

Curriculum innovation in the part-time madrasah learning system in Singapore

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Abstract

Singapore is a secular government system, where every policy does not include religious elements, including education. However, the Singapore government is quite responsive in providing support for the sustainability of Islamic educational activities. This study aims to analyze the management and curriculum of part-time madrasahs and also find out how the role of part-time madrasahs in equipping Muslim children of various ages with secular education to understand and practice Islam as a way of life especially in facing the challenges of the times. This study offers an overview and look at the management, curriculum and role of part-time madrasahs in Singapore. Using a qualitative method that includes a literature review and field study, the research is a combination of object research conducted directly at the research site, combined with literature research. Data was obtained through interviews with several parties involved in part-time education as well as research papers related to the basics of Islamic education in Singapore either in the form of books or journal articles, as well as other documents. The results show that the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) plays a major role in monitoring and managing the development of Islamic education in Singapore. Since the Muslim community in Singapore needs to display progressive characteristics and have a vision of a model community that creates a distinctive Singaporean Islamic thought, MUIS introduced the aL.I.V.E (Learning Islamic Values Everyday) Program curriculum established through SIES (Singapore Islamic Education System) for part-time madrasahs.

Keywords: *Islamic Education; Part-Time Madrasah; aL.I.V.E Programme.*

Abstrak

Singapura adalah sistem pemerintahan sekuler, di mana setiap kebijakan tidak memasukkan unsur agama, termasuk pendidikan. Namun, pemerintah Singapura cukup responsif dalam memberikan dukungan bagi keberlangsungan kegiatan pendidikan Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis manajemen dan kurikulum madrasah paruh waktu dan juga mengetahui bagaimana peran madrasah paruh waktu dalam membekali anak-anak Muslim dari berbagai usia yang berpendidikan sekuler untuk memahami dan mengamalkan Islam sebagai pandangan hidup terutama dalam menghadapi tantangan zaman. Penelitian ini menawarkan gambaran dan melihat manajemen, kurikulum dan peran madrasah paruh waktu di Singapura. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif yang mencakup tinjauan literatur dan studi lapangan, dimana penelitian yang dilakukan merupakan gabungan antara penelitian obyek yang dilakukan secara langsung di lokasi penelitian, dipadukan dengan penelitian kepustakaan. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara dengan beberapa pihak yang terlibat dalam pendidikan paruh waktu serta penelitian makalah yang berkaitan dengan dasar-dasar pendidikan Islam di Singapura baik dalam bentuk buku atau artikel jurnal, serta dokumen lainnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Majelis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS) berperan besar dalam memantau dan mengelola perkembangan pendidikan Islam di Singapura. Karena komunitas Muslim di Singapura perlu menampilkan karakteristik progresif dan memiliki visi model komunitas

yang menciptakan pemikiran Islam khas Singapura, MUIS memperkenalkan kurikulum Program aL.I.V.E (Learning Islamic Values Everyday) yang dibentuk melalui SIES (Singapore Islamic Education System) untuk madrasah paruh waktu.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Islam; Madrasah Separuh Masa; Program aL.I.V.E.

Introduction

Islamic education is highly valued by the Muslim community in Singapore. Despite this, the Singaporean government takes a secular approach and considers religious education a private matter for individuals, rather than a state concern. As a result, government schools are prohibited from providing religious instruction. This is due to Singapore's secular system, which does not include religion in its policies, including education. Presently, Singapore's educational system separates education for the Muslim community into two distinct categories: secular education and Islamic education.

In Singapore, the vast majority (about 95%) of Muslim children receive their education from the secular education system overseen by the Ministry of Education (Hassan, 2001). This approach aims to achieve the government's educational objective of keeping religious guidance separate from daily life. To balance their religious and worldly needs, Muslim students in Singapore also attend private institutions, madrasahs, and mosques to receive Islamic religious education.

Singapore is a diverse country with a rich blend of cultures and religions. However, the national education system does not prioritize Islamic education, leading to insufficient development in this area for the Muslim community, particularly the Malay population. Despite Singapore's overall reputation for peace and order, social issues persist, including delinquency among young Malay Muslim children (Hirschmann, 2023). Many Muslim teenagers in Singapore struggle with the negative influence of certain cultural trends, which can put them at risk and distract them from religious education and moral values. It is therefore vital for all parties to recognize and address these challenges faced by today's teenagers.

Addressing juvenile delinquency is a pressing matter that warrants our attention. It is crucial to provide Muslim children with a comprehensive education in their faith. Studies have indicated that merely 40% of Muslim children attending national schools participate in religious education classes (MUIS, 2015). Meanwhile, Islamic religious education is a conscious and systematic approach to equip students with an understanding and appreciation of the Islamic faith. Additionally, this education promotes respect for other religions and fosters harmony between different religious communities, which contributes to national unity and integrity (Majid & Andayani, 2005).

It is crucial to prioritize sufficient attention and effort towards enhancing the quality of education, particularly in the realm of Islamic religious education in

Singapore. The administration of Islamic religious education in Singapore falls under the purview of the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS). MUIS has assumed a significant responsibility in overseeing and directing the growth of Islamic education in Singapore through its Religious Education Cluster division. To accomplish this objective, MUIS has developed the Singapore Islamic Education System (SIES), which is responsible for formulating and consolidating the syllabus for both full-time and part-time Islamic education in Singapore. SIES is a curriculum developed by the Majlis for Islamic Education (IE) in Singapore. Its objective is to prepare Muslims of different age groups to better understand, appreciate and practice Islam in light of the present and future challenges. It serves as a framework for Muslims in Singapore. It is a curriculum that is relevant, dynamic and full of significant learning experiences for Muslims in Singapore.

