

Evaluation of Ambidexterity in Islamic Boarding School Curriculum Management

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Abstrak : This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of ambidextrous-based curriculum management strategies in the Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Area of Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School, which integrates traditional teaching methods with innovative elements to enhance the quality of education. Using a qualitative approach, this study involves teachers, students, and curriculum managers as subjects, with data collected through in-depth interviews, surveys, and classroom observations. Data analysis techniques include thematic analysis to identify patterns from interviews and observations, as well as statistical analysis for survey data. The research results indicate that the strategy successfully improved teaching effectiveness and the learning experience for most teachers and students, although there were challenges in the consistency of implementation. Some teachers experienced difficulties in adopting the new methods, which resulted in uneven implementation outcomes. These findings emphasize the need for periodic evaluations and additional training to address shortcomings and ensure that the curriculum strategy optimally benefits all parties involved.

Kata Kunci: *Ambidexterity, Manajemen Kurikulum, dan Pondok Pesantren*

1. Pendahuluan

The ability to manage Islamic Boarding Schools to combine traditional teaching methods with educational innovations at the same time refers to ambidexterity in Islamic Boarding School curriculum management (Ramdan et al., 2022). Ambidexterity is important in management because Islamic Boarding Schools face the challenge of maintaining traditional excellence and adapting to the demands of modern education (Nurwendi & Haryadi, 2022). So the Islamic Boarding School curriculum experiences an imbalance between the curriculum they manage and the needs that develop in the world of education (Hamdi, 2020). This is often seen in how Islamic Boarding School leaders manage the shift between old teaching methods and innovations, which can affect the quality of education and the relevance of Islamic Boarding Schools in the modern era (Rozi & Aminullah, 2021).

Zhaxylyk (2020) discusses the ambidexterity theory that Organizations operating in an increasingly turbulent and dynamic environment should adopt both exploitation and exploration strategies to remain resilient. Sumartono (2024) conveyed that innovation and tradition are often understood as opposing forces, but both can complement each other in certain contexts. On the other hand (Mutisya et al., 2020) explained that organizational ambidexterity has a positive and significant effect on the performance of large manufacturing companies in Kenya. Baharuddin et al. (2023) showed that leaders who apply ambidextrous leadership can produce significant innovation in public services while maintaining high efficiency, with important implications for improving public services. Pangarso et al. (2020) said that innovation ambidexterity partially mediates the effect of absorptive capacity on sustainable competitive advantage .

This study introduces a new approach to evaluating ambidexterity in Islamic Boarding School curriculum management. Although the concept of ambidexterity is well-known in organizational management, its application in the context of Islamic Boarding School curriculum management is limited (Hadi et al., 2023). This research

will contribute by examining how Islamic Boarding School managers can apply the principles of ambidexterity in their curriculum practices and provide guidance for effective curriculum management.

This study aims to evaluate how managers in the Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region of Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School manage their curriculum with an ambidextrous approach, identify challenges faced in the process, and explore successful strategies in curriculum management. This research also aims to provide practical recommendations for Islamic Boarding School managers to improve the effectiveness of their curriculum.

Therefore, this study shows that managers in the Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region who apply the principle of ambidexterity in curriculum management will demonstrate increased curriculum effectiveness and adaptation to modern educational needs. The main contention is that ambidextrous curriculum management allows Islamic Boarding Schools to maintain traditional values and adopt educational innovations, which can improve the quality and relevance of Islamic Boarding School education in the modern era. This research is expected to find that Islamic Boarding Schools that implement ambidexterity in their curriculum will be more competitive and relevant in the current educational context.

2. Metode

This research uses a qualitative design with a case study approach to explore the application of ambidexterity in curriculum management in the Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region of Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. This design allows researchers to delve deeply into how Islamic Boarding School managers manage the curriculum by combining modern innovations and religious traditions. Data collection techniques include in-depth interviews with Islamic Boarding School leaders, teaching staff, and Santri, direct observation of the curriculum management process, and analysis of curriculum documents such as syllabi and lesson plans. Through this method, a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, strategies, and impacts of

implementing an ambidextrous curriculum in the Islamic Boarding School context is expected.

