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Footprint Study of Education Modernization at the Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Elementary School, North Sumatra

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Abstrak

Modernisasi adalah suatu keniscayaan pada madrasah, pesantren, dan lembaga pendidikan Islam. Hal ini sesuai tuntunan Islam bahwa selain Allah adalah baru sesuai fitrah manusia yang menghendaki perubahan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan napak tilak proses modernisasi pendidikan di Sekolah Dasar Islam Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Sumatera Utara. Peneliti menggunakan metodologi kualitatif dengan pendekatan konstruktivis, pendekatan ini dianggap bahwa realitas sosial dibangun dan dikonstruksi oleh individu-individu yang terlibat di dalamnya. Pendekatan ini dilakukan untuk mengungkap bagaimana individu-individu memahami dan menafsirkan realitas sosial yang terjadi di sekitar objek penelitian, dengan teknik pengumpulan data yang umum digunakan dalam pendekatan konstruktivis. Hasil penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa fenomena modernisasi sekolah Islam adalah perubahan yang terjadi pada sistem pengajaran di sekolah-sekolah tersebut. Banyak sekolah Islam yang mulai mengadopsi metode pengajaran yang lebih modern, seperti menggunakan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi dalam proses belajar-mengajar, serta menyediakan fasilitas-fasilitas pendukung seperti laboratorium, perpustakaan, dan ruang kelas yang lebih nyaman. Selanjutnya, penyusunan kurikulum merupakan tahap pertama dalam proses pendidikan modern di sekolah karena kurikulum merupakan dasar yang menentukan arah dan tujuan pendidikan yang ingin dicapai. Kurikulum menjadi acuan bagi guru dalam menentukan materi yang akan diajarkan, serta membantu menyusun rencana pembelajaran yang tepat.

Kata Kunci: Modernisasi Pendidikan, Sekolah Dasar Islam.

Abstract

Modernization is a necessity in madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic educational institutions. This is in accordance with Islamic guidance that other than Allah is new according to human nature which wants change. This study aims to describe the footprints of the process of modernization of education at the Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Elementary School, North Sumatra. The researcher uses a qualitative methodology with a constructivist approach, this approach assumes that social reality is built and constructed by the individuals involved in it. This approach is taken to reveal how individuals understand and control the social reality that occurs around the object of research, with data collection techniques commonly used in the construction approach. The results of this study conclude that the phenomenon of modernization of Islamic schools is a change that occurs in the teaching system in these schools. Many Islamic schools have begun to adopt more modern teaching methods, such as using information and communication technology in the teaching-learning process, as well as providing more comfortable supporting facilities such as laboratories, libraries and classrooms. Furthermore, the preparation of the curriculum is the first stage in the process of modern education in schools because the curriculum is the basis that determines the direction and goals of education to be achieved. The curriculum becomes a reference for teachers in determining the material to be taught, as well as helping to develop appropriate lesson plans.

Keywords: Modernization of Education, Islamic Elementary School.

PRELIMINARY

Modernization of education within Islamic educational institutions is a necessity that has been practiced by previous Muslim scientists (scholars). Changes in the categorization of modernization are not just keeping up with the times, but rather have a big contribution in creating a change. These changes are intended to be balanced with the sustainability of human life which depends on the progress of education (Hasan, 2015: 296-306).

Uniquely, the educational movement towards modernization is assisted by developments in science, technology and even the cultural sector. This is also in line with the efforts of the community itself in meeting the demands of increasingly strong globalization (a world without borders). Furthermore, modernization is not a movement that comes without a path, of course this effort has a long series as a history in the field of education (Heriyudanta, 2016).

On this basis, a trace is needed to describe the series of events that make an educational institution evolve and innovate into an Islamic elementary school based on educational modernization. According to Wibowo & Wicaksono (2018), footprints are an effort to analyze history in the form of phenomena or events that occurred in the past as a step to take lessons for the present and the future. Furthermore, Woodrich (2017) added that this traceability study is also useful for efforts to find out the factors that influence an event, so that lessons can be drawn for the future.