The objective of this program is to equip Muslims in Singapore of all ages with a thorough understanding and practical approach to living Islam as a way of life, particularly in the face of contemporary challenges. The curriculum is both adaptable and engaging, designed to deliver a meaningful learning experience to Singaporean Muslims. Through this program, individuals will develop a deep appreciation of Islamic teachings and be empowered to put them into practice in their daily lives (Hj Siren, Abd. Majid, & Aljunied, 2014). The program is delivered through a non-formal education system, commonly known as weekend learning, and is overseen by MUIS. The local Muslim community has expressed great interest in the management of mosques, and the concept of studying in a mosque is often referred to as a Mosque Madrasah or Part-Time Madrasah.

Historically, madrasahs situated in mosques were primarily utilized to teach young children and teenagers how to read the Quran, pray five times a day, and comprehend the pillars of faith. As the importance of religious education for children attending national schools became more widely recognized within the Muslim community, mosques became the preferred location for Islamic studies. This realization sparked a growing demand for Islamic education in mosque madrasahs, which was met with an overwhelmingly positive response from the Muslim community in Singapore.

Due to overwhelming demand from the Muslim community, registration for the six full-time madrasahs has been closed. It appears that some Muslim families in Singapore opt to enroll their children in national schools during the week, which do not provide religious lessons, and then attend madrasahs on weekends for religious instruction. Consequently, mosque madrasahs are often not the primary choice for families seeking religious education for their children.

In the past, the education provided at madrasahs in mosques was conducted traditionally. The curriculum included lessons on subjects such as *Tauhid*, *Fikeh*, *Sirah*, *Akhlak*, *Arabic*, *Al-Qur'an*, and *Jawi*. Malay was the primary language used for instruction (Radzi, Sari & Irwandi, 2019). The teachers were highly qualified, with

many having received a full-time madrasah education in Singapore and further tertiary education abroad. They were well-equipped to teach religious studies at all levels. During this time, teaching religious lessons in mosques was relatively straightforward as the methods and processes were uncomplicated. Interactive lectures and question-and-answer sessions were used to deliver lessons, and students were assessed through written examinations. Students found it easy to follow and understand the lessons provided.

The Singaporean Muslim community is committed to promoting progressive values and developing an individual Islamic philosophy that aligns with the values of Singaporeans. To achieve this goal, the structure and curriculum of Islamic religious education in mosques are undergoing revisions. The primary objective is to impart an understanding of the contextual nature of Islamic teachings while remaining true to its fundamental principles. Moreover, society needs to practice moderation, in keeping with the crucial characteristics of societal stability in the Malay Archipelago (Bahar & Anuar, 2016).

MUIS is the organization responsible for the implementation of Islamic religious education in Singapore's mosques. Recently, they underwent a complete overhaul and reorganization of their system, to make it more appealing to every Muslim in the vicinity. In July 2004, MUIS pioneered a series of "Part-Time Religious Learning" programmes based on the Singapore Islamic Education System (SIES). Their objective is to ensure that religious education becomes an integral part of the lives of the cosmopolitan and modern "Singapore Muslim Community", starting from children to teenagers (MUIS, 2024). MUIS is committed to ensuring that every Muslim child, regardless of ethnicity or financial background, receives religious education. They aspire for mosques in Singapore and private education centers to have a role in ensuring that every Muslim child, whether privileged or underprivileged, participates in Islamic religious education classes.

At MUIS, the Curriculum Department oversees the curriculum for part-time madrasahs in Singapore. This responsibility is then entrusted to the mosque as an agency to ensure that the teaching staff comply with all MUIS provisions. The program's goal is to provide a fundamental Islamic Religious Education curriculum tailored to Muslim children and teenagers aged 5 to 20 years. Its objective is to equip Muslim youth with the resilience and self-assurance necessary to navigate life's challenges while retaining their strong Islamic identity in Singapore's diverse society, which encompasses a range of religions and nationalities.

The aL.I.V.E programme, also known as Learning Islamic Values Every day, has been successfully implemented in multiple mosques throughout Singapore. Using English as the language of instruction, the programme prioritizes teaching materials related to Islamic sciences. The curriculum utilizes an integrated and thematic approach to organize subjects into several themes, making it easier for students to understand and apply their knowledge. The subjects are formulated in the form of

problems or units, which helps eliminate the boundaries between subjects. Therefore, specific subjects such as *Fiqh*, *Tauhid*, *Sirah*, *Akhlak*, and others are not introduced to students (MUIS, 2024).

The aL.I.V.E programme boasts an innovative structure that sets it apart from traditional Islamic learning in Singapore. However, upon implementation in local mosques, certain obstacles arose, revealing a discrepancy between ideal and actual conditions. Every aspect of the curriculum and learning activities, including goals, teachers, students, methods, facilities, and infrastructure, was carefully considered. Despite these efforts, some students have struggled to integrate the program's teachings into their daily thoughts and behaviors, hindering the development of their personal growth (Syafri, Maya & Akhmadi, 2022).

