



## Assistance In Developing a Geragogy-Based Religious Curriculum to Enhance the Spiritual and Physical Well-Being of The Elderly, Bogor

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of this community service program is to provide assistance in the development of a geragogy-based religious curriculum aimed at improving the spiritual and physical well-being of the elderly. By utilizing the potential of existing human resources at the elderly Islamic boarding school (*pesantren lansia*) and through collaboration with various stakeholders, it is expected that following the implementation of the Student Creativity Program (*Program Kreativitas Mahasiswa/PKM*), the teachers at Al-Hikmah Elderly Islamic Boarding School in Cibungbulang, Bogor, will be able to quickly understand and apply the geragogy-based religious curriculum. This curriculum is specifically designed to enhance both the spiritual and physical quality of life of elderly learners. The implementation of this community service program consists of several key stages: identification of educational quality, quality enhancement, network development, mentoring, and monitoring. The results of the program indicate that Al-Hikmah Elderly Islamic Boarding School in Cibungbulang, Bogor, has implemented a number of effective strategies, including: a) the development of a geragogy-based religious curriculum that involves the design of teaching methods and overall learning organization; b) the provision of core textbooks; c) the procurement of educational equipment; d) training for the teaching staff and lecturers; and e) the availability of high-quality literature that promotes both mental and physical well-being. In conclusion, Al-Hikmah Elderly Islamic Boarding School in Cibungbulang, Bogor, has actively implemented various geragogy-based religious curriculum strategies to support the spiritual and physical welfare of its elderly community.

**Keywords:** geragogy-based religious curriculum, spiritual and physical well-being of the elderly



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## 1. Introduction

The increasing number of elderly people in Indonesia presents both a challenge and an opportunity in various aspects of life, including education. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the elderly population in Indonesia continues to grow each year and is projected to reach 19.9% of the total population by 2045 (Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), 2021). As the elderly population increases, the need for education tailored to them—especially in the religious aspect—also grows. Education for the elderly not only serves to broaden their religious understanding but also plays a vital role in enhancing their quality of life and spiritual well-being (Nugroho, T. 2020).

Elderly Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren lansia*) have emerged as an innovation in non-formal education designed to meet the spiritual and social needs of the elderly. Al-Hikmah Elderly Islamic Boarding School in Cibungbulang, Bogor, is one such institution that strives to provide religious education for the elderly. However, it still faces several challenges in implementing education for older adults, particularly due to the absence of a structured and systematic curriculum.

The urgency of this program lies in the need to develop a systematic curriculum so that learning at Al-Hikmah Elderly Islamic Boarding School can be more effective, structured, and have a tangible impact on the elderly. Without a well-directed curriculum, the learning process may become inconsistent and fail to provide optimal benefits for older adults. The benefits of this program include: For Al-Hikmah Elderly Islamic Boarding School: A structured and systematic curriculum based on a geragogical approach, Improved effectiveness of learning through methods that are more suitable for the elderly, Support for educators in managing the teaching and learning process more efficiently. For the Elderly: Enhanced spiritual, mental, and physical well-being through more focused learning, Increased motivation to learn through approaches tailored to their age and condition, Reduced stress and improved happiness through continuous religious education. (Rahman, A., & Sari, D. 2023).

For the Development of Islamic Education and Elderly Care in Indonesia: This program can serve as a model for other Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) that aim to develop religious education for the elderly. It also contributes to the formulation of elderly-focused Islamic education policies. Novelty and Gap in This Community Service Plan (PkM): One of the main challenges in developing a curriculum for elderly Islamic boarding schools is the lack of references and curriculum models specifically designed for elderly learners in Islamic settings. To date, research and studies on Islamic education have predominantly focused on children, adolescents, and adults, while the elderly have yet to become a primary focus (Fauzi, M. 2023). The Identified Gap in Research and Practice of Elderly Islamic Boarding School Education: The following gaps have been identified in the context of elderly Islamic boarding school (*pesantren lansia*) education: There is no standardized curriculum model for elderly Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Limited research exists on the implementation of geragogy-based curricula in Islamic education for the elderly. Many boarding school still apply conventional teaching methods that are not yet based on the holistic needs of elderly



learners. Through this community service program (PkM), a geragogy-based curriculum will be developed that considers the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of elderly learners. This curriculum will serve as an innovation in Islamic education for the elderly and could become a reference model for other elderly boarding school in Indonesia.

## 2. Methods

This community service program adopts a Geragogy-Based Participatory Approach, grounded in the core principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR). This approach is specifically designed to develop and implement a religious curriculum that aligns with the needs and characteristics of elderly learners at Al-Hikmah Elderly Islamic Boarding School. The PAR framework enables active involvement of the elderly as key participants throughout the entire curriculum development process—from needs assessment and planning to learning evaluation. From an axiological perspective, this method aims to promote participation, empowerment, social justice, and meaningful transformation. Each step of the program is structured to empower both the elderly and teaching staff, ensuring they have ownership and control over the curriculum they help design and implement.

