Development of Islamic boarding school curriculum through equalization policies

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Abstract
This study aims to find out the existence of the mu’adalah curriculum in the global era as well as to know the challenges of implementing the mu’adalah curriculum after the issuance of the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation (PMA) number 18 of 2014. Global changes, technological and scientific developments, and the development of art and culture are the basis for changes in the education system, namely the curriculum. This is done so that educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools, can adapt and be able to compete with existing developments. This research method uses a qualitative approach with the type of library research. The results of this study state that the existence of Islamic boarding schools has not regressed at all to date. This is because Islamic boarding schools received recognition from the government with the mu’adalah policy which was strengthened by the birth of the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation (PMA) Number 18 of 2014 which was able to make Islamic boarding schools able to compete with any educational institution. But of course, challenges related to it cannot be avoided. One of them, some people question the quality of mu’adalah Islamic boarding school graduates who do not take the national exam.

Keywords: Islamic studies, Curriculum, Pesantren curriculum, Mu’adalah
INTRODUCTION

The theory that Islamic boarding schools have always served as a "platform" to spread Islam throughout Indonesian history has been proven by the fact that they have always had Islamic meaning and Indonesian authenticity. Pedagogically, Islamic boarding schools are Islamic educational institutions that aim to instill understanding, awareness, and implementation of Islamic teachings by emphasizing the importance of Islamic morals as a guideline for life in people's daily lives (Zaini, 2021; (Amaly et al., 2020). Taking into account their role so far, Islamic boarding schools were established to support religious values and jihad to incorporate the knowledge learned into the process of progress and development of society. The aim is for people's lives to have a balance between worldly and *akhirat* aspects. In Indonesia, there are two models of Islamic boarding schools: *salafiyyah* (traditional) and *asyiah* (modern) (Warits, 2022; Farida, 2017).

The government issued Government Regulation No. 73 of 1991 concerning Out-of-School Education (PLS) in the middle of the New Order. This policy considers that Islamic boarding schools are not formal educational institutions that are equivalent to other formal educational institutions in Indonesia. The government believes that Islamic boarding schools do not meet government standards because they do not have a quality assurance and management system that the government cannot (Setiawan & Ustman, 2023) Islamic boarding schools are separated from the national education system because of this policy. As a result, there is no coaching, effort, attention, funding, and system support needed to accelerate Islamic boarding schools into educational institutions that have good systems, standards, management, and curriculum and can keep up with the times (Suryana et al., 2020).

With the *mu’adalah*, Islamic boarding schools began to get recognition from the government thanks to the struggle of Muslim scholars and figures, especially those in the ranks of the bureaucracy. On December 9, 1998, the Director General of Islamic Religious Institutions issued Decree Number: E.IV/PP.032/KEP/80/98, which stated regarding the recognition of equality for graduates of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo. On June 29, 2000, the Minister of National Education recognized equality by issuing decree number 106/0/2000 (Ghozali, Nofiratullah, & Zuyinatunnajah, 2022).

Two years later, the Director General of Islamic Religious Institutions issued a circular numbered Dj.II/PPO1.1/ AZ/ 9/2002 dated November 26, 2002, concerning Guidelines for
the Implementation of Granting Equality Status for Islamic Boarding School Education with Madrasah Aliyah. Finally, Islamic boarding schools were included in the national education subsystem after Law number 20 of 2003 was passed and strengthened by Government Regulation number 32 of 2013 concerning Amendments to Government Regulation number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards and Government Regulation number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious and Religious Education (Hidayat & Wahib, 2014). Therefore, education in Islamic boarding schools has clear recognition and receives the same facilities as other educational institutions, as long as they comply with established government regulations.

Etymologically, the word *mu'adalah* comes from the Arabic "adala", "yu'adilu" "mu'adalatan" which respectively mean equality or equality (Indarwati, et al., 2023). As for terminology, the definition of *mu'adalah* is a process of equalization between educational institutions, both inside and outside the Islamic boarding school, using standards and quality that have been determined fairly and openly. The results of this process can be used to improve services and the provision of education in Islamic boarding schools (Hamzah, 2018). By considering the concept of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), you are part of improving the pesantren to remain original even though it is modernized and innovative(Bashori, 2017).