Researchers are interested in studying the learning curriculum for the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme, which is carried out in several mosques in Singapore. The research aims to scrutinize the teaching methods of the aL.I.V.E programme at the Singapore Mosque Madrasah while identifying any obstacles that may hinder the programme's success. Despite numerous studies on Islamic education in Singapore, this research will provide a comprehensive overview. It will concentrate on the advancements, prospects, and hurdles that arise in a country that has a secular perspective.

Research Method

This particular research can be classified as field research due to its location of execution. If the focus of the research revolves around process and perspective, then descriptive qualitative research would be the ideal approach. This method provides a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, highlighting the nuances rather than just numerical data (Sutopo, 2002). As Moleong said, descriptive research involves the interpretation of existing data in the form of words and images, including interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, observations and documents (Moleong, 2012).

This research aims to provide a comprehensive description of a variable or situation. Descriptive research involves analyzing data using logical reasoning. Specifically, this study examines the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme and an overview of the Part-Time Learning system. The research approach is qualitative, relying on observations of Islamic Religious Learning at Part-Time Madrasahs in Singapore. The researcher utilized a qualitative framework, with a focus on phenomenological philosophy and prioritizing appreciation (*verstehen*). Qualitative methods seek to interpret the meaning of a human behavior event within a specific context, as observed from the researcher's point of view (Usman, 1996). This study employs a phenomenological approach to investigate the aL.I.V.E Programme, which is implemented at the Singapore Mosque Madrasah.

The researcher conducted a thorough analysis of data from the part-time Islamic religious learning system, specifically the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) Programme that is being carried out at the Madrasah Mosque in Singapore. The data was divided into two categories: primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected on-site to provide a detailed description and address the research problem at hand. To achieve this goal, the researcher employed various data collection techniques.

1. Observation

Marshall (1995) suggests that direct observation of behavior can provide valuable insights to researchers. This involves meticulous note-taking, analysis of the observations, and drawing conclusions based on the data collected. In the context of the Part-Time Madrasah Learning System in Singapore, this method was employed to gain an understanding of the behavior and its underlying significance.

2. Interview

Interviews are a commonly employed method for data collection by researchers. They can serve as a means of conducting a preliminary study to identify issues that necessitate additional research or to gain a more thorough comprehension of a specific subject. In this study, interviews were conducted with stakeholders in the realm of Part-Time Madrasah Religious Learning in Singapore. The interviews were centered on the roles of each party involved, along with factors that facilitate or hinder progress. The conclusion reached by the researchers was that the school principal, teachers, students, and students' heirs possess a comprehensive understanding of these activities.

3. Documentation

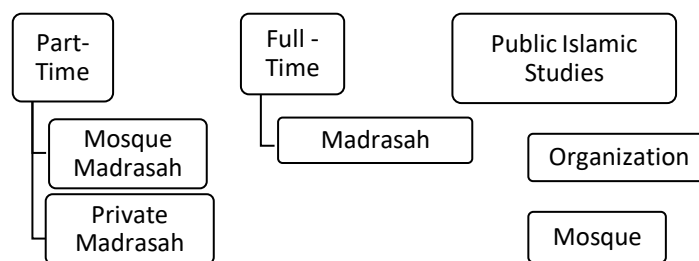
Document can take various forms such as written works, images, and monumental creations, that serve as a complementary source of information. These documents are relied upon to provide answers to questions that can't be obtained through interviews or observations alone. Some examples of such documents are organizational charts, details about educators and students, and information about the infrastructure of Singapore Mosque Madrasah.

The researcher in this study employed the widely accepted triangulation method to bolster the validity of their qualitative research. This involves integrating multiple data collection techniques and sources to ensure the data's credibility. By utilizing triangulation, the researcher can gather data while simultaneously verifying its accuracy through various methods and sources. By harmonizing information from these four different approaches, precise, factual, and logical solutions can be obtained for the issues being studied.

Result and Discussion

A. Part-time Islamic education system in Singapore

Singapore has had a rich tradition of Islamic education since the advent of Islam. Presently, the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) oversees the progress of Islamic education in the country. For Muslim children who are unable to attend full-time madrasahs, the part-time Islamic education system is available. These children are often enrolled in national schools and can only attend the part-time programme for three hours on weekends due to time constraints, cause 95% of Muslim children in Singapore follow a secular education system. This programme is offered in private Islamic institutions and mosques across Singapore.



Picture 1. Types of Islamic Education in Singapore

The SIES, short for the Islamic Education System, is a part-time curriculum tailored towards providing Islamic education in Singapore. Its primary aim is to equip Muslims of all ages with the knowledge and pride to practice Islam as a way of life, especially during current challenges. The curriculum is both dynamic and appropriate, providing a comprehensive learning experience that is both wholesome and enriching for Muslims in Singapore (Adawiyah, 2018). This part-time Islamic education programme aims to produce individuals who are devout, virtuous, and possess a deep understanding of the Islamic religion and its practices. This is in line with MUIS' overarching mission of fostering an exemplary Muslim community in Singapore.

Its objective is to prepare Muslims of different age groups to better understand, appreciate and practice Islam in light of the present and future challenges. It serves as a framework for Muslims in Singapore. It is a curriculum that is relevant, dynamic and full of significant learning experiences for Muslims in Singapore. The programme has been designed to ensure that religious education fills the specific needs of Islamic society in a cosmopolitan atmosphere. It is also, as part of efforts to improve the structure of Islamic education for young children (MUIS, 2015).

