

The Role of I.A.I.N. In The Education System Reform of the “Madrasah”

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Abstract

IAIN (State Islamic Institute) is a part of the Islamic education system in Indonesia. As a higher Islamic institution, IAIN (currently there are twenty such institutions in Indonesia) is a continuation of the primary and secondary level of the madrasah. The establishment of the madrasah was initiated by the Muslim community with the aim to provide Islamic education to the general public. However, in the early 1960's, IAIN was originally established in response to the needs to prepare the ruling educated Muslims for positions at the Religious Ministry and to develop the education system of the pesantren and the madrasah. As part of the Islamic education system, IAIN has a very strong relationship with the madrasah and the pesantren. Since the 1980's, IAIN has played a huge role in the development and reformation of the education system of the madrasah and the pesantren. The role of IAIN is not limited only to the preparation of religious teachers as it always was in the early years of its establishment. IAIN has greatly contributed to a more enhanced and contextualized understanding and interpretation of Islam. The aforementioned change and roles played by IAIN have encouraged the process of transformation in the education of the madrasah in aspects such as those relating to the institution, thinking, programmes and orientation. During the early years of the independence era (1945), the madrasah was only the centre for producing the ulama (Islamic scholars) and in maintaining the Islamic traditions that were orientated towards the ritual and the spiritual facets alone. Today, the madrasah has developed not only in the ritual-spiritual aspects but also in the social and science aspects. The activities conducted in the madrasah are no longer limited to religious knowledge such as Fiqh, Tasawuf, Tafsir Hadith and Akhlak but also knowledge that is appropriate to the needs of the modern world like Mathematics, Physics, Science, English and ICT. This paper will discuss: the madrasah of today, its reformation and the role of IAIN in the education system reform of the madrasah.

Keywords : Madrasah, Institut of Islamic State (IAIN), Curriculum, Modernization, Indonesia

The existence of the Madrasah in Indonesia

The Madrasah is a traditional Islamic institution that was established out of an initiative from the Muslim community with the purpose of providing Islamic religious knowledge to the public. Madrasah educational institutes, which came into existence and were developed in the beginning of the 20th century, mainly emerged and flourished within the Muslim community both in the urban and the rural areas. Ever since Indonesia gained its independence in 1945 the Madrasah has been built under the auspices of the Religious Ministry.

The historical existence and development of the Madrasah are inseparable from the development of the community. Two important aspects have influenced the growth of the Madrasah, namely the political aspect and the modernization of religious thoughts. Consequently, the history of the Madrasah in Indonesia does not simply comprise the history of Islamic educational institutes but also that of the politics and religious thoughts in Indonesia.

There are two main factors that formed the basis of the existence and growth of the Madrasah in Indonesia. Firstly, the political pressure that arose from the Dutch colonial education. This contributed to the development of the Madrasah as it could offer an educational model that was different from the traditional system of education. The Madrasah had more or less adopted the organization and structure of the colonial education while at the same time maintaining the characteristics and specific religious criteria that were unique to the Madrasah. At this stage, secular or worldly education that was taught in colonial schools was incorporated in the Madrasah education. This was thought of as breaking the tradition of the Madrasah education that was synonymous with the spiritual or theological education.

Secondly, the emergence of the modernization of religious thoughts movement towards the end of the 19th century had directly influenced the growth of the Madrasah. The pioneers and campaigners of the movement had gained the experience from the Middle East concerning the influence of reformation from Islamic reformists such as Jamaludin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Rida. Their awareness in the educational field was activated in the rationalization of Islamic educational institutions that were able to meet the urgent challenges and needs of the world. This situation gave rise to a progressive perspective of Islamic education that did not focus on the traditional education system that would merely employ the memorization approach. The aforementioned view was initiated via the establishment of the Madrasahs. As a result, there emerged a multitude of Madrasahs like the Adabiah School (1907), the Diniyah School (1915) in West Sumatra, Madrasah Manbaul Ulum (1905) in Central Java, Madrasah Muhammadiyah in Jogjakarta, Madrasah Persatuan Ummat Islam in West Java, Madrasah Jamiyat Al-Khair in Jakarta, Madrasah Amiriah Islamiyah in South Sulawesi and Madrasah Al-Sultaniyah in South Kalimantan. All of these came into existence in the early 1920s. The development of the Madrasah education system can be seen in the curriculum development at all levels of the education. The integration of religious and general subjects as well as skills would result in the establishment of the different types of Madrasah.

