government certainly has a positive impact on the development of hard skills teaching in Islamic boarding schools. Not only are skilled teachers who are civil servants (ASN) provided, who are paid by the state so that Islamic boarding schools do not need to allocate funds, but the government also provides learning facilities for welding, fishing, and fashion design skills.

Pesantren have actually been in line with the government in human resource development and have even helped in organizing the government since its inception.⁵² This can be seen from the participation of santri in the war to expel the colonizers, so it is not surprising that the government now provides a lot of assistance to programs initiated by pesantren.

d. Geographical Location and Environment

The geographical location of the Islamic boarding school at the foot of Mount Slamet is quite strategic for learning hard skills, in this case, fisheries. The abundance of mountain water and long established ponds are maximally utilized by the Islamic boarding school as a learning facility. Moreover, because it is located at the foot of a mountain, the water circulation for fisheries skills can be maintained as desired. Natural resources are one of the supporting factors in learning, and according to Kononets, resources can help teachers simplify the teaching process while allowing students to see real-world conditions firsthand.⁵³

In addition, the environmental factor in this case is that Java has the potential to employ students who already have sufficient hard skills. As a center of development, Java ultimately makes it easy for students to undertake Field Work Practice (PKL) so that their skills can be honed in the world of work for approximately ninety days.

⁵¹ (Wawancara)

⁵² Ibnu Halomoan, Isnarmi Moeis, and Abubakar Yakubu, "An Overview of the Strength of Implementing Democratic Values in an Islamic Boarding School Atmosphere," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2023): 190–206, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v6i2.2865>.

⁵³ Natalia Kononets, Olena Ilchenko, and Volodymyr Mokliak, "Future Teachers Resource-Based Learning System: Experience of Higher Education Institutions in Poltava City, Ukraine," *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education* 21, no. 3 (2020): 199–220, <https://doi.org/10.17718/TOJDE.762054>.

Furthermore, according to Ag, a welding skills teacher, there is often a demand for workers on ships, especially those with welding skills. In addition, the boarding school supervisor also emphasized that an environment that expects human resources with skills certainly becomes a supporting force where the absorption of prospective workers among students is faster.

From the statements of the boarding school stakeholders, it can be concluded that the environmental conditions are very supportive in at least three aspects, namely learning facilities, internship places, and employment opportunities.⁵⁴ states in his findings that environmental factors greatly influence the success of boarding schools. He further gives an example related to the motivation of students, which is largely influenced by both internal and external environmental factors.

e. School

The formal certification possessed by schools under the Islamic Boarding School foundation is used as a means of equipping students with hard skills. It is this formality that rationalizes why the idea of Islamic boarding schools is manifested through schools under the Al Hikmah 2 Benda Islamic Boarding School foundation.⁵⁵ The world of work requires formal hard skills, which pesantren do not possess. The Kiyai recognized this and decided that schools should be at the forefront of teaching hard skills in order to break the deadlock. Furthermore, the caretaker stated that even though teaching activities are carried out in schools, pesantren always monitor these activities so that they remain within the typical pesantren framework.

The school, as an extension of the Islamic boarding school, has become a place for the realization of the idea of teaching hard skills to students. This has had a positive impact, especially on the acceptance of new students. According to the head of the Islamic boarding school, there has been a significant increase in enrollment after the introduction of skills teaching through the school. Madrasah Aliah has become the largest private madrasah aliah school in Central Java, which previously only had two classes.

Ibnu Halomoan said that many formal schools were born from Islamic boarding schools, where the costs involved are usually

⁵⁴ Ihsan et al., (2021)

⁵⁵ "Wawancara Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah 02 Brebes."

much lower than schools outside Islamic boarding schools.⁵⁶ Furthermore, according to Dzuhayatin, Islamic boarding schools also ensure that students always have a religious attitude and avoid immoral influences that are often spread in the environment.⁵⁷ So, basically, Islamic boarding schools and the schools within them support each other's programs.

f. Community Needs

The demands of the job market, which require specific skills, have an impact on the community's desires, particularly parents, for their children to possess life skills. As stated by Mr. SK:

The first supporting factor is clear: the government. The second is community needs, which at that time required a large number of human resources with specific skills.⁵⁸

This condition certainly had an impact on the increasing enthusiasm of the community to enroll their children in Islamic boarding schools as a place for their children to seek knowledge. Furthermore, Mr. SK said that according to data, the Islamic high school with the most students in Central Java at that time was Madrasah Aliyah Alhikmah 02.

