



Ma'had Aly Lecturers' Research and Publication Activities: Challenges and Prospects

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Abstract

Purpose

In Islamic higher education, Ma'had Aly lecturers rarely performed research and publication activities. The study aimed to explore Ma'had Aly lecturers' in conducting research and publishing scholarly works activities.

Method

This qualitative study used a case study design whose data collection techniques utilized in-depth interviews and a review of relevant articles. The informants comprised four Ma'had Aly lecturers taken purposively.

Results/Findings

The findings revealed problems that caused lecturer Ma'had Aly to rarely carry out research and publication activities. In terms of personnel problems, apart from the fact that Ma'had Aly lecturers had not only adequate knowledge regarding research and publications, but they were also burdened with a heavy teaching load and other non-academic activities. Meanwhile, in terms of institutional problems, Ma'had Aly could not create a conducive atmosphere for lecturers to perform research and publication activities.

Conclusion

Research and publication are important for Ma'had Aly lecturers for their professional development. Therefore, both Ma'had Aly management and the Ministry of Religion should make various efforts to accelerate the research and publication competency improvement of Ma'had Aly lecturers.

Keywords

Ma'had Aly lecturers, research, publication, scholarly works.

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Abstrak

Tujuan

Kajian ini dilakukan berdasarkan temuan awal bahwa dosen Ma'had Aly jarang melakukan kegiatan penelitian dan publikasi. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menggali aktivitas dosen Ma'had Aly dalam melakukan penelitian dan menerbitkan karya ilmiah.

Metode

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus dan teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan wawancara mendalam dan review artikel yang relevan. Informan terdiri dari empat orang dosen Ma'had Aly dan kerangka teori dalam penelitian ini adalah komunikasi keilmuan

Hasil/temuan

Hasil temuan mengungkap permasalahan yang menyebabkan dosen Ma'had Aly jarang melakukan kegiatan penelitian dan publikasi termasuk permasalahan dosen dan institusi. Dari sisi permasalahan dosen, selain karena dosen Ma'had Aly tidak hanya mempunyai pengetahuan yang memadai mengenai penelitian dan publikasi, mereka juga dibebani dengan beban mengajar yang berat dan kegiatan non-akademik lainnya. Sedangkan dari sisi permasalahan kelembagaan, Ma'had Aly belum mampu menciptakan suasana yang kondusif bagi para dosen untuk melakukan kegiatan penelitian.

Kesimpulan

Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa baik manajemen Ma'had Aly maupun Kementerian Agama dituntut untuk melakukan berbagai upaya percepatan peningkatan kompetensi dosen Ma'had Aly, khususnya dalam melakukan kegiatan penelitian dan publikasi.

Kata kunci

Dosen Ma'had Aly, aktivitas penelitian dan publikasi, karya ilmiah.

المخلص

الهدف

أجريت هذه الدراسة بناءً على النتائج الأولية التي تفيد بأن محاضري المعهد نادراً ما يقومون بأنشطة البحث والنشر. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على أنشطة المحاضر معهد علي في إجراء البحوث ونشر الأوراق العلمية.

الطريقة

يستخدم هذا البحث منهج دراسة الحالة وتقنيات جمع البيانات باستخدام مقابلات متعمقة ومراجعات للمقالات ذات الصلة. وتكون المخبرون من أربعة محاضرين من المعهد العالي، وكان الإطار النظري في هذا البحث هو التواصل العلمي.

النتائج

تكشف النتائج عن المشكلات التي تجعل المحاضر معهد علي نادراً ما يقوم بأنشطة البحث والنشر، بما في ذلك المشكلات المتعلقة بالمحاضرين والمؤسسية. فيما يتعلق بمشاكل المحاضرين، بصرف النظر عن حقيقة أن المحاضرين في المعهد ليس لديهم المعرفة الكافية فيما يتعلق بالأبحاث والمنشورات فحسب، بل إنهم مثقلون أيضاً بعبء التدريس الثقيل والأنشطة غير الأكاديمية الأخرى. وفي الوقت نفسه، فيما يتعلق بالمشاكل المؤسسية، لم يتمكن المعهد العالي من خلق جو مناسب للمحاضرين للقيام بالأنشطة البحثية.

الخلاصة

تؤكد هذه النتائج أن إدارة المعهد ووزارة الدين مطالبان ببذل جهود مختلفة لتسريع زيادة كفاءة محاضري المعهد، خاصة في إجراء أنشطة البحث والنشر.

الكلمات الرئيسية

المحاضر للمعهد العالي؛ أنشطة البحث والنشر؛ عمل علمي

INTRODUCTION

Ma'had Aly is a higher education institution that differs from other Islamic universities in Indonesia. It is implemented and managed by a *pesantren* (a classical and traditional religious education institution). It runs learning activities based on the study of classical Islamic and Arabic books as well other Islamic boarding schools. *Ma'had Aly* is a form of Islamic higher education institution that has long been the hope and long-awaited presence, especially for students graduating from traditional Islamic boarding schools and those who are interested in continuing their academic education to the tertiary level to deepen the field of religion and master Arabic through studying classic books (Idrus & Abdullah, 2021).