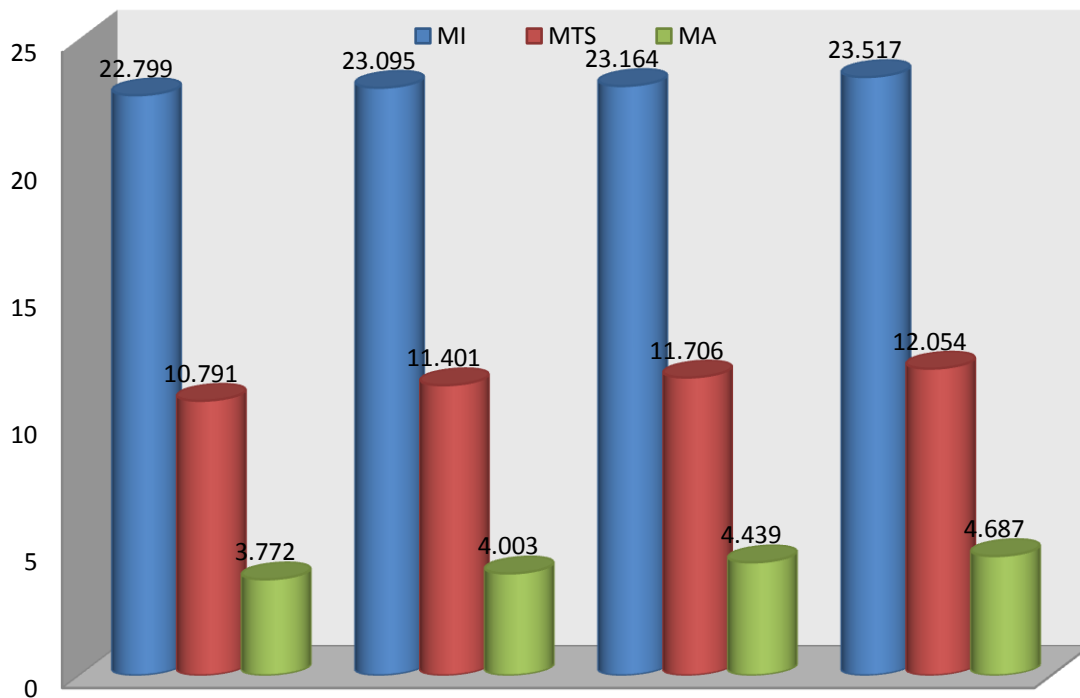
The existence of the Madrasah in Indonesia was influenced by external factors. Nevertheless, in other aspects, these were also in turn influenced by the existence of the Madrasah. The rapid growth of the Madrasah in the beginning of the 20th century had successfully produced a group of educated Muslims in Indonesia. The involvement of these graduates in high-ranking political posts and administration substantiated the success of the Madrasah education.

Modernising the Madrasah Education

The current Madrasah

The Madrasah is a model of traditional Islamic education in Indonesia that is the Pesantren. The Madrasah now runs an educational system in three classical forms of educational levels. The primary level is termed Madrasah Ibtidiah (6 years), the lower secondary level is known as Madrasah Tsanawiyah (3 years) and the upper secondary level is named Madrasah Aliyah (3 years). The educational development of the Madrasah is very encouraging especially in terms of its quantity. According to the Madrasah report, Ministry of Religious Affairs 2006, altogether there are 40258 Madrasahs with the following divisions:

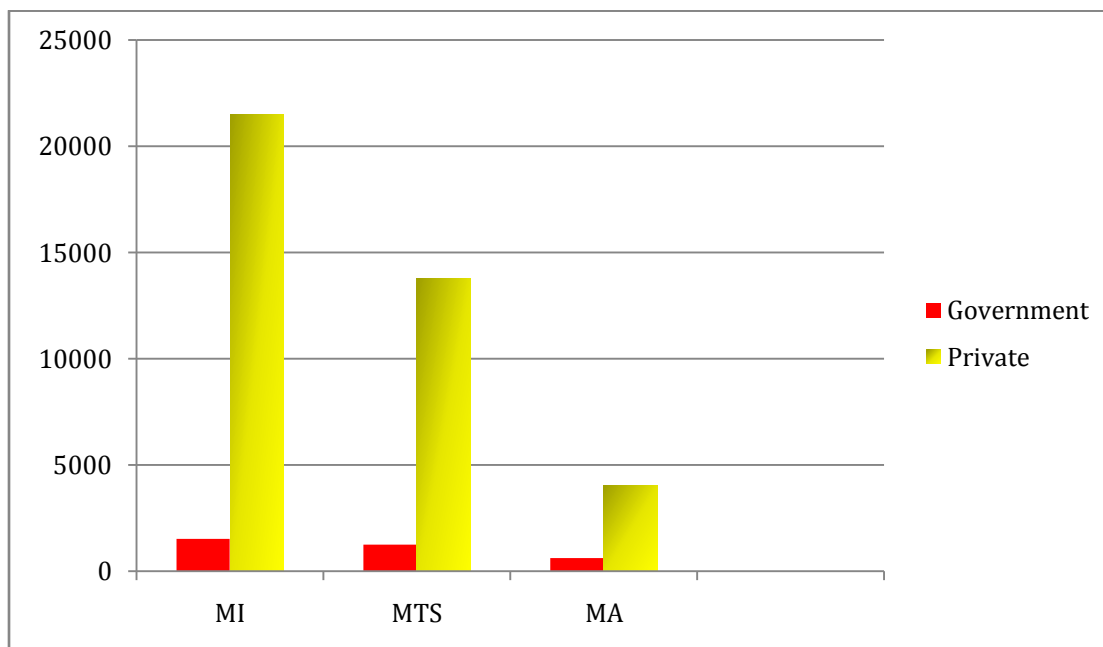
Figure1: The growth in the number of Madrasahs (2001-2004)



Key: MI = Madrasah Ibtidaiyah MTS= Madrasah Tsanawiyah MA = Madrasah Aliyah

The encouraging growth of the Madrasah educational institutions is inseparable from the role of the community in establishing the Madrasah with the intention of providing a better religious as well as general education to all. In the figure below, it is evidently seen that there are almost 91.5% private Madrasahs and only 8.5% government Madrasahs.

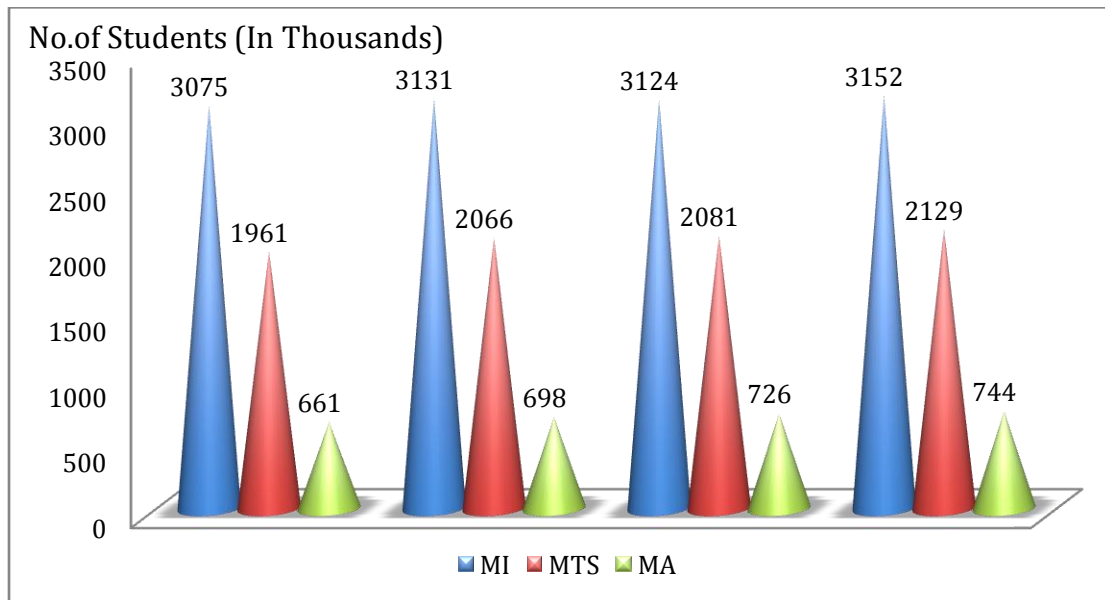
Figure 2: Madrasahs in 2004 (Government Vs Private)