Speaking about the community's understanding of the urgency of hard skills in the future, AZ, a computer student, stated that the reason he chose computers as his skill was because of his family's consideration. His parents believed that computers would become commonplace in the future and if their children did not have these skills, they would be left behind.

Fitrihana said that in this era, computer skills and the like are not only needed for administrative documents, presentations, and the internet, but also for other skilled fields, such as fashion design, pattern making, cutting, sewing, and the final finishing process⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ Halomoan, Moeis, and Yakubu, "An Overview of the Strength of Implementing Democratic Values in an Islamic Boarding School Atmosphere."

⁵⁷ Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin, "Islamism and Nationalism among Niqabis Women in Egypt and Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 10, no. 1 (June 1, 2020): 49-77, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v10i1.49-77>.

⁵⁸ "Wawancara Kepala Sekolah MA Al Hikmah 02."

⁵⁹ N Fitrihana, "Urgensi Literasi Komputer Pada Pembelajaran Di Smk Tata Busana Untuk Menyiapkan Generasi Emas Indonesia," *Seminar Nasional 2016 "Professional Responsibility Pendidik Dalam Menyiapkan SDM Vokasi Abad 21"*

Furthermore, these skills are also increasingly crucial amid the rise of cybercrime. Nazarudin said that cybercrime includes crimes committed: (1). By means of a computer system or network; (2). Within a computer system or network; and (3). against a computer system or network.⁶⁰ According to Dermawan in his research, this highlights how crucial legal protection is for victims of criminal acts. Moreover, the internet allows for many loopholes for crimes to be committed, especially because these crimes are not visible to the naked eye and we are often unaware of them.⁶¹

g. Financial Autonomy

In every skills program, not only is regular funding provided by the institution to carry out the learning process, but participants are also encouraged to become financially independent. Mr. SK, as the school principal, stated that there are at least three aspects that can be utilized, namely training, services, and production. First, the Training Program. If there is a training program organized by the government or any other agency, then the relevant skills are ready, whether as facilitators or resource persons. Training conducted by universities, for example, from Jenderal Sudirman University, sends its students for internships because Islamic boarding schools have the facilities needed by students. Second, Services. The general public, both individuals and institutions, can use the services available, such as the production of welding goods, school uniforms, and fish nurseries. Third, Production Units. The skills possessed are used to continuously produce goods that are sold to individuals and institutions. In general, fashion design produces school uniforms, welding produces trellises and shoe racks, fisheries produce fish seeds, and computers produce student cards. The last two points mentioned are ongoing, while the first point is only carried out at the beginning of the period when Hard Skill teaching is conducted.

Jurusan PTBB FT UNY, 2016, 318-33, <https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/ptbb/article/view/30561>.

⁶⁰ Nazarudin Tianotak, "Urgensi Cyberlaw Di Indonesia Dalam Rangka Penangan Cybercrime Disektor Perbankan," *Bulan Oktober-Desember* 17, no. 4 (2011): 20-27, file:///C:/Users/User/OneDrive/Dokumen/Referensi makalah cyber crime dan cryber law/Nazarudin Tianotak.pdf.

⁶¹ Ari Dermawan, "Urgensi Perlindungan Hukum Bagi Korban Tindak Pidana Kejahatan Teknologi Informasi," *Journal of Science and Social Research* 4307, no. 2 (2019): 39-46, <http://jurnal.goretanpena.com/index.php/JSSR>.

