

Integrated Curriculum in Islamic School: Integration of Knowledge and Parental Involvement

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Abstract

Integrative education is one of the current trends in education models, especially integration in the curriculum aspect with a broad understanding, not only limited to the curriculum as a list of subjects but also learning experiences for students. This study aimed to analyze the implementation of integrated education in two aspects: first, the integration of knowledge, and second, the integrative role between school (teachers) and home (parents). This research was conducted using a qualitative approach at Al-Azhar Islamic School Solo Baru. Data collection techniques were conducted through interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis techniques used interactive analysis with steps: 1) data condensation, 2) data display, and 3) drawing and verifying conclusion. The results of the study showed: 1) Al-Azhar Islamic School harmonizes empirical sciences with religious sciences in the education process; 2) The process of integrating educators at home (parents) and at school (teachers) is an essential aspect of implementing an integrative curriculum. Well-educated parents can contribute to the children's education process at school.

Keywords: Al-Azhar Islamic School, Integrated Education, Knowledge Integration, Parental Involvement.

Abstrak

Pendidikan integratif menjadi salah satu tren model pendidikan saat ini, khususnya integrasi pada aspek kurikulum dengan pemahaman yang luas, tidak hanya sebatas kurikulum sebagai daftar mata pelajaran namun juga pengalaman belajar bagi siswa. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk menganalisis implementasi pendidikan yang terintegrasi pada dua aspek, yaitu: 1) integrasi ilmu pengetahuan; 2) integrasi peran sekolah (guru) dan rumah (orang tua). Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan pendekatan kualitatif di Sekolah Islam Al-Azhar Solo Baru. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Teknik analisis data menggunakan analisis interaktif dengan langkah: 1) kondensasi data; 2) penyajian data; dan 3) penyimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan: 1) Sekolah Islam Al-Azhar mengharmonisasikan antara ilmu empiris dengan ilmu-ilmu keagamaan dalam proses pendidikan; 2) proses integrasi pendidik di rumah (orang tua) dan di sekolah (guru) menjadi salah satu bagian penting dalam pelaksanaan kurikulum integratif. Orang tua yang telah teredukasi dengan baik mampu memberikan kontribusi dalam proses pendidikan anak di sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Integrasi Ilmu Pengetahuan, Keterlibatan Orang Tua, Pendidikan Integratif, Sekolah Islam Al-Azhar.



Introduction

Indonesian Islamic education scholars have attempted to integrate the project into the curriculum of various educational institutions: pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools.¹ In addition to the curriculum, the integrative role of parents and teachers in children's education is also significant to support the success of the education process.² Islamic schools are a new entity in Indonesian Islamic educational institutions that was present at the end of the 20th century.

It cannot be separated from the anxiety of the Indonesian Muslim community about the lagging of Muslims in the world of education.³ If madrasahs try to divide subjects into 70% general and 30% religious, then Islamic schools try to integrate general materials with religion with various versions of its integration.⁴ Several variants of Islamic schools have emerged in recent decades, including Al-Azhar Islamic School.

Al-Azhar Islamic School is the oldest Islamic school in Indonesia, and it began to exist in the 1960s. The Islamic school is trying to make a breakthrough by providing quality Islamic education for the community, especially urban Muslims.⁵ The presence

¹ Akhsanul Fuadi and Suyatno Suyatno, 'Integration of Nationalistic and Religious Values in Islamic Education: Study in Integrated Islamic School', *Randwick International of Social Science Journal* 1, no. 3 (23 October 2020): 555–70, <https://doi.org/10.47175/rissj.v1i3.108>; Tulus Musthofa, Muhammad Sirojudin Nur, and Amin Maghfuri, 'The Integration of the Educational System in Indonesia Between the Islamic and National Identities', *Proceeding International Conference on Religion, Science and Education* 1 (22 February 2022): 377–83; Solehah Yaacob and Rahimah Embong, 'The Concept of an Integrated Islamic Curriculum and Its Implications for Contemporary Islamic Schools' (International Conference in Islamic Republic of Iran, Tehran, Iran, 2008), <http://irep.iium.edu.my/2470/>; M. Fajar Sidik et al., 'Conceptualization of the Integrated Islamic Religious Education Curriculum: A Literature Study at Imam Hatip Schools Turkey and MAN Insan Cendekia Indonesia', *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 21, no. 1 (30 June 2024): 111–30, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.7617>; Tasman Hamami and Zalik Nuryana, 'A Holistic-Integrative Approach of the Muhammadiyah Education System in Indonesia', *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (7 December 2022): 10, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7607>.