In fact, knowledge of the factors that cause an event to occur will help individuals or groups understand strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities for educational advancement, both internal and external. Furthermore, traces are also useful for knowledge of history (Sadana, 2013), factors that cause and influence a problem (Fatmawati, 2010), development of appropriate strategies and policies for institutional development (Simanjuntak, 2021: 25), as well as help understand and search for solutions to a phenomenon in the field of education (Malik, 2019).

Modernization of education is a comprehensive or complex process in an effort to achieve a higher level of progress in the field of education. Modernization of education occurs naturally along with technological, cultural and social developments as an internal part that influences the process of educational progress. Likewise, modernization is often associated with forms of adoption and adaptation of prototypes of progress that have been proven by institutions or other nations.

The process of modernizing education is not as easy as imagined, because it requires comprehensive efforts in institutional adaptation and development. This is because organizers of educational institutions must be able to position themselves as dynamic agencies and move towards accelerating progress. The forms of modernization in the field of education can be carried out such as using information and communication technology in the teaching and learning process, as well as providing supporting facilities such as laboratories, libraries and classrooms that are more comfortable and support the learning process.

Modernization of education has a direct or indirect impact on the education sector. This can also be classified into two, namely positive impacts and negative impacts. The positive impacts include (1) increasing the welfare of the community, especially "educated citizens"; (2) improving the quality of human resources; and (3) increasing the efficiency and productivity of the community. Furthermore, in the context of the modernization of Islamic education, it presents progress in the field of education as an effort to bring benefit to society according to the times and needs (Baidlawi, 2006).

In line with the above, Noor (2019) argues that modernization is important for the advancement of Islamic education, especially the basic education level. This is caused by the need for Islamic educational institutions to adapt to the rapid development of science, technology, and the demands of globalization. Furthermore, Minarti (2022) explains that efforts to modernize Islamic education are a must for every Islamic educational institution, because it is in accordance with Islamic teachings regarding the dynamic movement and innovative power of humans.

The sustainability of Islamic education is strongly influenced by the level of modernization efforts, one of which is the presence of an integrated Islamic elementary school-based institution as practiced by SD Islam Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif North Sumatra. The various innovations presented by this institution are a form of responsiveness to the progress of the times, while still not forgetting the essence and existence of Islamic teachings which are needed for elementary age children. Of course, this modernization effort is not fully acceptable to society, because they are worried that there will be gaps in the moral and religious development of children from Western teachings that are included in Islamic educational institutions.

Likewise, the organizers of Islamic education institutions, especially Islamic elementary schools, have proven how the presence of an institution with an integrated learning system is able to produce graduates who are intelligent and have Islamic morality, thereby eliminating the issue of Western sects in the world of education. In fact, many studies relevant to this have been reviewed, including from the aspect of education modernization through learning components or fields of study (Bali & Hajriyah, 2020: 42-62), the role of technology in the modernization of education (Gani, 2018: 1-19), early history of education modernization in Indonesia (Rahman, 2015: 174-182), comparison between traditionalization and modernization of Islamic education (Wahidah, 2016: 184-207), modernization as an effort to renew education in Indonesia (Saihu, 2018: 1-33), the idea of modernizing education from Fazlur Rahman's perspective (Fazlurrahman, 2018: 73-89), modernization of education from a sociological view of Indonesian society (Primadata & Kusumawati, 2014), modernization of education in Islamic boarding schools (Baharun, *et.al.*, 2021: 1-22), modernization of education from the perspective of Nurcholish Majid (Munir, 2018: 202-222), and the development of Islamic educational institutions (Tabrani, 2013).

Observing the literature review above, it can be seen that Islamic schools must be open to Western influence in order to be able to compete in the midst of competition for the development of learning technology. Likewise, the study of the modernization of Islamic education focuses on technological studies, while the development of learning-based institutions has not been studied from the trace aspect of the process. For this reason, researchers deepen the study which is summarized in the title, "*Footprint Study of Education Modernization at the Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Elementary School, North Sumatra*".