Challenges for Islamic Boarding Schools in Improving Students' Employability Skills Through the Implementation of Hard Skill Instruction

There are several challenges faced by Islamic boarding schools in their efforts to improve the employability skills of students through the teaching of hard skills, including:

a. Lack of skilled human resources/ teachers

Human resources in the implementation of pesantren adjustments in welcoming the future are advantageous in terms of human resources from the perspective of students, but from the perspective of teachers, this is certainly a task that needs to be addressed, and can even be considered a problem.⁶² This condition occurs at the beginning of the implementation of hard skill teaching.

The lack of human resources, in this case, skilled teachers, is a challenge for Islamic boarding schools. This was initially addressed by providing short courses for several students to villagers who understood fishing so that they could acquire the skills to become teachers in fishing skills. This was gradually improved by studying directly at the Cianjur Vocational Training Center (BLK)⁶³.

As the years passed, especially after collaboration with the government, the team of skills instructors was sufficiently fulfilled. However, problems arose again when there was specialization in computer skills, namely network and computer engineering specializations. This was conveyed by computer students, who said that there was no separation between instructors of the two skills. In line with this statement, the number of welding skills instructors, which is only one person, is considered insufficient for students taking this skill, given the importance of supervision and guidance during welding activities.

b. Lack of experience

At the beginning of the effort to implement hard skills learning at the Islamic boarding school, there were challenges due to the absence of role models, so the caregivers at that time were quite confused about where to start. However, after one of the caregivers' children, Gus Solah, visited abroad, he gained some new insights. First, during his visit to Singapore, he learned that even though schools in Singapore were not yet good at that time, vocational values were instilled from an early age. Second, during his visit to

⁶² "Wawancara Kepala Sekolah MA Al Hikmah 02."

⁶³ "Wawancara Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah 02 Brebes."

Beijing, China, he learned that vocational schools were already producing works.⁶⁴

On the other hand, the lack of experience also caused a lot of internal turmoil. Many parties questioned the implementation of hard skills teaching in Islamic boarding schools. Regarding this issue, the initiators provided guidance or enlightenment one by one on the future direction or output of the training for students. According to Rohmah,⁶⁵ this is called frustration, which is an adaptation stage where enthusiasm and excitement begin to shift to feelings of frustration, irritation, and helplessness because the reality does not match the expectations at the initial stage. This condition usually occurs at the beginning of the adaptation process.

c. Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs

As an educational institution under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, madrasahs are naturally under supervision and protection. Therefore, the idea of introducing subjects in madrasahs that are outside the norm has become the subject of scrutiny. This situation is certainly questionable. This was conveyed by the pesantren leader, who said that when this practice was implemented, it was opposed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in this case the Regional Office, which said:

“Kok ada ini, kenapa madrasah aliyah mengajarkan Komputer dan perikanan seperti ini”.

According to Rohmah,⁶⁶ the challenges faced by local institutions fall under the category of frustration in adaptation theory, where reality does not match the expectations held at the initial stage. Meanwhile, if Islamic boarding schools are able to overcome this, they will enter the readjustment stage, where individuals are in the process of readjusting and focusing on developing various ways to adapt to the existing circumstances.

This can be seen from the unwavering enthusiasm of pesantren stakeholders in continuing to implement hard skills learning. Furthermore, Abah Solah (caretaker) continued that the point is that pesantren do not violate government regulations. Of course, it can be concluded that the establishment or emergence of hard skills learning is not supported by the Ministry of Religious Affairs itself, which is in fact the home of religious education institutions in Indonesia. Furthermore, it raises the question of why madrasahs are teaching skills that are not yet regulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs at that time.

⁶⁴ “Wawancara Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah 02 Brebes.”

⁶⁵ Rohmah, (2021)

⁶⁶ Rohmah (2021)

The direct effect of implementing Hard Skill education was that after three years, the number of prospective students at the madrasah, which had previously only been one or two classes, increased to nine or even eleven classes, transforming it into the largest private madrasah in Central Java.⁶⁷ The emergence of Islamic boarding schools with their madrasahs had already proliferated in the 1990s. The boarding school offered a new breakthrough by equipping its students with certified life skills, which became a unique attraction for parents and prospective students.