The *mu'adalah* curriculum of Islamic boarding school is one example of progress in the Indonesian education system that has been recognized by the government and society (Firdaus et al., 2024). Islamic boarding schools must follow government policies by including certain subjects in their curriculum. Islamic boarding school graduate diplomas are equivalent to MTs and MA, so graduates do not need to worry about continuing to public and private universities.

Based on the awareness that developments and changes that occur are inseparable from global changes, technological and scientific developments, and the development of art and culture, therefore curriculum changes are made (Nurhasanah et al., 2021). To become a society capable of competing and adapting to these changes, the national education system must be updated, including curriculum refinement (Nursyamsiyah & Huda, 2023). Based on this, interesting things were found that will be studied more deeply through literary studies, namely about the existence of the *Mu'adalah* Curriculum in the global era while knowing the challenges related to it.
METHOD
This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of library research to obtain relevant information and data related to the existence of mu’adalah curriculum in the global era and its challenges. In this literature method, some stages can be used to answer this research question as follows: First, literature identification begins with identifying relevant literature sources in textbooks, newspapers, magazines, scientific journals, online articles, theses, theses, and other research reports related to the mu’adalah curriculum and pesantren curriculum. Second, literature selection is carried out using certain criteria, such as relevance to the research topic, year of publication, quality, and novelty. Third, the collection of data obtained from the literature that has been carefully sorted in the form of quotations, summaries, and other relevant data related to the mu’adalah curriculum and the challenges in its application. Fourth, the literature analysis is carried out using a systematic and structured approach, namely content analysis and text analysis by paying attention to arguments, approaches, and findings relevant to the research topic of the mu’adalah curriculum. Fifth, the synthesis of literature is carried out through the process of summarizing all findings from relevant literature related to the existence of the mu’adalah curriculum, comparing research results, and identifying conclusions from the literature. Sixth, Report writing is carried out with preliminary coverage, theoretical studies, research methodology, findings, and conclusions. The research report must adjust the format and writing rules applicable to publication in academic journals. Seventh, Conclusions are made based on literature analysis and data synthesis and describe their relevance to research topics related to the existence of the mu’adalah curriculum.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Mu’adalah Curriculum
The term "curriculum" comes from the Greek language, where it was first used for sports, namely "currere", which means running distance (Hikmah, 2020). According to Hilda Taba, curriculum means something designed for a child’s lessons. John Kerr uses a broader definition to refer to all learning designed and supervised by educational institutions, whether conducted in groups or individually within or outside educational institutions (Qosim, 2019). The different definitions of curriculum above only show how important certain elements are according to the philosophy they profess. The curriculum is the basis of education designed and supervised by a school or educational institution.
A clear education system and well-planned curriculum are the keys to the progress of Islamic boarding schools from salaf Islamic boarding schools (bandongan and sorogan) to modern Islamic boarding schools that are growing rapidly to this day (Suparji et al., 2021). According to research, Islamic boarding schools have exclusive authority to create and develop curriculum. According to Lukens-Bull's research in Abdullah Aly's book, the pesantren curriculum typically consists of four categories: religious education, experiential and moral education, schooling and general education, and skills and courses (Arifai, 2018).

The curriculum of Islamic boarding schools has changed. Previously it included only the polar studies of al-qadimah (classical books), but now it includes the polar studies of al-ashriyah (modern books). As a result, Islamic boarding schools can adopt and use literature that is appropriate to modern developments, but traditions must be maintained (Nurkholis & Santosa, 2022).

In this regard, Islamic boarding schools have an unwritten curriculum in addition to the formal and non-formal curriculum adopted. This curriculum aims to instill Islamic values, which are very important in shaping the character of students. In Islamic boarding schools, all activities are based on these values which consist of: (a) sincerity, (b) modesty, (c) independence, (d) brotherhood, and (e) freedom to strive for a disciplined life (Husnan, 2021).

With the advent of modernization and globalization in various fields, Islamic boarding school education is affected. According to Marwan Saridjo, some Islamic boarding schools teach general and religious education (Rahmawati & Drajat, 2022). Therefore, to facilitate its construction, the Ministry of Religious Affairs divides madrassas into two types. First is a madrasah that has religion as the main subject and includes general subjects in its curriculum. The second, called Madrasah Diniyah, has all religious subjects (Aimah, 2020). The learning system in some madrasah diniyah still applies the old pattern commonly known as Madrasah Salafiyah. The madrasah diniyah that makes updates to its learning system is still called Madrasah Diniyah.