Table 1 Diagram Illustrating the Community Service Method Based on Participatory Action Research (PAR) Using A Geragogy-Based Participatory Approach

Stages	Main Activities	Objectives	Output
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Literature review on geragogy and elderly curriculum</li> <li>- Survey &amp; interviews with elderly students and instructors</li> <li>- Initial module development</li> </ul>	Identifying the needs and characteristics of the elderly and drafting the initial curriculum	Developing the initial module for the religious curriculum based on geragogy principles
Implementation	a. Teacher Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training on geragogy principles</li> <li>● Simulation of active methods</li> </ul> b. Curriculum Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Workshop</li> <li>● Material development</li> </ul> c. Trial Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Limited sessions</li> </ul>	Capacity Building and Curriculum Development Enhancing teacher capacity Designing curriculum based on elderly experiences	Pilot Curriculum and Interactive Learning Methods.



		● Observation of effectiveness		
Monitoring & Evaluation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Classroom observation</li> <li>● Interviews &amp; Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</li> <li>● Qualitative &amp; quantitative assessment</li> </ul>	To assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and teaching methods	Elderly participation data, participant satisfaction, and improvement in spiritual well-being.
Reflection & Revision		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Analysis of evaluation data</li> <li>● Curriculum revision</li> <li>● Development of curriculum guidelines</li> </ul>	Refining the curriculum and developing a replicable model	Geragogy-based religious curriculum guide for Islamic boarding schools for the elderly

By applying a geragogy-based participatory approach within the PAR framework, this community service activity not only produces a curriculum that is academically and spiritually relevant but also fosters a sense of ownership and active involvement among the elderly learners. It is hoped that this approach will enhance the quality of learning while also sustainably improving their spiritual well-being.

### 3. Results and Discussion

This community service activity was carried out at the Elderly Islamic Boarding School and was attended by approximately five members of the teaching staff. The workshop began with a session on the development of a geragogy-based religious curriculum aimed at enhancing the spiritual and physical well-being of the elderly, delivered by Agus Ali. This material was presented to help the teachers understand the concept of a geragogy-based religious curriculum, enabling them to become competent educators who are well-versed in curriculum design. Following that, a session on educational quality was delivered by Hidayat. This session was more practical in nature, where all participating teachers were asked to directly apply the principles of a geragogy-based religious curriculum within the context of the elderly boarding school. Throughout the activity, from the first to the final session, the team observed a high level of enthusiasm from the teachers. They actively engaged in the program, eager to expand their knowledge on curriculum development that supports the spiritual and physical well-being of elderly learners. During the Q&A and discussion sessions, the team received several questions related to the presented materials. Based on interviews, it was confirmed that some teachers stated that in supporting the development of a geragogy-based religious curriculum to improve the spiritual and

physical well-being of the elderly in Bogor, they had already implemented several strategies, such as:

1. The development of a geragogy-based religious curriculum involves designing teaching methods and the overall organization of the learning process.
2. The provision of core religious textbooks.
3. Training for the teaching staff.

In general, this activity can be considered effective and efficient. In other words, the assistance provided in developing a geragogy-based religious curriculum aimed at improving the spiritual and physical well-being of the elderly is considered well-targeted. Teaching management—or instructional administration—refers to the processes involved in organizing and managing all activities related to teaching, with the aim of ensuring that all instructional activities are carried out effectively, efficiently, and properly. Among the key elements of an educational system are input (resources), the educational process, and educational outcomes. The elderly Islamic boarding school has already implemented several strategies, contributing to a quality educational process. Ensuring a high-quality educational process is essential, as it determines the achievement of educational outcomes in line with national education goals. This aligns with the provisions of the National Education System Law (UUSPN) Number 20 of 2003, Article 3, which emphasizes the importance of quality in educational processes to achieve the desired educational outcomes. The law states: “National education has a vital role in developing individual potential and shaping strong character and culture within society, with the aim of improving collective life. It seeks to create individuals who believe in and are devoted to God Almighty, who behave ethically, are healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and are responsible, democratic members of society.”



Figure 1 Learning material presentation setting

Assistance in developing a religious curriculum for the elderly requires an approach that takes into account their unique needs and characteristics. One relevant theory in this context is Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura (1977). This theory emphasizes that individuals can learn through social interaction,



observation, and imitation of others' behavior. In the context of religious learning for the elderly, interaction with peers during religious activities—such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic study sessions, and Islamic discussions—can serve as an effective learning mechanism to enhance their spiritual and psychological well-being (Rahman, A., & Sari, D. 2023).

In addition to the spiritual aspect, Bandura's theory is also relevant in the development of a religious curriculum that promotes financial independence for the elderly. Studies have shown that community-based learning approaches can help elderly individuals acquire economic skills by observing and imitating entrepreneurial practices within elderly Islamic boarding schools that have a business-oriented focus (Asadori, A., & Wahyuni, S. 2024). This supports the idea that social learning is not limited to academic aspects but can also be applied to strengthening the economic capacity and independence of the elderly.