d. Funding Constraints

The head of the Madrasah Aliyah stated that at the beginning of the implementation of hard skills teaching, there was no recruitment of hard skills teachers or advertising related to the need for skills teachers due to the pesantren's limited ability to provide welfare to prospective teachers, which was certainly due to limited funds. Funding is a necessary resource for learning to take place properly. The boarding school's limited funds were acknowledged by the boarding school administrators in equipping students with hard skills. Furthermore, this condition is also reinforced by the fact that there is a desire to add welding equipment, but because it is recognized that welding equipment is quite expensive, it is understandable that the addition of welding equipment has not yet been carried out.⁶⁸

The lack of funds also affects students, who have to spend their own money to cover the operational costs of practical training. Students who take fashion design skills say that they often spend up to a hundred thousand rupiah just to buy materials that are often used up in only a few meetings. The materials used by fashion design students tend to be disposable items such as buttons and thread, so the boarding school needs to pay more serious attention to this issue to avoid burdening the students. Furthermore, Ismuhadi explains in his research that the cost of learning a skill is said to be the main factor, and even after mastering the skill, a person needs capital to open a business offering that skill.⁶⁹

e. Limited Learning Facilities

Funding is a capital requirement for learning to take place as it should. The lack of funds available to Islamic boarding schools is acknowledged by boarding school administrators in equipping students with hard skills. This aspect certainly has an impact on learning facilities, which

⁶⁷ "Wawancara Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah 02 Brebes."

⁶⁸ "Wawancara Guru Pengelasan."

⁶⁹ Ismuhadi, "Pelatihan Kewirausahaan Keterampilan Menjahit Bagi Ibu-Ibu PKK," *PASAI: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 20–25, <https://doi.org/10.58477/pasai.v1i1.5>.

are very simple and only utilize things available around the boarding school location, such as rivers and natural ponds. Teaching hard skills requires a lot of equipment that is used once and then discarded, such as thread in fashion design or gas in welding, which cannot be properly supported.⁷⁰ Furthermore, Mr. SK, the principal of Madrasah Aliah, also said that the equipment that supports learning is not updated, whereas ideally, within ten years, there should be extreme changes for the development of skills.

If properly facilitated, this fashion design program should be continued or upgraded to include cosmetology and culinary arts for a more comprehensive approach. Fisheries should be developed into food processing, agriculture into welding, and light vehicle servicing. However, what is happening is stagnation⁷¹. This condition is also reinforced by the statement of the welding skills teacher that he hopes there will be additional welding equipment, but because it is realized that this welding equipment is quite expensive, it is understandable that no additional welding equipment has been purchased yet. Furthermore, HT said that fish pond facilities should be added and the water should be kept sterile, especially from trash entering the pond. This was also complained about by the fisheries students, who said that water conditions needed to be given more attention. Water conditions containing trash tend to cause various problems for fish, such as sudden death, respiratory problems, and stunted growth⁷².

The students also hoped for the renewal of equipment. Zs said that when making patterns on clothes, they sometimes experienced difficulties due to jammed or damaged equipment and a tendency to not upgrade to the latest sewing equipment, which hindered learning.⁷³ Furthermore, for fisheries students, fish safety needed to be improved because pests in the form of humans/ illegal fishermen often appeared, which disturbed learning. This often results in the loss of fish that are being used or are still in the process of development.⁷⁴ On the other hand, language students also complain about the suboptimal condition of the speakers when used in listening lessons for language students. Poor sound quality greatly interferes with the reception of messages from the speaker. It is hoped that in the future, earphones/ headsets

⁷⁰ "Wawancara Kepala Sekolah MA Al Hikmah 02."

⁷¹ "Wawancara Kepala Sekolah MA Al Hikmah 02."

⁷² Nesha Rahadatul A'isy et al., "Hubungan Sanitas Lingkungan Dengan Kejadian DBD: Tinjauan Sistematis Review Dan Menurut Pandangan Islam Relationship between Environmental Sanity and DHF Incidence: A Systematic Review and Islamic Perspectives," *Junior Medical Jurnal* 1, no. 4 (2022): 492-503.

⁷³ "Wawancara Santri Tata Busana" (n.d.).