After these changes occurred, two groups contradicted each other about the necessity of madrasah diniyah. Some people argue that the madrasah should be maintained as an institution of tafaqquh fi al-din, while others argue that graduates of madrasah diniyah should be recognized for equality (mu’adalah) (Bustari & Bashori, 2019).
In its role of making people's lives balanced (worldly and *ukhwawi*), Islamic boarding schools also contribute to the Nine-Year Basic Education Compulsory Education Program (*Wajar Dikdas*) regulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This is done because of Indonesia's vast geographical conditions and regions as well as the diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds of education. In addition to the formal education units of MI and MTs, the nine-year compulsory basic education program is also carried out through the *Salafiyah* Islamic Boarding School and Equality Education (Package A and B) (Setyawan, 2015).

Mu’adalah the right of Islamic educational institutions that can be submitted by the terms and conditions applicable to the renewal of Islamic educational institutions. Domestic Mu’adalah can be submitted through the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, while overseas Mu’adalah can be submitted through cooperation in the Mu’adalah Islamic boarding schools communication forum (FKPM) with countries such as Egypt, Saudi, Morocco, Yemen, and others. The curriculum of Islamic boarding schools is prepared by the religious department, with the contribution of general material determined by the religious department. The curriculum abroad is prepared by the cooperation agreement (MOU) of Islamic boarding schools with universities abroad (Surip, 2022).

Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs (PMA) Number 18 of 2014 stipulates the legal basis for Mu’adalah Education in Islamic Boarding Schools in 2014. Article 1 of PMA states that "Mu’adalah education unit in Islamic boarding schools, hereinafter referred to as mu’adalah education unit, is an Islamic religious education unit organized by and within the Islamic boarding schools by developing a curriculum according to the peculiarities of the Islamic boarding schools based on the yellow book or *dirasah islamiyah* with a *mu'allimin* education pattern in a tiered and structured manner that can be equivalent to the primary and secondary education levels located in scope of the Ministry of Religious Affairs” (Supriyadi & Sholeha, 2023). Through this Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation, the position of mu’adalah education is getting stronger and a new face that previously did not have a name now has the status of the Mu’adalah Education Unit which is abbreviated as SPM.

The birth of the regulation has a significant impact on Islamic boarding schools because of the recognition that Islamic boarding schools have diplomas, which allow students (santri) to no longer take equality or equalization exams, as stated in article 26 paragraph 6 of
The National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003: "The results of non-formal education can be valued equivalent to the results of formal education programs after going through an equalization assessment process by an institution appointed by the government or government regions concerning national standards of education" (Setiawan & Rofi, 2020).

There are two main considerations in granting mu'adalah status to Islamic boarding schools as written in the consideration of 'weighing' PMA No. 18 of 2014 regarding the Mu'adalah Education Unit at Islamic Boarding Schools in points a and b. First, being run by Islamic boarding schools with a boarding schools education system has brought significant positive impacts on the development of the country. This approach has been recognized by educational institutions abroad, which provide recognition to Islamic boarding schools' education standards through an equalization process. This enables graduates from such Islamic religious educational institutions to pursue studies at higher levels smoothly. Second, there is a need for stronger regulations as a legal umbrella to recognize that Islamic boarding schools that adhere to the mu'adalah system are equivalent to formal schools (Hamzah, 2018).

To achieve mu'adalah or reconciliation status, Islamic boarding schools must pass through several steps regulated by government law. This indicates that mu'adalah status can only be granted to eligible Islamic boarding schools. Some of the main criteria for you include: First, Islamic boarding schools must have the status of a foundation or institution that has been registered with the relevant agency. Second, registered as an educational institution at the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) and does not use the curriculum of the Ministry of Religion or the Ministry of National Education (Kemendiknas). Third, there are components of education implementation, including education staff, students or students, curriculum, textbooks, and learning rooms, having a structured and measurable level of education and infrastructure (Setiawan & Rofi, 2020).