Key: MI = Madrasah Ibtidaiyah MTS= Madrasah Tsanawiyah MA = Madrasah Aliyah

Along with the development of the Madrasah, the number of students who enrolled in the Madrasah is also continually increasing. Currently, there are 6,002.965 students with the following categories:

Figure 3: The growth of the number of students since 2001



Key: MI = Madrasah Ibtidaiyah MTS= Madrasah Tsanawiyah MA = Madrasah Aliyah

The growth in the number of Madrasah students at the 3% level is higher than the increase in the population below the 3% level. This indicates the high commitment of the community to send their children to the Madrasah as opposed to other type of schools.

The beginning of modernization

The modernization of the Madrasah education began at the status of the Madrasah in the national education system, the change in the orientation as well as the curriculum of the Madrasah. In the beginning of the 20th century, the establishment of the Madrasah was aimed at producing religious scholars as well as maintaining the Islamic tradition that was orientated towards the ritual-spiritual aspects. The Madrasah curriculum focused more on religious knowledge like Aqidah, Fiqh, Tasawuf, Tafsir and Akhlaq. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of the development of the Madrasah today shows that the orientation of the Madrasah has expanded immensely; not only focusing on the ritual-spiritual aspects but also on the social and science aspects. The Madrasah curriculum is not only limited to the religious subjects but also the knowledge that is appropriate to the needs of the modern world like Mathematics, English language, Science, Physics, Biology, Economy, skills and ICT. The change is due to the great understanding and the interpretation of Islamic teachings in overcoming the contextual challenges that are encountered by society. The concept of modernization and development cannot be separated from the development of the Madrasah. The Madrasah is an aspiration of the Muslim community to make its way into the new world that is called development.

The modernization of the Madrasah education can be seen in two aspects; firstly, the status of the Madrasah in the national education system and secondly, in perfecting the curriculum.

The status of the Madrasah

In the early days of the Independence (1945), the Dutch educational institution legacy was replaced and developed by the Ministry of Education, while the Madrasah and the Pesantren came under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religious Affairs up until the present day. The management of religious and general education by two different ministries had resulted in the dualism in the education system in Indonesia. At that time, the government was putting a greater emphasis on the public rather than the religious education. Consequently, public schools were much more developed in terms of their quality and administration.

In order to alleviate the problem of dualism in the national education, in 1974 the government decided to put the Madrasah education under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. Such a decision received a strong objection from the Muslim community as the private Madrasahs were owned and run by the Muslim community. They also feared the abrogation of the Madrasah system of education. Eventually, the government agreed to a compromise by issuing a new policy. In the effort to raise the quality of the Madrasah education, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs were given the responsibility in building and developing the Madrasah. The Ministry of Education was responsible for the building and development of all general subjects with a 70% proportion while the Ministry of Religious Affairs would be responsible for developing and managing all religious subjects with a 30% proportion.

The government's judicious initiative was crucial in minimising the problem of dualism in education and increasing the quality of the Madrasah education. This was also a strategic move towards the integration of the Madrasah in the national education system. Consequentially, the measure had reinforced the status of the Madrasah as a religious educational institution, which was on par with other public schools while its administration remained under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Under public pressure and based on the current development and needs, the government is making an ongoing effort to upgrade the status of the Madrasah. One very important measure taken by the government was in integrating the Madrasah education into the national education system. This was in conjunction with the establishment of the Laws of the National Education System (UUSPN) in 1989. This was part of the modernization of the Islamic education specifically the Madrasah. With the formation of the new educational laws, the Madrasah has undergone a change in definition, from "religious school" to "public school with Islamic characteristics". This was a very meaningful change as the Madrasah had become a modern Islamic institute which formed part of the national education system. The new educational laws had also received positive responses from the Muslim community as well as the Ministry of Religious Affairs. They were responsible towards other Islamic education institutions and Madrasahs.