Ma'had Aly's legality was strengthened by Regulation of the Minister of Religion Affairs No. 71, 2015. The presence of an Islamic higher education institution as *Ma'had Aly* is very important because it is hoped that *santri* (students) will have a capable mastery of Islamic religious knowledge (*tafaqquh fiddin*). Besides its Islamic classic books, each *Ma'had Aly* has specialization (*takhoshus*) in certain religious disciplines (Kemenag RI, 2015).

As a formal higher education institution, *Ma'had Aly* should follow academic and cultural regulations like other higher education institutions. *Ma'had Aly* not only conducts teaching and learning activities but also research and publication activities or scientific communication (Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, 2020). Scientific communication is a system in which research and other scientific works are developed, reviewed for quality by disseminating them to the scientific community, and archived for future use (Nemati-Anaraki & Tavassoli-Farahi, 2018). Simply, scientific communication means a process of sharing the findings of studies performed by academics, scholars and researchers through publications to the wider academic community (Borgman, 2000). There are three types of scientists involved in the scientific communication process: conventional, modern and liberal scholars. Each of them brings different beliefs and perspective regarding the process of scientific communication (Shehata et al., 2015)

Some studies on *Ma'had Aly* undertaken by researchers concern with scientific tradition, the authority of the *kyai* (supreme leader), *its* curriculum, *its* function in society, and so on. One study that discusses the scientific tradition in *Ma'had Aly* was conducted by Fuaduddin (2008), a researcher of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion. It pointed out *Ma'had Aly* was built on the basis of a combination of classical intellectual traditions and local Indonesian traditions by emphasizing the values of independence, sincerity, simplicity, the ability to play its role in transmitting and transferring Islamic knowledge, maintaining local Islamic traditions, and other social roles.

In terms of the authority of *kiyai*, some *Ma'had Aly* still have the passive and simple academic culture, relying more on the authority of *kiai* as the highest leadership, especially in academic curriculum development. Therefore, lecturers and students only follow the *kyai's* policies in scientific matters. A case study conducted at *Ma'had Aly Darussunnah* revealed that a *kiyai* has full authority in determining all policies. In curriculum reform, for example, *Ma'had Aly Darussunnah* rejects all forms of curriculum modernization, *kiyai's* policy (Wajdi & Aulia, 2019).

Another study conducted by Zulkhairi and Muzakir (2020) revealed that the curriculum development of *Ma'had Aly* was based on Arabic Islamic classic books. This study discussed how the Arabic Islamic classic books become the basis for all academic activities, not only in the teaching and learning activities of *Ma'had Aly* in Aceh but also in discussions of contemporary issues. Arabic Islamic books, well known among Islamic educational institutions as yellow Islamic books, are always used both by lecturers and students in planning, preparing, and implementing teaching and learning activities. However, currently many *Ma'had Aly* have made many changes, especially in the academic field, while maintaining their traditional characteristics (Fauzi, 2018).

There are at least four initial findings of the preliminary study conducted at four

Ma'had Aly which became the basis for conducting this research. First, most of lecturers has bachelor's degree, while a few of them has master degree doctoral degrees. Second, related to the length of teaching experience at *Ma'had Aly*, on average they have one to four years of teaching experience. Third, in research activity, most of *Ma'had Aly*'s lecturers do not have the opportunity to carry out research funded by *the institution* or the Indonesian Ministry of Religion. However, it does not mean they have never carried out research, they have done some basic research. Fourth, concerning with publication, some of *Ma'had Aly* lecturers have never published their research reports; only a few of them publish their research articles in scientific journals, as well as in books and mass media. It happened because they have been required to focus on the teaching and learning process as a more prioritized activity. Most of their scientific works are stored on channels, namely libraries, their personal computers or laptops, their official *Ma'had* websites and their personal blogs.

Considering the previous studies' and the preliminary study's findings, this research concerns with various efforts of the leaders of the *Ma'had Aly* authorities and the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to improve research and publication skills among *Ma'had Aly* lecturers which have not yet become a tradition of their academic culture. It mainly emphasizes on challenges all parties have to cope with, and prospects that they have in developing *Ma'had Aly* lecturers' research and publication skills.

METHOD

This Qualitative study implemented a descriptive design by conducting in-depth interviews, observations, and studies of relevant literature as data collection techniques. The research engaged key informants from four *Ma'had Alys* in South Kalimantan, in Tuban, East Java, in Parabek, West Sumatra, and in North Aceh, Sumatera. For privacy reasons, the key informants asked the researchers to consider not mentioning *Ma'had Aly*'s name.