There are two types of mu'adalah Islamic boarding school education units, namely Mu'adalah Salafiyyah education units and Mu'adalah Mu'allimin (modern Islamic boarding school) education units (Warits, 2022). These two types of mu'adalah Islamic boarding schools (salafiyyah and mu'allimin) are understood historically as examples of the role of Islamic boarding school models that have developed in Indonesia over the years. Both Islamic boarding schools certainly apply different curricula which can be seen in the following picture:
Figure 1. Pesantren Curriculum Framework

According to Article 10 PMA No. 18 of 2014, the curriculum of the *mu’adalah* education unit consists of an Islamic religious curriculum and a general education curriculum. The Islamic religious curriculum is developed based on the peculiarities of each organizer and is based on the yellow book or *dirasah islamiyah*, while the general curriculum is designed with the *mu’allimin* education pattern (Setiawan & Rofi, 2020).

In Salafi Islamic boarding schools, the yellow book-based curriculum is taught in the form of *sorogan*, *wetonan*, and *bandongan*. However, the curriculum in the unit *mu’adalah muallimin* is largely rooted in the Islamic boarding school tradition to build individuals who can carry out the functions of the caliphate in this world and at the same time as servants of Allah who must devote themselves fully to Allah while carrying out these functions. In the same way, the curriculum approach used to organize competencies between subjects is an important, comprehensive, and independent approach (Surip, 2022).

The existence of certain criteria and requirements in the *mu’adalah* (equalization) curriculum applies to salaf or modern huts (Setyawan, 2015). For Islamic boarding school that get equality (*Mu’adalah*) either salaf or modern must add 4 subjects, namely: (1) civic education (*al-tarbiyah al-wathaniyah*); (2) Indonesian (*al-lughah al-indunisiyah*); (3) mathematics (*al-ri.yadhiyat*); (4) Natural sciences (*al-ulum al-thabi’iyah*). This is by the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs number (PMA) 13 and 18 of 2014 concerning Islamic Religious Education and *Mu’adalah* Education at Islamic Boarding Schools (Ghofarrozin & Janah, 2021). With a mission to support the development of basic competencies in the ability of students to reason, instill a sense of nationality to improve the quality of internal education of the Islamic Boarding Schools, and be able to stand at the forefront to produce good and productive cadres of scholars, leaders, and servants of God.
As stipulated in PMA No. 14 of 2014, Article 5, Mu’adalah Islamic boarding school is given the freedom to name its educational unit. Through this article, it is explained that "The naming of mu’adalah educational unit can use the following names: Madrasah Salafiyah, Madrasah Mu’allimin, Kulliyat al-Muallimin al-Islamiyah (KMI), Tarbiyat al-Mu'allimin al-Islamiyah (TMI), Madrasah al-Mu'allimin al-Islamiyah (MMI), Madrasah al-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyah (MTI) or other names proposed by the proposing institution and determined by the Minister" (Hana, 2023). The recognition of your status above also aims to maintain the diversity of Mu’adalah Islamic boarding school as a unique, original, and distinctive entity rather than imposing the same identity or label.

At the Islamic boarding school education level, an Islamic boarding school consists of a basic education unit for 6 years, an MTs education unit for 3 years, and an MA education unit for 3 years. For the MA level, your education unit can be held by combining MTs and MA education units for 6 years continuously. Each level of education has a different formal education unit. For example, MI/SD/Package A, MTs/SMP/Package B, or MA/SMA/Package C.

The challenge of implementing the Mu’adalah Curriculum after the issuance of the Minister of Religious Affairs (PMA) Regulation number 18 of 2014

The emergence of PMA is not to "muzzle" and "force" Islamic boarding schools to change the entire system that has been firmly held for many years, but as a legal umbrella for these Islamic boarding schools to continue to grow and develop with the distinctiveness, uniqueness and privileges of the system that has been running so far. With the existence of PMA Number 18, the position of Islamic boarding schools as a sub-system of national education will be stronger and also increase the level of trust and confidence of the community as users of educational services developed in Islamic boarding schools, but with this policy comes challenges that must be faced by Islamic boarding school.

First, the mu’adalah curriculum does not require students to take national exams, so the quality is questionable (Darlis, 2018). Not taking the national exam means that Mu’adalah Islamic boarding school graduates are not formally selected, which means they do not undergo the national competence exam. This has created distrust among some people, especially ordinary people.
Second, Mu’adalah Islamic boarding school graduates cannot show their diplomas and national exam results, which prevents them from being accepted at several universities (Sutomo, 2019). Students applying must be able to present their national examination transcripts and diplomas, as stated in certain college entrance rules.