In Singapore, Private Islamic Religious Schools play a significant role in promoting Islamic education. Notable schools such as al Khairiah Islamic School, Madrasah and Tahzibiah al-Islamiah, Radin Mas Religious School, Almas Weekly Madrasah, Jamiyah Education Center, Pertapis education center, and others, have developed their curriculum, which emphasizes Al-Quran and *Fardu Ain* studies. The

madrasah, which operates under the company's name, offers part-time classes on weekends. This private madrasah is an alternative for parents who prefer not to send their children to a mosque. Furthermore, there are efforts to enhance Islamic education by providing weekend or part-time programmes at the Andalus & Cordova Corporation Education Center. This center offers programmes ranging from preschool to adult education to the Muslim community in Singapore (Andalus, 2024). In general, private half-time madrasahs offer programmes such as the following; Nursery Tutoring Class; Pre-School Tutoring Class; Child Tutoring Class; Intermediate Tutoring Class; Youth Guidance Class. The subjects are *Tauhid, Fikeh, Akhlak, Sirah, Jawi, Arabic* and the *Quran*.

B. Mosque as a centre for Islamic education

Mosques have long been important education centers throughout history. Originally, they provided basic religious education, but over time, they evolved into centers for studying various Islamic sciences. These centers, also known as *Halaqah*, were formed by teachers from different regions. Interestingly, this teaching system is still used in modern Islamic boarding schools. Unfortunately, with the advent of modern times, mosques were transformed into madrasahs, and their role as education centers diminished. However, in recent years, there have been efforts to restore mosques to their former glory and re-establish them as centers of civilization. This has given hope for a new civilization founded on the principles of mosques (Fathurrahman, 2015).

Mosques play a crucial role in enhancing the growth of individuals, families, and communities. To restore their function and role in educating families and communities, mosques should draw lessons from past experiences. By fostering creativity, mosques can intensify their efforts to educate people's lives through formal and informal programs. The aim is to develop a more efficient, skilled, and open-minded generation that can tackle current issues and crises effectively.

In Singapore, mosques function much like they did during the time of the Prophet, serving as centers for Islamic activities that go beyond worship alone. These centers of community life provide education and social development opportunities for their congregations, with prayer rooms and various facilities to meet their needs. Each mosque also has classrooms for religious study and skill courses, administrative office space or secretariat, a courtroom, a multipurpose room or auditorium, a library, and other spaces for community activities and social development programmes (Atan, 2005).

To fully understand the significance and purpose of mosques, it's essential to explore their role during the era of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). During that time, mosques served as both a place for worship and a hub for addressing worldly issues. Education was also a crucial component, with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) using mosques to educate and nurture the minds and morals of his followers, both during and outside of congregational prayers. Essentially, the mosque acted as a

madrasah, with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) serving as the teacher and the eager learners as his students. This rich tradition continued with subsequent Islamic leaders and scholars, with the process of "*ta'lim*" frequently taking place within the mosque walls through the "*halaqah*" tradition, resulting in the birth of many esteemed scholars (Zaman, 2019).

Mosques are an ideal venue for educational activities due to their accessibility and popularity. Islamic religious education is increasingly becoming more structured and prominent within mosques. The mosque offers a variety of learning opportunities, such as daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly religious education, including holy book studies, lectures, and more. To appeal to congregations that have been exposed to modern learning techniques, mosques need to adapt their teaching methods to make the learning experience more engaging and effective. Among the recommended informal education gatherings are such as Fardhu Ain adult classes, Islamic understanding courses, Weekend madrasah, Lectures at dawn, *duha*, and *maghrib*, *Iqra'* and al-Quran classes, Forums, and public lectures.

Mosques are versatile and valuable institutions that provide a range of educational and beneficial services to the community. These services include courses and seminars addressing contemporary issues, guidance on household matters, instruction on Hajj rituals, exhibitions, collection and management of zakat, marriage contracts, financial assistance, religious guidance and consultation, and fundraising activities. Religious teachings are offered both during the day and in the evening, while spiritual lectures are held in the evenings. Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad saw, the function of the mosque has been significant, serving as not only a place of worship but also as a hub for planning programmes and activities to improve the religion and the community. Mosques serve as a platform for discussions on diverse Islamic and contemporary topics. Muslims should strive to develop mosques as exemplary institutions that they can take pride in. Mosques can be a symbol of the excellence of the *ummah*.

Currently, 73 mosques in Singapore offer classes in general religion and other disciplines, with 32 mosques operating a part-time madrasah system, commonly known as Mosque Madrasah. They have a sophisticated and exclusive mosque management system, as well as a unique recitation method (Adawiyah, 2018). This mosque madrasah, founded by MUIS through the Singapore Islamic Education System (SIES), provides the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E.) programme (MUIS, 2024). This organized programme incorporates an interactive teaching procedure and a theme approach or method in the topics, with English serving as the introductory language. Mosques are ideal locations for educational activities since they are easily accessible and frequently frequented by people. Mosques are increasingly being used as a platform for Islamic religious teaching, and this role is becoming more systematic. The mosque contains a wide range of knowledge and learning opportunities.

As people's situations and lifestyles have changed dramatically in recent years, teaching methods in mosques must also alter slightly in order to guide the congregation, which has been confronted with modern tactics in various forms, in a better and more engaging direction. Mosques, as non-formal educational institutions, are accountable for training believing, devout, and intelligent people who would do good deeds, have noble character, and become good and responsible citizens. It takes a long time to strengthen mosques' educational functions because education is an ongoing and repetitive activity, in Qur'an surah Al-Zumah: 9:

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding ... (QS. Al-Zumar: 9).