METHOD

This research was conducted at Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Elementary School, North Sumatra. The researcher uses a qualitative methodology with a constructivist approach, this approach assumes that social reality is built and constructed by the individuals involved in it. This approach is taken to reveal how individuals understand and interpret the social reality that occurs around the research object, with data collection techniques commonly used in the constructivist approach (Astuti, 2015; Assingkiy, 2021). Obtaining research data using the method of observation, interviews and document study. While data analysis using data reduction techniques, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Hamid, *et.al.*, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Madrasah Curriculum Development

Curriculum development is the initial stage in the process of modern education in schools because the curriculum is the foundation that determines the direction and goals of education to be achieved. The curriculum becomes a reference for teachers in determining the material to be taught, as well as helping to develop appropriate lesson plans. The curriculum is also a reference for students in understanding the material to be studied, so they can prepare themselves to follow the learning process that will be carried out. In addition, the curriculum is also the basis for evaluating learning outcomes that have been carried out, so that it can determine the level of students' understanding of the material that has been taught (Karo, 2017). Thus, the preparation of the curriculum is a very important stage in the process of modern education in schools.

At the Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Elementary School in North Sumatra, it has its own elements, but after a deeper investigation it has good and ideal uniqueness and specifications, in contrast to several pesantren-based schools or madrasahs which are heading towards modernization. The elements that must be present in the preparation of a modern school curriculum are: first, curriculum development, which includes 5 elements, namely (1) educational goals and objectives, (2) learning materials, (3) learning methods, (4) evaluation, and (5) final assessment).

According to Bashori (2017), curriculum development is an absolute requirement internally that educational institution administrators must reorient towards educational modernization. This is because quality learning that is relevant to preparing for future HR needs helps institutions innovate in producing

competent madrasah graduates. Furthermore, secondly, the use of varied and interesting (fun) learning media. As for this second requirement, the Islamic elementary school Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif North Sumatra did 6 (six) things, namely (1) preparation of a curriculum based on madrasa modernization, (2) use of attractive digital-based media, (3) improvement of teacher quality and educational staff, (4) providing adequate learning facilities, (5) implementing innovative learning methods, and (6) organizing various extracurricular activities as a step in honing students' soft skills.

With regard to extracurricular activities, it is realized that currently students must have balanced abilities in intra-curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular (Muiz, *et.al.*, 2021). Individual need for skills development in the modern era is a necessity. This is because individuals are not only required to be capable in the academic field and intellectual insight, they must be equipped with the attributes of communication skills, critical thinking, problem solving skills, and leadership skills. Thus, individuals can establish networks of cooperation and joint collaboration between parties.

Improving the Quality of Teachers and Education Personnel

Teachers and education personnel are important figures for the progress of an educational institution (Murtadlo, 2018). Improving the quality of teachers and education personnel can be carried out in various ways, while efforts to improve the Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif North Sumatra Islamic elementary school consist of 4 (four), namely providing opportunities for teachers to attend training and seminars, providing learning facilities that adequate, providing guidance and consulting opportunities to teachers, as well as apprenticeship opportunities for teachers and education staff.

The first activity in the form of providing opportunities for teachers to attend training and seminars is an important matter in efforts to improve the quality of teachers and education staff. This is in accordance with opinion by Satria (2019), that educators and educational staff are learning figures who are responsible for facilitating the process of student development. On this basis, teachers and education staff have the right to have the opportunity to upgrade their abilities or competencies. In fact, Solichin (2014) adds that teachers and education staff are not only given the opportunity to attend seminars and training, they also have the right to be given permission to study or study further from the master's program to even the doctoral program (level III).

The second activity is the provision of adequate learning facilities. In this context, teachers and education staff are not only given conventional teaching facilities, they are also given digital facilities to facilitate the learning process and to be able to drive performance improvement. Through adequate facilities, teachers and education staff can work optimally in an efficient time, so that various tasks can be carried out quickly and precisely. Thus, leaders can target more interesting subjects as school orientation from time to time.