Third, the management of mu’adalah education units in Islamic boarding schools is very dependent on the leadership of kyai (Hakim & Herlina, 2018). In the future, Islamic boarding schools should give the education implementers under them more space to organize and empower existing resources so that the education and teaching process can take place more effectively. Therefore, when Islamic boarding schools depend on the authority of the kyai, it does not hamper the educational process itself. To form leadership in mu’adalah Islamic boarding school effectively, collegial leadership patterns must be considered.

Fourth, mu’adalah Islamic boarding school must carry out a process of institutional strengthening and management (Hamzah, 2018). Independence (autonomous), accountability, and credibility must be the basis for the institutional strengthening of mu’adalah Islamic boarding school. Given the current global challenges and the national education system, Islamic boarding schools must be strengthened and empower their institutions. For this reason, mu’adalah Islamic boarding school needs to be managed with contemporary management so that the education it organizes can be carried out more effectively and efficiently. Mu’adalah Islamic boarding school should start studying contemporary management concepts such as total quality management (TQM), which has been adopted in several other educational institutions.

Fifth, strengthening and improving the quality of human resources in Mu’adalah Islamic boarding schools. The results of research by the Research and Development Center for Religious and Religious Education of the Research and Development and Training Agency in 2017 show that teachers in mu’adalah fulfilled according to competence even though their academic qualifications vary, ranging from graduates of Islamic boarding schools, SMA / MA to universities (Hamzah, 2018). Especially in general subject educators, there is still a lack of competence and qualifications. Mu’adalah Islamic boarding school must prioritize this fact to be used as material in its development. In the future, the availability of adequate and qualified human resources is very important to improve the quality and competitiveness of Islamic boarding schools. To promote and improve the quality of human resources in Mu’adalah Islamic boarding schools, systematic and continuous efforts are needed.
The explanation above will cause concern for the community because mu'adalah is interpreted by the government’s recognition of the existence of Islamic educational institutions called Islamic boarding schools, with all its advantages and disadvantages, even though this recognition has long been enforced. The government has also enacted various laws to support the process. However, if not alert, the law can damage the identity of Islamic boarding schools especially (indigenous) ones. The principle of autonomy and independence of Islamic boarding schools is questioned in this regard, especially when viewed as a community-based education institution.

In addition, the word "mu'adalah" refers to the idea that equalization should not be uniform. Because independence is the core of Islamic boarding schools, which produces diversity in it (Setiawan & Rofi, 2020). The way policymakers carry out uniformity must be questioned if the National University (PTN) refuses to accept graduates from Mu'adalah Islamic boarding school. In the end, further socialization of Mu'adalah Islamic boarding schools at the national level is also needed. This is necessary so that the idea of Mu'adalah Islamic boarding school as a recognition of education throughout the country, especially by PTN Nasional can be understood comprehensively.

CONCLUSION
The mu'adalah Education Curriculum allows Islamic boarding schools to create their unique curriculum, and the provision of such curriculum is a tribute to Islamic boarding schools, which are the oldest place of education in Indonesia. On the contrary, the inclusion of the Mu'adalah education program is intended to encourage Islamic boarding schools to improve the quality of human resources, so that the implementation of the curriculum in the Mu'adalah Islamic boarding school is recognized de facto and de jure. The challenges related to the formation of the mu'adalah curriculum are expected to be taken into consideration in developing and maintaining the existence of the mu'adalah curriculum and Islamic boarding schools. So that if these challenges can be answered or overcome gradually, it will be able to make public trust in Islamic boarding school superior.

The purpose of research or scientific articles is to serve as a source of information, develop discussion material and in-depth understanding for readers, especially for policy makers in Islamic boarding schools that implement the mu'adalah system and researchers who
want to conduct research related to the Islamic boarding school curriculum or *mu'adalah* curriculum. Of course, there is awareness related to the shortcomings in this article that still cannot be reviewed perfectly and thoroughly related to the research topic, but this article or research at least able to become a picture or written evidence based on a critical study related to the phenomenon of the *mu'adalah* curriculum in the global era. It is hoped that future studies will be able to correct the shortcomings in this research so that the topic of your curriculum continues to grow.

**REFERENCES**