The study population consisted of the head of the region, teaching staff, and the Tarbiyah wa Ta'lim section in the Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region. The sample was taken using purposive sampling with the target of Islamic Boarding School leaders, teaching staff, and students. The research instruments included interview guidelines, observation notes, and curriculum document analysis. Research procedures include instrument preparation, data collection through interviews and observations, data analysis with coding and thematic techniques, and preparation of research reports. This method aims to provide in-depth insights into effective curriculum management and practical recommendations for Islamic Boarding Schools to manage the curriculum ambidextrously.

3. Results and Discussion

Evaluating the Balance between Innovation and Tradition in Curriculum

Success depends on the balance between innovating and maintaining tradition. In maintaining cultural values and traditional rules while still innovating to improve efficiency and competitiveness in the modern era (Karlina et al., 2024). Meanwhile, challenges can be used as a basis for improving their advantages and evaluating weaknesses (Aprillia & Iryanti, 2024). Without evaluation, we will not know the weaknesses and strengths in the planning and implementation process of the curriculum that has been used (Hamdi, 2020). Where success depends on the balance of innovation and tradition in the curriculum by maintaining traditional cultural principles and values and innovating to increase productivity and competitiveness in the modern era.

Islamic Boarding Schools face the difficulty of combining two different educational approaches in curriculum implementation. The traditional approach, which has long been the hallmark of Islamic Boarding Schools, and the innovative approach, which is necessary to prepare students for the needs of today's times

(Damanpour & Aravind, 2012). Therefore, how do Islamic Boarding Schools design, implement, and evaluate the curriculum to achieve an effective balance between the two. The curriculum in Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region is divided into two main parts (Karlina et al., 2024). First is the traditional part (exploitation), which includes subjects such as Islamic religious studies, tahfidz (memorization of the Qur'an), Arabic language, and building partnerships with alumni, communities, and religious institutions. The purpose of this section is to provide students with in-depth knowledge of Islamic teachings and Arabic language skills, which are essential components in Islamic Boarding School education. Second, the new sections include contemporary (exploratory) subjects such as critical thinking skills, foreign language development (English and Mandarin), and information technology (Ramaditya et al., 2022). These components are intended to provide students with the practical skills they need to succeed in this increasingly complex and connected world.

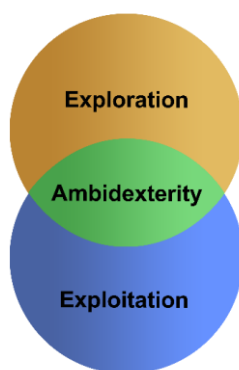


Figure 1: Ambidexterity concept

Based on the picture above, the Islamic Boarding School curriculum has used various approaches to combine these two aspects. The results show that in the exploitation aspect including 1) Islamic Religious Studies, Education in this Islamic Boarding School emphasizes a deep understanding of Islamic teachings, including the study of fiqh (Islamic law), aqidah (creed), and tasawwuf (spirituality). Students are taught to understand the basic principles of religion, apply the teachings in daily life, and strengthen their faith through intensive study. 2) Tahfidz (Qur'an Memorization), The tahfidz program aims to teach students to memorize the Qur'an. This is an