² Voltisa Thartori, 'Parental Involvement in Education Among Albanian Parents', *IJUM Journal of Educational Studies* 6, no. 1 (2018): 38–55, <https://doi.org/10.31436/ijes.v6i1.213>; D. E. Ginanto et al., "'The School Does Not Belong to Me.'" Involving Parents in an Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia', in *Religion, Education, Science and Technology towards a More Inclusive and Sustainable Future* (Routledge, 2024); A.Z. Ubale et al., 'The Effects of the Epstein's Types of Parental Involvement in Learning Islamic Education', *The Social Sciences* 11, no. 2 (1 January 2016): 147–55, <https://doi.org/10.3923/sscience.2016.147.155>; Raden Rachmy Diana et al., 'Parental Engagement on Children Character Education: The Influences of Positive Parenting and Agreeableness Mediated by Religiosity', *Jurnal Cakrawala Pendidikan* 40, no. 2 (17 June 2021): 428–44, <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v40i2.39477>.

³ Yanwar Pribadi, 'Sekolah Islam (Islamic Schools) as Symbols of Indonesia's Urban Muslim Identity', *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia* 10, no. 2 (November 2022): 203–18, <https://doi.org/10.1017/trn.2021.15>; Faisal Mubarak, 'Perkembangan Kebijakan Pendidikan Islam Indonesia', *Jurnal Ta'lim Muta'allim* 4, no. 8 (20 August 2015): 8, <https://doi.org/10.18592/tm.v4i8.513>.

⁴ Charlene Tan, *Islamic Education and Indoctrination: The Case in Indonesia* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

⁵ Jamhari Jamhari, 'New Trend of Islamic Education in Indonesia', *Studia Islamika* 16, no. 2 (2009), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v16i2.482>.

of Islamic schools hopes to make students proficient in social and natural sciences, but at the same time, they also have good spiritual depth. Thus, religion can be values that fortify itself from bad things.

Several previous researchers have carried out research related to Islamic Schools. Mustakim's research on the transformation of Islamic education shows that the presence of schools in the pesantren environment strengthens the existence of pesantren from various aspects, especially in integrating modern science and management without eliminating the pesantren institution. The results of Mustakim's research refute Karel Steenbrink's thesis that traditional pesantren must be transformed into madrasas and schools.⁶ It is confirmed in Sumanti's research, which explains that the existence of Islamic educational institutions should be altered in various aspects, be it in terms of science, education, teaching, and management. The transformation is carried out by adhering to positive Indonesian cultural roots while adapting to modernity.⁷

Sidik's research explains that integrating religious and natural science is needed to eliminate today's dichotomy in the context of science integration in Islamic educational institutions.⁸ A curriculum arranged in an integrative manner will have an outstanding impact on students in developing their potential spiritually, mentally, and intellectually simultaneously.⁹ As emphasized in Rohman's research, scientific integration in some curricula is one of Indonesia's main problems in curriculum development.¹⁰ So, an integrative curriculum that is not partial is urgent and needs to be developed following the problems in Indonesia.