⁷⁴ "Wawancara Santri Perikanan" (n.d.).

will be used for listening so that the sound is clear and the learning process can be maximized.⁷⁵

Miftahul Huda stated in his study that, fundamentally, media and facilities are part of non-linguistic issues in learning listening.⁷⁶ Therefore, these issues can be addressed more quickly than linguistic aspects themselves.

There are several media that can be used in learning listening in language learning, such as podcasts,⁷⁷ e-learning,⁷⁸ watching movie,⁷⁹ web development,⁸⁰ or Android applications,⁸¹ but ultimately, audio quality has a significant impact.

f. Pesantren Schedule

Ag, as a welding teacher, stated that because the students follow two curricula - the boarding school curriculum and the school curriculum - there are sometimes overlapping class schedules, which inevitably means that the boarding school agenda must take priority. This results in less than optimal welding activities, as welding tasks cannot be completed on the same day, even though welding work that is interrupted by the boarding school agenda will be less than optimal in terms of performance. 's statement is also in line with what was conveyed by the fisheries teacher, where there are often

⁷⁵ "Wawancara Santri Bahasa Inggris."

⁷⁶ Miftahul Huda, "PROBLEMATIKA KEMAMPUAN MENYIMAK MAHASISWA DALAM PEMBELAJARAN MENYIMAK BAHASA ARAB," *Arabia* 12, no. 2 (October 19, 2020): 171, <https://doi.org/10.21043/arabia.v12i2.8634>.

⁷⁷ Jainul Dedi Abidin and Sutrisno Widodo, "Pengembangan Media Audio Berbasis Podcast Materi Storytelling Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Kelas X Jurusan Rekayasa Perangkat Lunak SMK Krian 1 Sidoarjo," *Jurnal Mahasiswa*, 2018, 1-6.

⁷⁸ Randy Irawan and Herman Dwi Surjono, "Pengembangan E-Learning Berbasis Moodle Dalam Peningkatkan Pemahaman Lagu Pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris," *Jurnal Inovasi Teknologi Pendidikan* 5, no. 1 (2018): 1-11, <https://doi.org/10.21831/jitp.v5i1.10599>.

⁷⁹ Yahfenel Evi Fussalam, Renda Lestari, and Rensi Yu Anggelia, "A Study of Listening Skills Through Movie: A Review of the Current Literature," *Journal Of Language Education and Development (JLed)* 1, no. 2 (2019): 158-68, <https://doi.org/10.52060/jled.v1i2.139>.

⁸⁰ Nugroho Ponco Riyanto, "Perancangan Sistem Informasi Pembelajaran Listening Berbasis Web," *INTECOMS: Journal of Information Technology and Computer Science* 5, no. 2 (2022): 196-200, <https://doi.org/10.31539/intecom.v5i2.5096>.

⁸¹ Asmun Munandar, "Pengembangan Aplikasi Android Untuk Mendukung Pembelajaran Listening Bahasa Inggris Kelas XI SMAN 1 Boyan Tanjung," *Jurnal Penelitian Inovatif* 2, no. 3 (2023): 511-42, <https://doi.org/10.54082/jupin.111>.

unscheduled pesantren activities that conflict with fisheries skills learning, which is in fact given priority over the pesantren agenda. This condition actually often occurs in pesantren because pesantren follow the orders of the Kiyai as a whole.⁸²

Conclusion

This study concludes that Islamic boarding schools have considerable opportunities to equip their students with hard skills, but they need support in terms of curriculum, adequate resources, and industry networks, both during teaching and in the placement of graduates in the workforce.

Opportunities for further research include focusing on smaller areas, such as one aspect of hard skills, so that one skill can be studied in more detail, and research on the sustainability of the skills acquired by students in the world of work after graduating from Islamic boarding schools.

⁸² Alfia Miftakhul Jannah, Irada Haira Arni, and Robit Azam Jaisyurohman, "Kepemimpinan Dalam Pesantren," *J-CEKI: Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah* 1, no. 1 (December 30, 2021): 42–49, <https://doi.org/10.56799/jceki.v1i1.17>.

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