important aspect of Islamic Boarding School education, which not only strengthens students' memorization but also enhances their deeper understanding and practice of Islamic teachings. 3) Arabic, Arabic is an important component of the traditional curriculum. Students are trained to actively master this language, which is necessary to understand religious texts and communicate in an Islamic context. Mastery of Arabic supports a deeper understanding of the yellow books and classical Islamic literature. 4) Partnerships with Alumni and Communities, Islamic Boarding School strives to build close relationships with alumni, communities, and religious institutions (Liriwati et al., 2024). This aims to create a network of support and collaboration that benefits students and the Islamic Boarding School, as well as strengthening social and religious integration in the community. On the other hand, in the exploration aspect: 1) Critical Thinking Skills, This education aims to develop students' abilities in analytical thinking and creative problem-solving. Students are trained to analyze information, make rational decisions, and apply innovative solutions in various situations. 2) Foreign Language Development, The curriculum also includes the teaching of foreign languages such as English and Mandarin. Mastery of these languages is designed to assist students in communicating effectively in an international context, as well as opening up opportunities in the global marketplace and in various professional fields. 3) Information Technology, This aspect includes education on the use of information technology, including basic computer skills, software, and the Internet. Students are taught to utilize technology in a variety of contexts, from digital communication to data analysis and software development.

Table 1: Exploitation and Exploitation

EXPLOITATION		EXPLOITATION
Islamic Religious Studies		Critical Thinking Skills
Tahfidz (Qur'an memorization)		Foreign Language Development (English and Mandarin)
Arabic Language		Information Technology
Alumni and Community Partnerships		

This shows that Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region has successfully managed the balance between innovation and tradition in its curriculum. Through strategies such as content integration and continuous training for teachers, these Islamic Boarding Schools manage to maintain traditional educational values while adapting relevant modern methods. This evaluation shows that an ambidextrous approach in curriculum management not only maintains the integrity of traditional values but also improves the quality of education and relevance of Islamic Boarding Schools in the contemporary era. Ajis Ardiansyah, as Tarbiyah Wa Ta'lim stated "Our curriculum focuses on traditional education such as religion and tahfidz, while trying to integrate innovative elements such as information technology. However, we face challenges, such as variations in teacher training skills. Some teachers feel insufficiently skilled with new technologies, and many students are more comfortable with conventional methods. For example, new software for Arabic language teaching is only used by some teachers, while others still use old methods. As a result, there is an imbalance in the quality of learning between classes."

Identification and Analysis of Challenges in Implementing Ambidexterity in Curriculum Management

In identifying and analyzing the challenges faced by Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region on the application of the principle of ambidexterity in curriculum management (Zulkarnain, 2022). The a need to identify the main foundation to build

an effective and solutive approach for educators, students, and other related parties to achieve the optimal potential of the curriculums (Ningsi et al., 2024). In this context, the ability to simultaneously maintain traditional teaching methods and integrate modern educational innovations. Faizur Rofiq, the regional head, said "We face a big problem in training our teachers. Many of them don't fully understand how to use the new technologies we are implementing in the curriculum. This results in inconsistent implementation in the classroom." Key challenges identified include inequality in the application of new technologies, lack of training for teachers, and mismatches in student learning experiences.

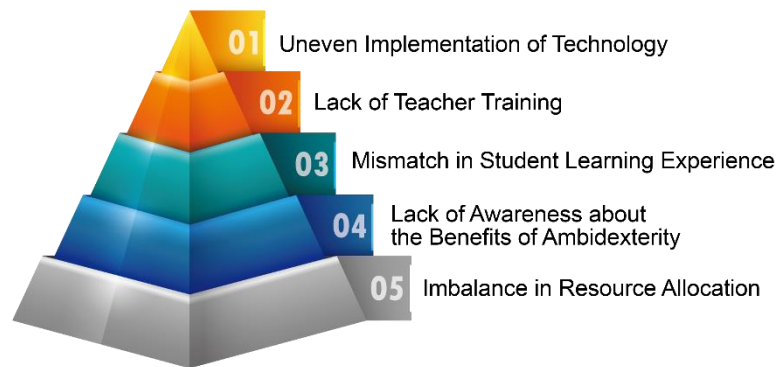


Figure 2: Challenge Identification and Analysis

The results showed that Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region experienced several obstacles in implementing ambidexterity. Among them: 1) Inequality in Technology Implementation, Inequality in technology implementation is due to variations in the level of teacher readiness and training (Yusri, 2020). Teachers who do not receive adequate training or feel less comfortable with technology tend to rely on traditional teaching methods. This impacts the effectiveness of the curriculum, where technology designed to enhance learning is not optimally utilized. According to Dr. Faizur Rofiq, Area Head, "While we plan to incorporate technology in every aspect of teaching, we face a major challenge regarding teacher readiness. This has led to the technology we prepared not being optimally utilized, which would have improved the quality of learning." 2) Lack of Teacher Training, lack of adequate training affects teachers' ability to use technology effectively (Faesal et al., 2023). To address this issue, a more