Karen Bryner, in her research, alluded to Islamic schools in Indonesia as a piety project, where Islamic schools have succeeded in filling empty spaces that Islamic educational institutions do not touch to solve the problems of Urban middle-class

⁶ Muh Mustakim, 'School and Pesantren: Study of Institutional Transformation of Islamic Education in Pesantren-Based Schools (SBP) Ibnu Abbas Klaten Indonesia' (6th International Conference on Community Development (ICCD 2019), Atlantis Press, 2019), 342–44, <https://doi.org/10.2991/iccd-19.2019.90>.

⁷ Solihah Titin Sumanti, Nunzairina Nunzairina, and Salminawati Salminawati, 'The Evolution of Islamic Educational Institutions in North Sumatra Indonesia', *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (7 February 2024): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i1.4419>.

⁸ Sidik et al., 'Conceptualization of the Integrated Islamic Religious Education Curriculum'.

⁹ Hamami and Nuryana, 'A Holistic-Integrative Approach of the Muhammadiyah Education System in Indonesia'.

¹⁰ Abdul Rohman et al., 'Challenges in Islamic Education Curriculum Development: A Comparative Study of Indonesia, Pakistan, and India', *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 23, no. 6 (2 July 2024), <https://ijlter.org/index.php/ijlter/article/view/10351>.

Muslims.¹¹ Basyit also strengthened Bryner's conclusion by mentioning several factors that affect the existence of Islamic schools in Indonesia, namely the awareness of modern Muslims to design superior education, the declining quality of public schools, the skepticism of some people toward the quality of Islamic boarding schools and madrasas, the improvement of the community's economy, and the government's alignment with private schools in increasing internationalization.¹²

Yanwar Pribadi also researched the link between Islamic schools and urban middle-class Muslims. In his research, he asserted that urban Muslim communities tend to choose Islamic schools as a place to educate their children because it is related to the purity of Islam.¹³ Regarding the educational process in Islamic schools, Charlene Tan, in her research, emphasized that Islamic schools have a different tradition from other Islamic education institutions in Indonesia. Islamic schools emphasize mastery of religious and general sciences, emphasize understanding rather than memorization, and develop activities oriented to students' life skills.¹⁴

The researcher sees that previous research related to Islamic schools is very focused on discussing the relationship between Islamic schools and urban middle-class Muslims. While significant attention has been given to various aspects of education, in-depth research focusing on the educational process remains relatively rare. Understanding what the educational process entails and its operation is crucial for advancing effective teaching and learning strategies. Thus, this research will focus on implementing an integrated curriculum in Islamic schools based on two integrations: the integration of knowledge and the integrative role between school (teachers) and home (parents). Based on the focus, the two focus findings will be the novelty of this research.

Method

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study at Al-Azhar Islamic School Solo Baru. This location was selected based on several academic considerations: 1) Al-Azhar is one of the Islamic schools that implement an integrative curriculum regarding

¹¹ Karen Bryner, 'Piety Projects: Islamic Schools for Indonesia's Urban Middle Class' (Dissertation, New York, Columbia University, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.7916/D8V69RR7>.

¹² Abdul Basyit, 'Madrasah Dan Sekolah Islam Elit Di Indonesia', *Rausyan Fikr: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pencerahan* 15, no. 1 (28 February 2019), <https://doi.org/10.31000/rf.v15i1.1366>.

¹³ Pribadi, 'Sekolah Islam (Islamic Schools) as Symbols of Indonesia's Urban Muslim Identity'.

¹⁴ Charlene Tan, 'Educative Tradition and Islamic Schools in Indonesia', *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 14 (2014): 47–62.

teaching materials; 2) Al-Azhar has good communication with parents and involves parents as an integral element in the learning process.

Data collection techniques use interviews, observations, and documentation. First, interviews were conducted with Islamic education teachers on scientific integration applied at Al-Azhar Islamic School and the role of parents in the Islamic Education curriculum at Al-Azhar Islamic School. Second, researchers carry out observations directly. The researcher observed several educational activities at school and parents' involvement in the educational process at Al-Azhar Islamic School. Third, documentation can be obtained by accessing data about Al-Azhar Islamic Schools through the official website and Islamic Religious Education books published by Al-Azhar Islamic Schools.