The third activity is the provision of guidance and consultation opportunities for teachers and education personnel. Guidance and consultation is an exploratory space for teachers and education staff to obtain input on performance, as well as reorient the next goal. Teachers and education staff often question career development. Of course, providing guidance and consultation will make it easier for teachers and education staff to find solutions for career development.

The fourth activity is an internship opportunity for teachers and education personnel. This fourth point is very useful for teachers and education staff in efforts to improve self-quality. Because, the theory obtained will be less useful if it is not accompanied by direct practice. Through internship opportunities, teachers will be able to put their pedagogical skills into practice, as well as gain experience in how to teach students. Meanwhile, educational staff will gain various experiences to assist with administration and academic needs of students.

Furthermore, teachers and education staff should also be given the opportunity to participate in various scientific activities. The main concept is scientific-based learning with the help of sophisticated media (technology). Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Elementary School, North Sumatra presents learning with the help

of interesting and sophisticated media, including the use of multimedia such as videos, animated films, and power point-based presentations of student learning outcomes. Furthermore, textbooks which have been textual, are added with interesting pictures, illustrations or photos, so that students enjoy books in every learning process. In addition, learning is also updated on various social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and so on.

Based on the description above, according to Setiawan (2013), the efforts made by the Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic elementary school reflect the seriousness of the madrasa management in presenting fun and innovative learning for students. In line with this, Dahlan (2018) suggests that fun learning is the basic base for students to be able to learn cooperatively, be able to solve various learning problems, try to find new solutions, take lessons from each lesson, and be productive. Thus, these innovation efforts describe a concrete form of modernization of education in these schools.

Implementation of ICT-Based and Extracurricular Activities as an Effort to Modernize Education

Extracurricular activities are not just an addition needed by students, because through these various activities students will be skilled and have soft skills that are in line with the times and the needs of the world of work. Furthermore, Masrur (2014) explains that individual needs for the development of soft skills for the modern era are very important. Because, through soft skills, individuals can collaborate and empower together for the progress and modernization of education.

The extracurricular activities carried out by the Islamic elementary school Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif North Sumatra include; (1) Organizing sports activities such as running, basketball or football. These sports activities can help students develop their physical and mental abilities; (2) Organization of artistic activities such as music, dance or theatre. This art activity can help students develop their creativity and imagination; (3) Organizing scientific activities such as science competitions or robotics competitions. These scientific activities can help students develop their logical and analytical skills; (4) Organizing foreign language activities such as English, Arabic, or Japanese. This foreign language activity can help students improve their language skills; and (5) Organizing social activities such as humanitarian activities or recitation activities. These social activities can help students develop their social awareness and responsibility.

In line with the above, Pumama (2010) explains that modern schools must have spacious, clean, comfortable facilities and adequate learning equipment. Then, learning must also be carried out effectively using innovative methods, in the form of cooperative learning, problem-solving-based, project-based, inquiry-based, and experience-based. Furthermore, the implementation of extracurricular activities as well as the provision of guidance and consultation for students. Furthermore, Ismaniati (2010) added that learning in modern schools is based on information and communication technology (ICT).

Based on the description above, it can be understood that the implementation of ICT-based extracurricular activities reflects the characteristics of the Islamic elementary school Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif North Sumatra as one of the educational institutions that implements the modernization of Islamic education. This is intended as an effort to meet the needs of the community, and can also be input for various schools towards the modernization movement of Islamic education. This manifestation can be seen from various extracurricular activities, innovative learning, and information communication technology (ICT) based.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded as follows that the factors influencing the modernization of Madrasah Al-Azhar Ash-Syarif North Sumatra are the development of information and communication technology, the community's need for better education, and government support. This research is useful for schools because it can provide input on how to improve the modernization of Islamic boarding schools in North Sumatra. Based on the research results, suggestions that can be given to schools are to increase the use of information and communication technology in the learning process, provide adequate facilities, use innovative learning methods, and organize a variety of extracurricular activities.

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