comprehensive and continuous training program is needed to ensure that all teachers can adopt new technology effectively, Ajis Ardhiyansyah, Tarbiyah wa Ta'lim section, said "To implement technology effectively, teachers must be trained, but the current training is still not thorough enough. Many teachers do not feel confident in using new technology because they do not receive sufficient training, leading to inconsistent implementation of technology". 3) Mismatches in Student Learning Experiences, Mismatches in student learning experiences highlight that the application of new technologies has not been fully successful in achieving curriculum goals (Putra, 2024). Differences in technology adoption by teachers have a direct impact on how students receive and utilize technology in their learning. Samsul Arifin, Information Technology, shared that "Differences in technology adoption by teachers have a direct impact on how students interact with technology in their learning. This suggests the need for adjustments in technology integration strategies so that all students can benefit from technology" 4) Lack of Awareness of the Benefits of Ambidexterity, Many parties have not fully understood the benefits of ambidexterity, the ability to manage innovation by maintaining traditional practices (Lutfi, 2023). This lack of awareness can lead to resistance to change and neglect of the potential benefits of incorporating new technologies and methods in the curriculum. Faizur Rofiq, Area Head, said "This lack of understanding often leads to resistance to change and neglect of the benefits that can be gained from incorporating new methods and technologies into the curriculum". 5) Imbalance in the Use of Resources, Resources available for technology implementation are often unevenly utilized across Islamic Boarding Schools (Kusuma & Nurmahmudah, 2022). Some areas or teachers may have better access to technology and training compared to others, creating an imbalance in curriculum implementation. Ajis Ardhiyansyah, Tarbiyah wa Ta'lim section, explained that "We face a problem in the unequal distribution of technology resources in different areas of the Islamic Boarding School. Some sections or teachers have better access to technology and training, while others lack the same support".

It can be concluded that the Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region faces some major challenges in implementing ambidexterity. Unevenness in the application of new technologies is caused by a lack of adequate training for teachers, which leads to inconsistent application of technology. This gap creates an uneven learning experience among students, where some of them do not get the maximum benefit from new technologies. This research confirms that without improvements in training and integration strategies, the gap between traditional and innovative teaching methods will continue to exist, hindering the achievement of effective balance in the curriculum

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Ambidexterity-Based Curriculum Management Strategies

Curriculum development and evaluation must be carried out continuously to improve the ongoing curriculum (Zulkarnain, 2022). Without evaluation, it is impossible to determine how the curriculum is doing in terms of design, implementation, and outcomes (Sianturi et al., 2022). Therefore a managerial analysis is needed that can bring up ideas and produce results that are more developed and more advanced than before (Sodikin & Gumiandari, 2022).

In this section, we evaluate the effectiveness of the ambidexterity-based curriculum management strategy implemented in the Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region. This strategy combines traditional teaching methods with innovative approaches, including the use of new technologies and pedagogical methods, to create a balance between the maintenance of traditional values and adaptation to modern educational needs (Lutfi, 2023). From the evaluation results, it was found that this strategy showed mixed results. Despite progress in some aspects, significant challenges remain in consistent implementation and teacher training. The data showed that the strategy was successful in improving teaching effectiveness in some areas, but also faced barriers to consistency of implementation and adoption by all teachers. This was expressed by Ahmadi, as an educator, "Our curriculum management strategy aims to combine traditional teaching methods with the latest innovations. However,

implementation results vary, and there is a need for further evaluation and adjustment to improve consistency of implementation."