The researcher used the triangulation method to ensure the data's validity. Researchers simultaneously matched the data obtained from interviews with data obtained from observation and documentation. Thus, when the data obtained from various sources was consistent, the researcher stopped extracting data and considered the data valid. After a validity test, the data was analyzed using interactive analysis in three steps: data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusion.¹⁵ Data condensation is selecting data used and not used in the research. Researchers only took data related to the focus of this research: the integration of science and the integration of the role of teachers and parents in the Islamic School curriculum. In the next step, the researchers presented research data and discussed the two research focuses. In the final step, the researcher draws conclusions based on the data and discussion.

Results and Discussion

Sciences Integration

Islamic Religious Education subject cannot be separated from six main topics: the Qur'an, Hadith, faith, worship, morals, and Islamic Cultural History. The six topics in the Madrasah curriculum are concocted into four subjects: the Qur'an Hadith, Moral Beliefs, Fiqh, and Islamic Cultural History. Meanwhile, the school curriculum is summarized into one subject: religious education and ethics.

¹⁵ Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 3rd ed. (USA: SAGE, 2014).

Islamic religious education materials in schools look very minimalist. The difference between a school without an Islamic label and an Islamic school is seen at this point. Islamic schools strive to provide religious education to students beyond the minimum targets the government gives, such as adding teaching materials and lesson hours and conditioning the school environment with Islamic culture and values.

Al-Azhar Islamic School Solo Baru is one example of many Islamic schools in Indonesia that have implemented this strategy. Religious learning no longer stops at the level of knowledge alone but is also internalized in practice and personality formation. Al-Azhar Islamic School Solo Baru carries out four curriculum development programs, namely: 1) Islamic Personality Development; 2) Foreign Language Proficiency; 3) Mastery of Science and Technology; and 4) Life *Skill Development* (Skills, Independence, and Personality).¹⁶

Table 1. Curriculum Development Area of Al-Azhar Islamic School Solo Baru

Field of Development	Information
Islamic Personality Development	The purpose of developing an Islamic personality is to form superior individuals who have a straight faith, true worship, and noble morals, which are reflected in daily behavior both at school and at home, which is integrated through activities: morning meetings, pledges, testimonials, and <i>tahfidzul Quran</i> , independent <i>dhuha</i> prayers, <i>dhuhr</i> and <i>Ashar</i> prayers in congregation in mosques and other Islamic activities.
Foreign Language Mastery	The superior personal dimension in foreign language mastery is reflected in English and Arabic Community activities, the habit of memorizing 10-30 vocabulary words every week, short conversations and discussions, special performances, English camps, and student visits to Singapore.
Mastery of Science and Technology	The superior personal dimension in the field of mastery of science and technology is carried out through the IT-based curriculum program, where learning activities are integrated using multimedia devices supported by Wi-fi devices and internet networks and equipped with a representative multimedia computer laboratory.
Life Skill Development (Skills, Independence, and Personality)	The success of an educational process is not only measured from the academic aspect, in terms of mastery of science and technology, but also needs to be equipped with global skills, life skills, and noble values (<i>Akhlaq al-Karimah</i>).

The four developments have a relationship, so they cannot be separated. The development of the Islamic personality aims to realize a superior person in religion, shown by upright faith, strong faith, true worship, and noble morals in daily activities,

¹⁶ Al-Azhar Solo Baru, 'Kurikulum - Kampus KB-TK-SD-SMP-SMA Islam Al Azhar Solo Baru', accessed 6 June 2023, <https://www.al-azharsolobaru.net/index.php/sekolah/smpi-al-azhar-21/kurikulum-smp>.

as well as integrative life at school and home. Integration between school and home is crucial to realizing a complete Muslim personality. In summary, the educational curriculum at Al Azhar Islamic School can be divided into religious subject clusters and general subject clusters with religious values.¹⁷