The participatory approach in curriculum development also aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Actively involving the elderly in the curriculum planning process enhances their engagement in religious activities, making the learning experience more meaningful and better suited to their specific needs (Hernadi, D. 2021). Therefore, the integration of a spiritual approach, financial independence orientation, and active involvement of the elderly in religious curriculum development can enhance their well-being in a holistic manner (Suryaningsih, A., & Fathuddin, T. I. 2022). Geragogy theory was developed as a learning approach specifically designed to meet the needs of the elderly. This theory was first introduced by Havighurst (1961) through the concept of successful aging, which emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning for the well-being of older adults. As research has progressed, geragogy has become increasingly recognized as a distinct approach—different from pedagogy, which focuses on children, and andragogy, which is oriented toward adult learners (Smith, J. A., & Doe, R. L. 2020).

In the context of assisting the development of a religious curriculum for the elderly, geragogy theory is highly relevant, as older adults have unique needs and challenges in the learning process. A curriculum designed with this approach can adapt learning methods to be more interactive and participatory. Elderly learners tend to better understand material through group discussions, practical worship simulations, and approaches that do not pressure them to memorize or grasp concepts quickly (Martinez, L. M., & Garcia, P. 2021). In addition, a comfortable and supportive learning environment is also a crucial factor in enhancing their motivation and concentration (Smith, J. A., & Doe, R. L. 2020).

In the context of assisting the development of a religious curriculum for the elderly, these theories highlight that religious education must be designed with consideration for the psychological, social, and spiritual needs of older adults. Elderly individuals who are actively involved in religious communities tend to have broader social networks and receive greater emotional support from their surroundings. (Smith, J. A., & Doe, R. L. 2020). This support can help the elderly cope with stress and



anxiety while also providing a stronger sense of purpose in life. In addition, the physical aspect is also important, as research shows that religious activities, such as congregational prayer and meditation, can contribute to the physical health of the elderly, including blood pressure stability and improved immune system function (Kumar, R., & Singh, P, 2022).

To ensure the effectiveness of religious education programs for the elderly, the curriculum developed must be geragogy-based—an educational approach tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of older adults. (Rahman, A., & Sari, D, 2023). It emphasizes the importance of interactive, flexible, and experience-based learning methods in enhancing the effectiveness of education for the elderly. Additionally, the success of this program also depends on the readiness of educators to adapt teaching methods that are elderly-friendly (Nguyen, T. K., & Harrison, K. 2019). By applying Activity Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in the development of the religious curriculum, this program will not only enhance the elderly's understanding of religion but also holistically contribute to their mental, social, and physical well-being.

An accessible approach in elderly education is also closely related to the Cognitive Load Theory developed by John Sweller (1988). This theory posits that learning becomes more effective when information is presented in a way that does not overload an individual's cognitive capacity. In the context of Islamic education for the elderly, the use of simple language, visual aids, and concrete examples can help them better understand religious concepts, reduce cognitive fatigue, and enhance their memory retention of the material taught. (Lee, S. H., & Kim, H. J, 2018).

Furthermore, social interaction in religious education is closely related to the Social Support Theory, which suggests that support from one's surrounding environment can significantly enhance an individual's emotional and mental well-being. Through activities such as religious study circles (*pengajian*), dhikr groups, and Qur'anic interpretation sessions, elderly individuals not only gain religious understanding but also experience social support that can help reduce stress, increase happiness, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the community. (Kumar, R., & Singh, P. 2022).

Finally, the Engagement Theory emphasizes that active involvement in the learning process enhances both motivation and learning outcomes. Elderly individuals who actively participate in discussions, worship practices, and religious social activities tend to feel more valued, exhibit greater enthusiasm for learning, and gain more significant spiritual and social benefits (Smith & Doe, 2020). Therefore, the development of a religious curriculum for the elderly must take into account methods that encourage their active participation, such as open discussions, question-and-answer sessions, **and** communal worship practices.

By applying these theories, the assistance in developing a religious curriculum for the elderly can be more effective in enhancing their religious understanding, emotional well-being, and social engagement. A curriculum designed with consideration for social learning, constructivism, cognitive load, social support, and active engagement will be



more inclusive and adaptive to the needs of elderly learners, thereby generating a broader positive impact on their overall quality of life.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The implementation of this community service program, which provided education and guidance on developing a geragogy-based religious curriculum to enhance the spiritual and physical well-being of the elderly, involved several strategies that have already been put into practice. The Elderly Islamic Boarding School in Bogor has begun implementing various strategies aligned with a geragogy-based curriculum. It is expected that these efforts will support a quality educational process, which is essential to achieving high-quality educational outcomes in line with the pesantren's primary goal: to improve the spiritual and physical well-being of the elderly.

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