In terms of mosque education, numerous improvements have been implemented to strengthen the learning system and make it more creative and inventive. The non-formal education or weekend learning system conducted by mosques under the supervision of the MUIS (Singapore Islamic Religious Council) has sparked widespread interest among the local Muslim community.

Islamic education at mosque madrasahs found an echo outside the Muslim community, reflecting the Muslim community's need for religious knowledge. First, due to strong public demand, the six full-time madrassas under the Singapore Ministry of Education closed for registration. Second, consider the tendency and mindset of some Muslim communities in Singapore that send their children to government schools that do not provide Islamic education; therefore, they attend madrasahs on weekends. Thus, mosque madrasahs are the second option for their children to obtain religious knowledge (Batri, 2012).

Initially, mosque madrasahs only functioned to teach children and young people how to read the Quran, pray five times a day, and understand the pillars of Islam. Muslims select mosques to teach their children religion because they understand the necessity of religious education in national schools. Mosques nowadays are not only at the center of society as places of worship for Muslims, but they also play an important strategic role in the advancement of Muslim civilization. Mosques are not only places of worship, but also centers for education, learning, and religious research. The 2005 Muis conference called for local mosques to change and focus on Islamic learning and education by establishing mosque madrasahs. The MUIS (SIES), or Singapore Islamic Education System, launched the aL.I.V.E (Learning Islamic Values Everyday) programme in 2004. It was initially tried at a few mosques, and it is planned that all mosques would fully implement the programme by 2015.

This Islamic education programme was created to generate Muslims who are intelligent, confident, and of noble character, in keeping with Muis' aim of establishing a magnificent Muslim community in Singapore. The L.I.V.E.

programme provides a curriculum that matches current needs while being exciting and interactive for students of varying ages.

Learning environments can be evaluated from a number of angles, such as infrastructure and facilities. It starts to advocate for social and physical norms. The learning methodologies of Islamic religious education are supported by well-designed and standard-compliant learning environments, and vice versa. The mosque madrasah's infrastructure and amenities are often quite respectable and suitable. This is so that all mosque madrasahs and other educational establishments in Singapore can comply with the standards and requirements established by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MUIS). Everyone knows that the criteria used by the MUIS are suitable.

One could characterize the madrasah's mosque facilities and infrastructure as excellent. From the Researcher own observations, he reviewed the condition of aL.I.V.E classes in several mosques. The presence of LCD monitors, appropriate air conditioners or fans, and other auxiliary equipment in every classroom at the madrasah has been verified. Because they are furnished with items that can aid in teaching and learning, the classrooms also have a very tidy, roomy, and comfortable ambiance that helps spark students' interest in learning.

For this reason, the infrastructure and amenities of this mosque madrasah satisfy the requirements of international education. Mosque madrasah, of course, continue to work towards developing and improving their infrastructure and facilities because these norms are merely the minimum. Instead, the mosque madrasah fosters an attitude of progress and improvement over the past. The Singapore Mosque Madrasah's aL.I.V.E. curriculum is bolstered by a favorable learning environment complete with sufficient infrastructure and amenities. From the Researcher own observations, although appropriate facilities and infrastructure are not the only important variables that contribute to the effectiveness of the learning process, they do play a significant role.

If a teacher without sufficient infrastructure and facilities is able to elevate his students to the highest level of learning, then it stands to reason that the learning process itself can yield several benefits when combined with sufficient infrastructure and facilities. Conversely, in the event that a teacher's failure to achieve the highest possible learning outcomes for his students is attributable to a lack of infrastructure and facilities, he may be able to improve upon previous results with the aid of sufficient infrastructure and facilities.

C. Islamic education curriculum innovation

Curriculum innovation is a dynamic process that involves the integration of new resources and tools, including technology, teaching materials, and evaluation techniques, into the planning, implementation, and evaluation of a curriculum. The primary objective of curriculum innovation is to enhance the quality and

effectiveness of education and learning outcomes. It is important to keep in mind that the curriculum is not an end in itself, but rather a means to achieve educational goals. Thus, it should be flexible and adaptable to changes in societal and cultural values, as well as the evolving needs of students. In short, curriculum innovation is an ongoing process of responding to the changing demands of education and society (Hadi, Syaifullah & Yusuf, 2022).

A strong understanding of curriculum innovation is essential for effectively applying fundamental principles of basic education. It's worth noting that curriculum innovation and educational achievement are closely intertwined. The advancement of education heavily relies on teachers' proficiency in carrying out their responsibilities, which encompasses a thorough comprehension of the curriculum. Without teachers possessing a comprehensive understanding of curriculum innovation, accurately gauging educational progress becomes a formidable task (Banfatin, 2024).