Figure 3: Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Curriculum Management Strategies

From the evaluation of the ambidexterity-based curriculum management strategy in Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region, it appears that the implementation of this strategy yielded mixed results and highlighted several challenges in the process. This strategy, designed to combine traditional teaching methods with innovative elements such as new technologies, showed some achievements but also faced various obstacles. These include: 1) Combination of Traditional Methods, This method aims to preserve the academic heritage and values that have been an integral part of Islamic Boarding School education (Mukhlis, 2024). It serves as a stable foundation in the curriculum while providing structure for innovations to be implemented, such as lectures, discussions, and memorization. 2) Integration of New Technology, the implementation of information and communication technology is crucial as it can increase the accessibility of education as well as enhance the learning experience with additional resources, increase student engagement, and provide wider access to learning materials (Alip Nur Yanto et al., 2023). Such as educational software, online learning platforms, and multimedia. 3) Teacher Training, Teacher training is important to ensure that they have the competence and confidence to implement curriculum strategies effectively (Abrori & Muali, n.d.). Such as training includes

workshops, seminars, and training sessions designed to improve teachers' skills in using innovative methods and tools. 4) Periodic Evaluation, Periodic evaluation aims to identify successes and challenges in the implementation of curriculum strategies, The periodic evaluation process involves regular assessment of the effectiveness of curriculum strategies, including the collection of feedback from students, teachers, and other stakeholders (Murtafiah, 2023). This evaluation is conducted through surveys, classroom observations, and analysis of academic results. 5) Challenges and Adjustments, Addressing challenges and making adjustments are key to ensuring that curriculum strategies remain relevant and effective, this element includes identifying and addressing challenges that arise during strategy implementation (Sukana, 2024). Such as unevenness in implementation, difficulties in using technology, and differences in teacher readiness. Adjustments are made to address these issues and ensure the curriculum strategy functions properly.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of ambidexterity-based curriculum management strategies in Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region shows mixed results, with significant achievements but also several challenges (Sari & Pujiastuti, 2023). The integration of traditional teaching methods with innovative elements such as new technologies improved teaching effectiveness for some teachers, but there were difficulties among others in adapting new methods consistently (Ilhaq & Kurniawan, 2023). This leads to inequities in students' learning experiences, with some feeling inconsistently benefited. Periodic evaluations and additional training are needed to address these gaps and ensure more effective implementation of the strategy. Overall, while this strategy has the potential to improve the quality of education by blending traditional values and modern innovations, the challenges emphasize the need for continuous adjustment and support to achieve the desired results across the board.

5. Kesimpulan

This research reveals that ambidexterity-based curriculum management strategies in Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Region have the potential to improve the quality of

education by combining traditional and innovative teaching methods. While most teachers and students benefit from the integration of technology and modern approaches, there are significant challenges to overcome. Most teachers report improvements in teaching effectiveness but some experience difficulties in consistently adapting new methods. This gap points to the need for adjustments in the implementation of strategies to ensure equitable results across classes.

This research expands the understanding of the application of ambidexterity in curriculum management, particularly in the context of Islamic Boarding School education. The findings underscore the importance of the balance between maintaining traditional values and adopting educational innovations to achieve optimal teaching effectiveness. This study also shows that ambidexterity theory needs to be adapted to the context of faith-based educational institutions, which can enrich the literature on curriculum management and innovation in various contexts.

This study has some limitations that need to be considered. Data were collected from one Islamic Boarding School, so the findings may not be fully generalizable to other Islamic Boarding Schools with different contexts. The data collection methods used include interviews, surveys, and observations. It is possible that this study did not fully capture all the nuances of the challenges faced in implementing the curriculum strategy. In addition, the assessment of the effectiveness of these strategies relies on subjective reports from teachers and students, which may affect the objectivity of the results. These limitations underscore the need for further research with a wider sample and more varied methods to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

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