A straightforward indicator to measure the success of religious education is to look at the compatibility between ideal practices in schools and the reality outside of school. When students' prayers at school and home are equally good, religious education can be said to be successful because a good *mushalli* personality is formed. Al-Azhar Islamic School synchronizes ideals and reality by building good communication with parents to motivate their children and filling out the control card provided by the school. The student's guardian did not hesitate to admit that it was wrong if his child did not pray at home for some reason and promised to discipline his child again to perform prayer.¹⁸

The strengthening of Islamic religious education can also be seen from the school's seriousness in educating students to read the Qur'an. The school provides more than ten special *Iqra* teachers in the Primary School unit to provide intensive guidance to children who are still weak in reading the Qur'an.¹⁹ With this special *Iqra* teacher, the task of religious teachers becomes lighter, and the results of children's Qur'an readings can be appropriately standardized.

The cultivation of Islamic values is not only seen in the aspect of *ubudiyah* but also touches the fields of science, health, and hygiene. It can be seen in efforts to provide clean school facilities – such as bathrooms, the habit of brushing teeth during the day before high prayers, the strict implementation of health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic, the provision of adequate health facilities, conducive classrooms, and so on. The field of hygiene and health, which is sometimes a rarity in Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools and madrasas, has received outstanding attention in Islamic schools. That confirms that Islamic schools bring a new breath to Indonesia's tradition of Islamic education.

The attention of Islamic schools to science and technology does not reduce the intensity of attention to religious values. The relationship between science, society, and

¹⁷ Muhammad Zuhdi, 'Political and social influences on religious school: a historical perspective on Indonesian Islamic school curricula' (Dissertation, Canada, McGill University, 2006), <https://escholarship.mcgill.ca/concern/theses/3197xq82j>.

¹⁸ N, Interview I with IRE Teachers, 5 June 2023.

¹⁹ N.

religion, which dialogues with each other, will strengthen the existence of Indonesian Islamic education in the global arena. It is not surprising that Charlene Tan said that Islamic schools are the most successful Islamic educational institutions in integrating science and religion.²⁰ Thus, religion is not only a doctrine that is instilled in students but also understood and used as inspiration to produce new findings. The spirit of integrating science with religion and not being antipathetic to Western science is also emphasized by Fazlur Rahman for advancing Islamic education in Indonesia.

"...to accept modern secular education as it has developed generally speaking in the West and to attempt to "Islamize" that is, to inform it with certain key concepts of Islam. This approach has had two distinct goals, although they are not always distinguished from one another: first, to mold the character of students with Islamic values for individual and collective life, and second, to enable the adepts of modern education to imbue their respective fields of learning at higher levels, using an Islamic perspective to transform, where necessary, both the content and the orientation of these fields".²¹

In the quote above, Rahman suggested that schools should not reject and accept knowledge born from the West but need to be Islamized by incorporating key Islamic concepts. It is aimed at 1) shaping the character and character of children with Islamic values and 2) modern scientists combine their scientific and social sciences with Islamic values. That means that the integration of Islamic science is a legacy or heritage that must be combined with modern science so that Islamic education does not dwell on ancient, static, and non-contextual reasoning. What Rahman suggested is in line with the development of Islamic education in Indonesia today. Many educational institutions try to integrate science and religion at every level, from elementary school to higher education, with their formats.²²

The practice of Islam in the Al-Azhar Islamic School can be categorized as "Puritan Moderate Islam." Borrowing a classification from Moch Nur Ichwan, Puritan Moderate Islam is a religious thought of Islam that is moderate but influenced by several Puritan Islamic teachings that emphasize the purification of faith, anti-*bid'ah*, and superstition, anti-liberalism-pluralism-secularism, use a strict legal orientation in worship, be more sensitive to moral issues, be more aware of the exclusive interests of

²⁰ Tan, *Islamic Education and Indoctrination: The Case in Indonesia*.