In general, it can be concluded that the Madrasah today has undergone a change and reformation, and its status has been integrated in the national education system. As a result, the responsibility of the government on the Madrasah is the same as that on the other national schools.

The Madrasah curriculum

In 1973, the new curriculum of the Madrasah was introduced by integrating religious subjects (30%) and general subjects and skills (70%)(see Appendix 1). This is meaningful for the following reasons:

1. The availability of Madrasah education standard for all levels in both the government and private Madrasahs.
2. The presence of a detailed model for every subject that can serve as a guideline for the development of education in a Madrasah.
3. General subjects and skills have been made compulsory in the Madrasah curriculum.

Along with the passage of time and the development of education in Indonesia, the Madrasah educational curriculum has also undergone a number of changes and reformation like that of its general education counterpart. With the change of the status of the Madrasah and its definition as documented in the 1989 education laws, a new national education curriculum was introduced in 1996. Here all religious and general subjects were the same as those in the 1986 curriculum with a number of refinements in the availability of specialized learning especially at the Madrasah Aliyah level. The specialization included: religion, social knowledge, Science and the Arabic language.

The Madrasah curriculum has undergone some amendments and improvements. In 2004, the government introduced a new curriculum called competency-based curriculum. Again in 2010, the government introduced a new curriculum named First level Education Curriculum.

It is hoped that this curriculum is able to produce Madrasah graduates who possess basic religious education and general knowledge as well as skills that are in line with the national school. It can also reduce the gap or dualism that exists in education.

The role of IAIN in the modernization of the Madrasah education

The discussion on the modernization of the Islamic education particularly the Madrasah is inseparable from the role and contribution of the IAIN alumni. In the 1960s and 1970s IAIN had only 14 institutions, most of them were in Sumatra and Java. IAIN was established as a response to the needs of the government towards the educated Muslim staff and in order to expand the education system in the Pesantren and Madrasah.

In time, IAIN now has 20 institutions that are widely found in Indonesia. There are a number of religious faculties that have become the main pillar of the existence of IAIN. This includes Fakultas Tarbiyah (education), Fakultas Syariah (Islamic rulings), Fakultas Ushuluddin (Theology), Fakultas Dakwah and Fakultas Adab (Arabic Literature). The role that has been played by IAIN has expanded and is dominant in the modernized education system of the Madrasah especially in the last 30 years. The modernization is understood in the rationalisation frame of the religious perception and thoughts of the community, which eventually can encourage the transformational process in the Madrasah. This is in line with the challenges and needs of the community today. The reformation of the Madrasah education system is hoped to modernize the institution and is appropriate with the other national schools in the structural and curricular aspects. There are three important roles that are played by IAIN in the modernization of the education system:

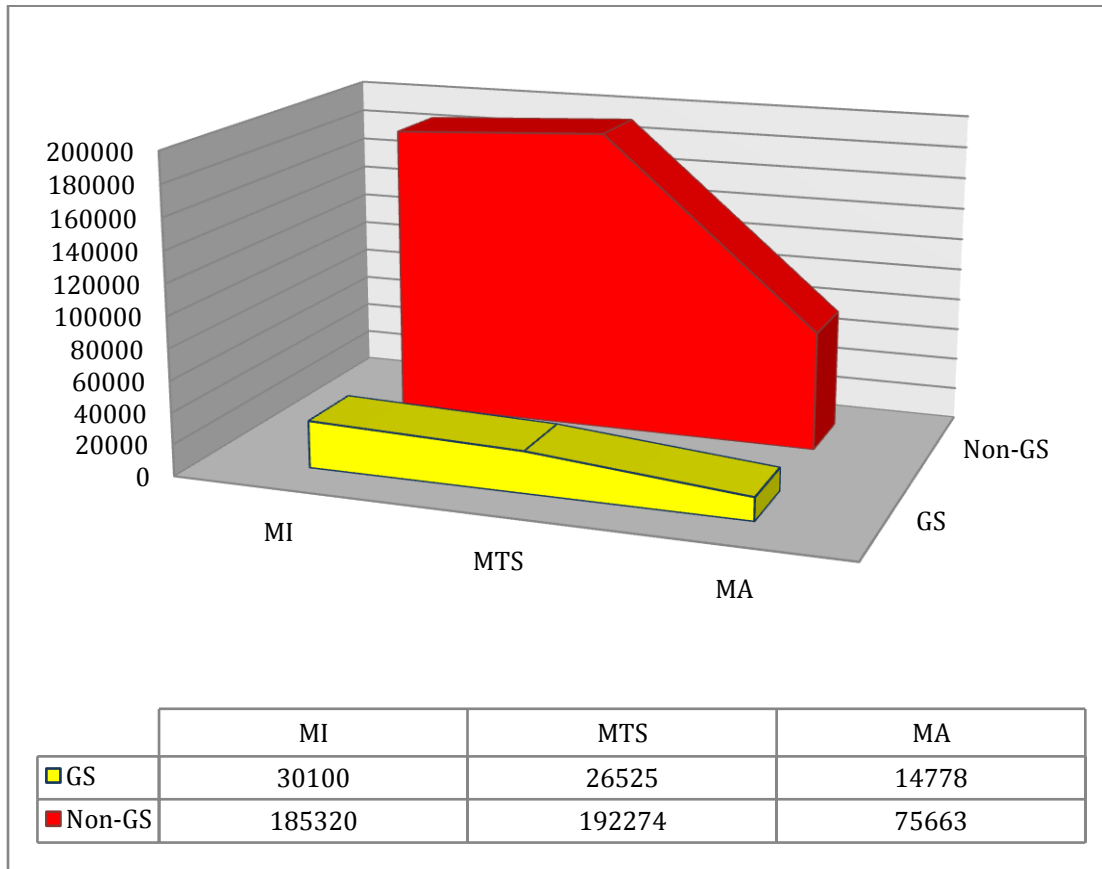
1. IAIN is the continuity of the Madrasah education

The relationship between IAIN and the Madrasah is complementary. Both are an Islamic education package. IAIN serves as an advanced Madrasah education. The Madrasah alumni have a number of choices to further their studies e.g. in higher public education institution, IAIN and to other overseas universities. Nevertheless, IAIN is the first choice of the Madrasah and the Pesantren alumni to further their studies in a higher Islamic institution within the country while having the opportunity to study in Al Azhar Mesir, Mecca, Medina and other Arab countries. In order to further their studies in a public institution, the Madrasah and Pesantren alumni would have to compete with the alumni from the government secondary schools who outnumbered them. The entrant examination is also very difficult. Another factor that made IAIN as a choice of the Madrasah and Pesantren alumni is the curriculum structure of IAIN that has a continuity in the Madrasah curriculum.

2. IAIN alumni, the main educators in the Madrasah

In the context of modernizing the Madrasah, the role of the IAIN alumni is huge especially in the last three decades. At the Religious Ministry level, the modernization of the Madrasah was pioneered by the IAIN alumni who held important posts at the ministry. This showed that the Religious Ministry has systematically coordinated the innovation of the Madrasah and ensured that its quality is at par with that of the other government schools. The other factor that has considerably influenced the reformation of the Madrasah is the large number of IAIN alumni who became educators at the public as well as the private Madrasahs. The alumni were graduates of the Madrasahs and the Pesantrens. It is thus unsurprising that after they have graduated from IAIN, they would return to the Madrasah and Pesantren to become educational leaders and educators. According to the report made by the Religious Ministry in 2006, there were sixty thousand IAIN alumni throughout the public and private Madrasahs in Indonesia. The following figure shows the number of IAIN alumni who have become teachers in the government Madrasah:

Figure 4: Number of Teachers (Government and Non-Government Servants)



Key: MI = Madrasah Ibtidaiyah MTS= Madrasah Tsanawiyah MA = Madrasah Aliyah
 GS = Government Servants Non-GS= Non Government Servants

3. Understanding Islam in the modern context

IAIN as a religious education institution has always held to the knowledge and academic principles as is the case with other public education institutions. The Islamic subjects that are taught in IAIN are the same as those taught in the Pesantren and Madrasah. Nevertheless, the research approach and perspectives in IAIN are different from those in the Pesantren and Madrasah. Religious subjects are learned by rote and via indoctrination, focusing on one Mazhab and less receptive to other Mazhabs in Islam. While in IAIN, Islamic knowledge is taken as an academic and knowledge research subject that needs to be studied and is open to criticism. A variety of Islamic knowledge is situated in its unique context, which can be studied and analysed academically. IAIN does not focus on the discussion of Islamic thoughts based on a single Mazhab only. It is open about how these can be analysed and studied. In order to fortify the analysis and perspectives on Islamic knowledge, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, history and science become crucial components of the IAIN curriculum.