The concept of innovation is frequently linked to the invention and discovery of words. Invention describes the process of bringing forth something novel through human ingenuity, whereas discovery is the act of identifying something that already exists. Innovation, on the other hand, refers to a fresh approach to solving a problem in a specific social setting. Alternatively, Donald P. Ely posits that innovation can encompass any creation by humans that is perceived as novel and advantageous to society, as discussed in Sa'ud (2012), "*An innovation is an idea for accomplishing some recognition social and in a new way or for a means of accomplishing some social.*"

Educational innovation, as defined by Santoso S. Hamidjojo and quoted in Abdulhak's work (2002), involves a deliberate and qualitative change that aims to enhance one's ability to achieve specific goals, particularly in the realm of education. Meanwhile, the curriculum pertains to a logically and systematically arranged set of educational programs or student learning programs that are the responsibility of the school or teacher, geared towards achieving the institution's educational objectives (Setiawan, 2012). Essentially, the curriculum serves as a practical tool to help schools structure their teaching and learning processes, with the educational institution and its teaching staff taking charge of its development and implementation (Risnajayanti, 2023).

D. Islamic learning in the aL.I.V.E programme

MUIS has recently introduced a new initiative called the aL.I.V.E programme (Learning Islamic Values Everyday) through the Singapore Islamic Education System (SIES) programme, which was launched back in 2004. Initially, the programme was introduced as a trial in a few mosques and was later rolled out to all local mosques in 2015. The full integration of the aL.I.V.E programme across all mosques is aimed at promoting Islamic values and education throughout Singapore (MUIS, 2015). During the early days of the Madrasah Mosque, education was

conducted through conventional methods such as lectures, Q&A sessions, and discussions. This differs from the modern Islamic education system in terms of its objectives, teachers, students, curriculum, methods, facilities, and infrastructure. Despite the lack of innovation in conventional methods, students were able to learn and keep up with the lessons taught.

Before the introduction of the aL.I.V.E programme, mosque madrasahs used a curriculum structure based on the learning module system of the Majelis Ulama Islam Singapura (MUIS). This system consisted of four religious subjects: *Fiqh*, *Tauhid*, *Sirah*, and *Akhlak*, and was organized into six primary levels (numbered 1 to 6) and four intermediate levels (numbered 1 to 4). In further developments, MUIS conducted research to evaluate the effectiveness of the Madrasah Mosque programs in Singapore. The results revealed that only 40% of Muslim children in Singapore attended structured religious classes (Risnajayanti, 2023). This percentage does not include children who attend madrasahs full-time. Therefore, MUIS believes it is crucial to provide a more comprehensive religious education to every Muslim child through targeted and structured concepts and programmes.

Source of the 2020 Republic of Singapore population census, 15.6% are Muslim, Malays make up 82%, Indian Muslims make up 13% and the remaining 5% are from Chinese, Serani and other communities. Because of the diverse requirements of the Muslim community, Islamic religious education in mosques has also changed. MUIS, the body responsible for conducting Islamic religious education in Singapore's mosques, has developed an entirely new system by putting together a curriculum, syllabi and textbooks, and using English as the language of instruction. This structured programme uses an integrated and thematic approach in its courses. This integrated curriculum organizes several subjects into several themes. Thus, the boundaries of an integrated curriculum (curriculum integration) between all subjects are no longer visible at all as all subjects have been formulated in the form of problems or units (MUIS, 2024).

E. aL.I.V.E programme curriculum

In simple terms, the curriculum can be interpreted as a set of plans and agreements regarding objectives, materials and learning materials, as well as the methods (methodologies) used as guidelines for the implementation of learning activities to achieve specific educational objectives. The curriculum is one of the things that must be present in every educational process because it has a very important function in education.

In terms of curriculum, the mosque madrasahs in Singapore have created their curriculum using the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme developed by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS). This programme is a new program introduced by the MUIS (SIES) or Singapore Islamic Education System in 2004. The aL.I.V.E (Learning Islamic Values Every Day) programme offers

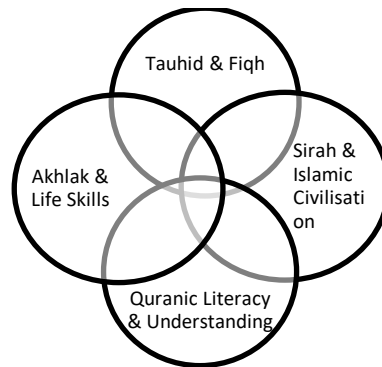
a curriculum that is relevant, engaging, interactive and tailored to the age of the students (5-20 years) (aLIVE, 2024).

Several important elements, including content, teaching and learning strategies, assessments, and well-defined objectives, are necessary for the curriculum to be implemented successfully. In part-time madrasahs, it is impossible to isolate the educational system from a full curricular structure. The MUIS curriculum section creates the curriculum. The mosque is tasked with overseeing that the teaching personnel adheres to all MUIS requirements when delivering the product. Positive adaptations, however, are not an issue. A fundamental Islamic curriculum appropriate for Muslim children and youth between the ages of 5 and 20 is what the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme seeks to offer. It seeks to support young Muslims in Singapore in overcoming obstacles in life with tenacity and self-assurance while preserving their Islamic identity amidst the multiculturalism of the country and the wider world.