²¹ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (University of Chicago Press, 1982).

²² Azmil Tayeb, *Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia: Shaping Minds, Saving Souls* (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2018).

Muslims, but at the same time approve of national and state development non-Islamic ideology.²³

Integrative Role of Teachers and Jam'iyatul Walidain

Optimal results in an educational process can not only be expected through formal activities at school without parental participation.²⁴ Parents' involvement in educational activities carried out at Al-Azhar schools. In religious education, teachers always coordinate with students' guardians regarding practicing *ubudiyah* at home, such as monitoring through prayer control books, coordinating children's reading and memorizing the Qur'an, and so on. Children who need special religious treatment will be consulted with parents regarding adding special hours outside school hours. Parents are also asked to be active in guiding and motivating their children. However, this communication is sometimes replaced by "representatives" of parents, such as grandparents, uncles, and household assistants, because parents work outside the city.²⁵

Formally, parental involvement is organized in the student guardian association known as Jam'iyatul Walidain, or *Jam'iyah* for short. This organization is a facilitator for parents to express their opinions on the technical implementation of education in schools. The presence of *Jam'iyah* is a support system for schools in the implementation of education, both morally and materially. So that the school does not feel like it runs alone or functions as a childcare.²⁶

The efforts of educational institutions to motivate parents to be involved in their children's education after school are significant. In the Islamic context, a child is primarily determined by how his parents treat him. In 21st-century education, parents must understand the basics of religion and other disciplines supporting children's educational involvement, such as information technology, communication, and psychology.²⁷

Parents who are satisfied with the pattern of education in Al-Azhar will easily promote the school to their colleagues who both have the profile of an urban elite

²³ Moch Nur Ichwan, 'Menuju Islam Moderat Puritan: Majelis Ulama Indonesia Dan Politik Ortodoksi Keagamaan', in *Conservative Turn: Islam Indonesia Dalam Ancaman Fundamentalisme*, ed. Martin van Bruinessen, trans. Agus Budiman (Bandung: Mizan, 2014).

²⁴ Ginanto et al., "'The School Does Not Belong to Me'; Thartori, 'Parental Involvement in Education Among Albanian Parents'; Ubale et al., 'The Effects of the Epstein's Types of Parental Involvement in Learning Islamic Education'.

²⁵ N, Interview I with IRE Teachers about Parents Involvement, 7 June 2023.

²⁶ N.

²⁷ Diana et al., 'Parental Engagement on Children Character Education'.

society. They think that Al-Azhar school is very suitable for their busy working conditions. They want their children to study religion but not in Islamic boarding schools because they do not want to be separated and grow and develop together. This condition makes the majority of the profile of parents of students dominated by the middle class so that the Jam'iyah organization can contribute significantly to providing infrastructure and cooperative relations between schools and outside parties.

Students and parents in Islamic schools have different profiles from those in Islamic boarding schools and madrasas. The profile of Islamic school students is urban-middle-class Muslims.²⁸ Karen Bryner, in her dissertation, revealed that there are at least four reasons behind middle-class Muslim parents choosing Islamic schools as an alternative education for their children.²⁹

The first is academic quality. This reason is the most important for middle-class Muslim parents. For elite parents, quality education must be given to their children. So, they are trying to find a favorite school with good academic quality. They don't infrequently send their children to schools abroad, such as Singapore, Australia, or America, or at elite Christian schools in the country. The problem is when these elite parents are Muslims, forcing them to provide religious education outside of school, such as calling a private religious teacher to their home. At this point, the presence of Islamic schools becomes very relevant, namely, on the one hand, providing general education with good quality, and at the same time, the cultivation of knowledge and moral values of Islam.³⁰ So, it is not surprising that the profile of parents or students at school socially and economically is often above pesantren and madrasas.³¹

Regarding marketing, Islamic education services carried out by Islamic schools are very appropriate. They succeeded in targeting "market share" that was not included in the target of madrasas and pesantren. So, Islamic schools can become a new alternative to Islamic education for specific groups. Although, in the future, it is not uncommon for stigmas to appear that Islamic schools commercialize religious education, the presence of Islamic schools becomes essential to fill the space that classical Islamic educational institutions have not touched for a long time.