The Islamic research taught in IAIN has succeeded in widening the vision of IAIN students most of whom came from the Pesantren and Madrasah. The kind of research has also resulted in transforming the students’ way of thinking as well as their attitudes. This is because the lecturers in IAIN have diverse educational backgrounds and came from different university alumni. They do not only consist of lecturers from the middle east but are also made up of scholars who specialize in the Islamic field and come from England, the Netherland, USA, Canada and Australia. The main characteristic of the IAIN alumni is their openness as well as their critical analysis. This attitude enables the alumni to formulate Islam in the realistic context among the contemporary community. Eventually, the IAIN alumni who have returned to the Pesantren and Madrasah will promulgate this Islamic perspective well. It can thus be concluded that, one of the factors that has encouraged the transformation and innovation of the Madrasah system today is the influence of the IAIN alumni who work at the Madrasah either as leaders or educators.

Conclusion

The Madrasah education today has gone through a lot of changes and innovation. Its status is equivalent to that of the public education. The Madrasah education has also become a component of the national education system. It is no longer considered as a traditional education institution. The society has no reservation about sending their children to the Madrasah. Moreover, the educational orientation and curriculum are always responsive to change and improvement so that it is relevant to the current situation. The change and modernization that have taken place in the Madrasah have reduced the dichotomy gap between religious and public education. This situation is very different from the time when the Madrasah came into existence in the beginning of the 20th century; the Madrasah education was known as the traditional Islamic institution, its existence was not very well recognized within the national education and it was less competitive. The Madrasah orientation and curriculum were focusing on the religious subjects as well as the ritual-spiritual aspects.

It needs to be mentioned here that the change and reformed Madrasah education system is inseparable from the role played by IAIN. There are at least three important roles of IAIN in reforming the Madrasah education. Firstly, IAIN is a continuity of advanced religious education. IAIN is the main choice for the Madrasah alumni to further their studies in religious education. Secondly, the IAIN alumni become educators and work at the Madrasah. The alumni are the main agents or supporters in the running and survival of the Madrasah. Thirdly, the IAIN alumni impart a comprehensive understanding of Islamic knowledge; understanding Islam not only from the perspective of one Mazhab alone. The openness, moderation and tolerance towards the views and thoughts of others are very much upheld in IAIN. The above characteristics have been inculcated and nurtured in IAIN and are continuously practiced among the alumni in the Madrasah where they are teaching.

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Appendix 1 : List of Subjects In Madrasah’s Curriculum

GROUP	MTs	MA
FOUNDATIONAL	1. Quran	Quran
	2. Hadith	Hadith
	3. Theology	Theology
	4. Ethics	Ethics
	5. Civics Education	Civics Education
	6. Physical Education	Physical Education
CORE	1. Islamic Law	Islamic Law
	2. History of Islamic Civilization	History of Islamic Civilization
	3. Indonesian Language	Indonesian Language
	4. Arabic Language	Arabic Language
	5. English Language	English language
	6. History	Mathematics
	7. Mathematics	Science Stream: Biology
	8. Science	Physics
	9. Sociology	Chemistry
	10. Geography	Art Stream: Geography
SKILLS	1. Arts	Arts
	2. Music	Music
	3. Calligraphy	ICT
	4. ICT	Calligraphy
	5.	Foreign Language : Germany, French, Mandarin
ECA	1. Scouts	Scouts
	2. Public Speaking	Public Speaking

Key:

MTs : Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Lower Secondary School)

MA : Madrasah Aliyah (Upper Secondary School)

Appendix 2:

Number of Periods Between Religious and General Subjects:By Comparison

No.	Level	Periods (Hr per Week): Religious Subjects	Periods (Hr per Week): General Subjects	Periods (Hr per Week) : Skills	Total
1.	MTs	16	22	10	48
2.	MA	20	32	12	64

Key:

MTs : Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Lower Secondary Level)

MA : Madrasah Aliyah (Upper Secondary Level)