The aL.I.V.E program seeks to inculcate values, through modelling so children can see them being practiced. Teachers will also facilitate these values by providing opportunities for the children to personally engage in the moral process. This is the intuitive instructional model proposed by the Quran and followed by the earlier generations of Muslim scholars (aLIVE, 2024). The programme managed by MUIS is divided into four age levels, namely:

1. Kids aL.I.V.E (5-8 years old). This programme provides an introduction to Islam. Students are exposed to the basics of Islam, especially in Aqidah, to anchor their beliefs from a young age.
2. Tweens aL.I.V.E (9-12 years old). This programme builds on students' knowledge of Islam from the previous programme. Students are guided on understanding and carrying out responsibilities as Muslims so that they will be prepared to face the challenges of pre-teen life.
3. Teens aL.I.V.E (13-16 years old). This programme reinforces Islamic values and builds on students' existing knowledge of Islam. It also provides a platform for students to discuss Islamic perspectives on issues like identity, entertainment, relationships and other relevant areas concerning teens.
4. Youth aL.I.V.E (17-21 years old). This programme provides a variety of modules for youths with different backgrounds and interests. It also provides an opportunity for youths with minimal or no formal Islamic education background to "catch up" via the "Revisit Series".
5. Re-visit Series. The aim of the Re-visit Series programme is for teenagers to understand more deeply the concept of the Pillars of Faith and the Pillars of Islam, so that they will be more confident in worshipping Allah. At the end of this session, teenagers will be able to understand more deeply about matters of faith and belief, such as belief in Allah, the Messengers, Angels, the Day of Judgment and the concepts of *Qada'* and *Qadhar*. In this chapter, emphasis will be placed

on the importance of the 5 daily prayers and fasting in the month of Ramadan as well as the feeling of confidence and enthusiasm to practice Islamic teachings in daily life wherever and under any circumstances, to strengthen their identity as a Muslim.



Picture 2. aL.I.V.E. Program Curriculum

The diagram above shows the emphasis and objectives of teaching and learning in all courses taught in the aL.I.V.E programme. The four science majors are given different emphasis according to the appropriate study level. At the Teens aL.I.V.E level (aged 13 -16 years) emphasizes Islamic values and develops existing knowledge of the Islamic religion. This programme also acts as a platform for students, discussing from an Islamic perspective regarding issues such as introduction, entertainment, relationships and other matters related to teenagers. There are no exams, just an assessment of achievement through skills and participation in class (aLIVE, 2024).

Below is a comparison of the aL.I.V.E lesson curriculum with traditional madrasahs, including:

Table 1. Comparison of the aL.I.V.E Program Curriculum with Conventional Subjects

Subjects	aL.I.V.E	Traditional Madrasah
3 Get to know Islam Pillars of Islam	Faith And	Tauhid
Prayer Ablution & Prayer	Practice	Fiqh
Cleanliness in Islam	Character and Life Skills	Akhlaq
Get to Know Prophet Prophet Muhammad spread Islam	Social and Civilizational Islam	Sirah
Iqra' & Recite Al-Qur'an	Qur'anic Literacy	Iqra' & Recite Al-Qur'an

The innovative Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme curriculum was developed and presented using many teaching models and methodologies, including inductive, deductive, integrative, and elective. This is evident in classroom learning activities, which are all part of the aL.I.V.E. implementation component. The aL.I.V.E programme utilized a variety of innovative learning tools, including LCD projectors, multimedia, MS PowerPoint, audiovisual,

and so on. A comprehensive curricular structure that focuses on objectives, content, methods, media, and evaluation. Below is an explanation of each of the four parts:

a. Objective

The Learning Programme (aL.I.V.E) at the Madrasah Mosque aims to enable Singapore's Muslim community to enroll their children in Islamic religious programme. The learning is an effort to improve knowledge and the transformation process so that it can achieve the expected quality, which can eventually produce students who are knowledgeable and practice religious values. And also, they become individuals who believe and are pious so that they have good morals, as well as students who are protected from various forms of delinquency.

b. Content

MUIS has produced the English language curriculum for the aL.I.V.E programme at the Singapore Mosque Madrasah, including a lesson plan for teachers. The subjects of this structured programme are taught using an integrated and thematic method approach. This integrated curriculum divides numerous subjects into themes. As a result, the borders of an integrated curriculum (Curriculum Integration) between all subjects, such as *Fikeh*, *Tauhid*, *Sirah*, and *Akhlak*, are no longer obvious because all subjects have been formulated as issues or units.

c. Methodology

The aL.I.V.E. learning process can be concluded based on field monitoring outcomes. The Madrasah Mosque is functioning properly, however there is still potential for development in terms of learning methods and strategies. Almost every teacher in this programme used a variety of tactics, including lectures, discussions, questions, group discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. In general, teachers at Mosque Madrasahs use effective approaches and strategies in the learning process. However, it still has to be improved because, according to field monitoring results, not all teachers are enthusiastic about acquiring various approaches and strategies, maybe due to a lack of mastery of the English language.

d. Media

LCD projectors, multimedia, Microsoft PowerPoint, audiovisual, and other novel learning tools have been utilized to supplement and improve the effectiveness of learning. The teacher has also planned educational and entertaining classroom activities.

e. Evaluation

According to field observations and research, practically all Mosque Madrasah teachers completed the class assessment procedure by filling out the MUIS-provided student progress books. At least three religion-related elements must be evaluated in students:

1. Students' knowledge and grasp of the Islamic faith.
2. Implementation of worship practices.

3. Good values and personality.

When determining learning materials, the appropriate technique will be used, taking into account the objectives that have been specified, as well as how the material is presented, and will be supported by appropriate media. Learning evaluation will take into account the learning objectives, materials offered, media and tactics used, and other interdependent and mutually intrusive components. To fulfil learning objectives, it cannot be separated from the current educational system, particularly with the implementation of the aL.I.V.E education system developed by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS).