²⁸ Pribadi, 'Sekolah Islam (Islamic Schools) as Symbols of Indonesia's Urban Muslim Identity'.

²⁹ Bryner, 'Piety Projects'.

³⁰ Bryner.

³¹ Nurlena Rifai, 'The Emergence of Elite Islamic Schools in Contemporary Indonesia: a Case Study of Al Azhar Islamic School' (Dissertation, Kanada, McGill University, 2006), <https://escholarship.mcgill.ca/concern/theses/fb494d58c>.

Second, a solid moral base. Elite parents are apprehensive about the development of juvenile delinquency and the challenges of globalization that are happening today. So, they see religion as the most essential thing to fortify their children so that they do not fall into delinquency. Good religious education cannot be found in public schools, both private and public. Thus, Islamic schools are an undeniable alternative.

The harshness of city life experienced by these elite parents is a strong driver. At the very least, they want their children to be better than them in terms of religion. Indeed, the awareness of the importance of religious values in these elite parents does not necessarily make them carry out religious worship well. But at least it can motivate them to be better. It is not uncommon in a family that the parents do not pray, while the child obediently prays because of the effects of education at school.³²

Religious education is given to students and parents through various activities. Such as routine *dhuha* studies on certain days that are precisely followed by parents.³³ In this study, parents received advice on religion to support the growth and development of their children in Al-Azhar schools.

Third, teachers and teaching methods. Elite parents view Islamic school teachers as teaching with great dedication. This view makes parents believe that schools will treat their children well and kindly amid their parents' busyness. The teaching method applied is student-centered education (*student-centered pedagogies*). So that learning does not stop at memorization but also understanding and reasoning.³⁴

Fourth, the full-day school system. The busyness of elite parents working until the afternoon makes them unable to supervise their children after school during the day. With a full day of school until 15.00, parents feel calm because their children are in a good environment.

Bryner's view is also confirmed in recent research from Hasanah, which explains that the reasons for choosing schools for Muslim parents include the similarity of family education goals with school education goals, which are concerned with moral or religious education.³⁵ Thus, the education process can be sustainable and run synchronously between school and home. The tendency of parents to choose faith-based schools with consideration of the urgency of religious education for children is also

³² N, Interview I with IRE Teachers.

³³ N, Interview I with IRE Teachers about Parents Involvement.

³⁴ Tan, 'Educative Tradition and Islamic Schools in Indonesia'.

³⁵ Enung Hasanah, M. Ikhwan Badar, and M. Ikhsan Ghazi, 'Factors That Drive the Choice of Schools for Children in Middle-Class Muslim Families in Indonesia: A Qualitative Study', *The Qualitative Report* 27, no. 5 (19 May 2022): 1393–1409, <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5316>.

alluded to in Rokhman's research.³⁶ This excellent awareness arises because of today's challenges and moral decadence. Another factor influencing parents' choice is the balance of religious teaching with natural science to enrich children's knowledge.

Conclusion

The integrated curriculum implemented by Al-Azhar Islamic School is very needed in this era. Integrating knowledge will create a balance in enriching students' intellectuality, and everything students learn will be connected theoretically and practically. Integration of the role of educators (teachers and parents) can produce good education. The *Jam'iyatul Walidain* organization supports the school because of a shared vision between school and home. This research implies that Al-Azhar Islamic School needs to innovate in providing education that follows parents' expectations and communicates school programs well to parents so that they can be more aware of their children's needs.

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³⁶ Mauhibur Rokhman et al., 'Consideration of Parents in Choosing Islamic Schools in the Digital Era', *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 3 (1 December 2023): 403–19, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v6i3.4026>.

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