F. Factors that Inhibit the Smoothness of the aL.I.V.E. Programme

Based on a discussion of the curriculum for the "Learning Islamic Values in Everyday Life" (aL.I.V.E.) programme in part-time madrasahs, the researcher concludes that the curriculum for Islamic learning in the aL.I.V.E. programme at the Singapore Mosque Madrasah is consistent with the plans and curriculum. The programme executed at the mosque madrasah aims to generate students who are knowledgeable and practice Islamic ideals, so that they become devout and pious individuals with high morals, as well as to prevent students from engaging in various sorts of crime. However, the researcher feels that pupils enrolled in the aL.I.V.E. programme have not acquired a sufficient education. Several reasons contribute to the aL.I.V.E. programme's inefficiency, including:

- a. The Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme offers an engaging and unique curriculum. However, pupils that participate in this programme are still unable to internalize these skills and apply them in real life. Based on the researcher's own experience, as well as input from numerous teachers and confessions from several parents of students who participated in the aL.I.V.E programme, they stated that their children were still unable to perform well in shalat despite having advanced to the Teens aL.I.V.E level. This could be because the topic (material)'s composition, which includes an integrative thematic concept, makes it difficult for students to understand the lessons they are learning.
- b. The subjects of this structured programme are taught using an integrated and themed methodological approach. This integrated curriculum organizes many subjects into themes. The distinction between disciplines in theme learning is less obvious. The emphasis in learning is on discussing things that are most relevant to the students' life. This curriculum also does not cover specific topics like *fikeh*, *tauhid*, *sirah*, and *akhlak*. Topics with thematically connected information do not help students understand topics like the Pillars of Islam and the Pillars of Faith. Learning time is also extremely limited. Teachers frequently find themselves unable to compensate for the time provided for classes since they must oversee the learning activities contained in each programme lesson.

- c. One of the challenges with the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme is that the textbooks and lesson plans are all written in English, which can make it challenging for the teachers to teach the material because the majority of them are non-native speakers of English. Islamic colleges or madrasahs, where conversations are typically in Malay. Unlike national schools, where English is the only language taught, this is not the case. There are some differences between teaching Islamic studies and teaching other courses. Teachers of other topics anticipate that their pupils will comprehend and perform well in the subject. In contrast, instructors in Islamic education aim for their pupils to not only grasp and excel in the material but also be able to apply it and use it as a guide for life both here on Earth and in the hereafter.

In addition, some teachers still lack proficiency in teaching English. Because different teachers have different perspectives on the curriculum and the available textbooks, this results in disparities in academic comprehension. In teaching and learning activities, this has an impact on how teachers and students interact. Teachers, on the other hand, may occasionally require specialized training from the MUIS in order to understand the aL.I.V.E. programme's curriculum. Given that not all religious education teachers are certified to teach the aL.I.V.E. course without prior training, it can be difficult to locate a substitute teacher in the event of a permanent teacher's absence.

- d. It was determined that the mosque had to be age-appropriate after an observational study of teenage pupils taking part in the madrasah's Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme. Since many of the students were too old to start the programme at the beginning but lacked even rudimentary religious knowledge, the researcher pointed out that the students typically struggled to understand the lessons because they were above their current level of understanding. These pupils frequently lament their boredom before becoming disoriented and ultimately dropping out of the program. The failure of religious education to effectively serve its role as a means of moral instruction for teens accounts for some of the adolescent population's proneness to anger, disrespect for parents, rudeness, and lack of discipline during worship.
- e. The path a student pursues in the field of education is determined by the assessment process. Reliable data acquired through assessment exercises is necessary to enhance the learning process. Because of this, enhancing teachers' capacity to administer assessments needs to be a top concern in raising educational standards since it ensures that data collected is reliable and allows for targeted improvement. As part of the mosque madrasah aL.I.V.E. programme, pupils are given comprehension test items in class but do not have written or oral exams at the conclusion of the school year. Only the completion of the students' performance book, which is based on their participation in class and skill set, is used to assess the growth and advancement of the participants in this

programme. Teachers evaluate a variety of aspects of their students' learning through visual observation, including behavior, communication, and interactions with their work. This type of grading system, in the researcher's opinion, is inaccurate.

Conclusion

The researcher in this study claimed that imparting Islamic educational ideals to students is a crucial responsibility. In order to attain inner harmony, physical and mental progress, and the development of a personal character based on Islamic teachings, the goal is to educate pupils with faith and knowledge. Thus, significant efforts must be taken to ensure that all Islamic educational institutions serve as a platform for students' character development by offering them all the resources necessary to grow into wiser adults.

To preserve the quality of the learning process in the mosque madrasah, adjustments must be made on a regular basis, because the better the religious learning process in the part-time madrasah, the better the outcomes for all participants. In light of the study's findings, it is necessary to revise the curriculum of the Learning Islamic Values Everyday (aL.I.V.E) programme by introducing a new curriculum based on the MUIS modular system (conventional) curriculum, which was previously used in mosque management classes.

Curriculum should be carefully prepared due to its relevance in education. The fundamental concepts and understanding that underpin a curriculum, both for individual and social goals, must be clearly specified in order to ensure the continuity of educational patterns and practices. As a result, it is vital to present basic principles for developing a curriculum that is consistent with the purpose and goals of education in Islam. According to the conventional lesson curriculum (before the aL.I.V.E programme was created), the researcher believed that the curriculum contained in the syllabus or subjects was easier to teach to pupils.

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