Before the researchers conducted field research, a preliminary research was carried out by conducting a survey using a questionnaire instrument that was distributed via Google Form to ten *Ma'had Aly*, however, only four of them replied the questionnaire sheet. The survey was aimed to reveal the respondent's educational level, the length of teaching experience, experience in conducting research activities, and in what channels the research work was published or stored.

Considering some of the researchers' limitations in conducting this study, especially in terms of time and budget, the data collection technique was carried out through in-depth interviews using Zoom meetings. Some questions in the in-depth exercise are based on survey findings and observations about *Ma'had Aly*, which were conducted by browsing the official websites of each *Ma'had Aly*.

The data were analyzed qualitatively using the concept or theory of scientific communication introduced by Nemati-Anaraki & Tavassoli-Farahi (2018). The analysis also considered scientific communication process including conventional, modern, and liberal scholars each of them brings different beliefs (Shehata et al., 2015).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Many academic institutions have expectations and requirements for their lecturers to engage in research activities as part of their job responsibilities. These expectations are often outlined in faculty contracts or institutional guidelines. By fulfilling these expectations, the lecturers show their commitment to their institution and contribute to its academic mission. One of their commitment is doing research and publication. Research activities play a vital role in the academic duties of the lecturers, allowing them to advance knowledge, improve teaching, foster professional development, build reputation, and fulfill institutional expectations (Undang-Undang, 2012). However, there are problems or challenges that *Ma'had Aly* lecturers should cope with, and prospects that they should manage for their professional development.

Challenges in Conducting Research & Publication Activities

A factor that hinders *Ma'had Aly* lecturers to do research and publication in their overloaded work. Although there are still a great number of *Ma'had Alys* that maintain their traditional characteristics; and some *Ma'had Alys* have received modernization, especially in curriculum development and other academic cultures. Contrarily, most of *Ma'had Aly's* lecturers still focus on conducting teaching activities rather than doing research activities and publishing scientific papers. This happens because they have overloaded teaching activities and that *Ma'had Aly's* policy has only prioritized teaching rather than academic activities, such as research and publication of scientific papers. Many *Ma'had Aly* leaders do not realize the importance of facilitating their lecturers to conduct research activities. Even the lecturers are only given a lot of burden in teaching and other tasks in society. Many lecturers carry out teaching activities beyond their obligations, a maximum of 12 credits a week. Such an excessive burden of teaching hours resulted from a lack of personnels, and multiple roles to play. The lecturers also have multiple roles and responsibilities, not only teaching, but also carrying out administrative, social, and religious tasks in the community. Various non-academic activities including religious and social activities require the lecturers to engage. These religious and social activities are often even conducted outside class hours, such as at night. These activities take more time to conduct so the lecturers can not manage their time for doing research. They cannot allocate sufficient time to prepare research proposals, rarely conduct research and even make quality articles that reputable national or international journal can publish. Research takes a lot of time to plan, conduct, analyze, and publish. Therefore, *Ma'had Aly* authority should provide flexibility in lecturers' schedules and workloads so that they have sufficient time and energy to carry out research. The possibility of lecturers having sufficient time and not being too busy will allow them to focus on research and make significant progress.

Overloaded teaching activities also influences the quality of other assigned jobs and works in the institution they must implement as their obligations. In teaching and learning activities, for example, they do not have enough time to prepare and deliver the material properly. They may be in a rush or simply do not have enough time to provide the students with quality teaching and learning activities. Excessive workload can cause accentuation and burnout for lecturers. This can negatively impact their overall well-being and reduce efficiency in their work. With a high teaching load, they may not have enough time to interact individually with students. This can hinder their ability to provide guidance, support, and feedback needed for student academic development. The lecturers who feel burdened with excessive teaching loads can experience a decrease in job satisfaction and motivation. This can affect the quality of their teaching and academic development and can hinder their career advancement and also lose opportunities to contribute to academia.

On the one hand, individuals (stakeholders) have high expectations for *Ma'had Aly* to provide solutions to numerous problems and challenges. However, it is not uncommon for people to blame *Ma'had Aly* or Islamic religious education institutions; this is due to the fact that pesantren has many flaws, which the intellectual community in pesantren (kyai, lecturers, and students) must be aware of and continue to work to correct. Islamic boarding schools, including *Ma'had Aly*, were heavily criticized for being selfish, slow, and orthodox institutions that frequently sought refuge in numerous theories and abstract, closed, and elitist ideas (Rosyidin, 2017).

Another problem is the level of education of *Ma'had Aly* lecturers, most of them are Bachelors (S1). Based on preliminary research findings, from all respondents, 83 lecturers from four different *Ma'had Aly* locations revealed that more than 45 lecturers (55%), had a bachelor's level of education. Of course, the level of education may have an influence on lecturers' tradition in conducting research activities as part of the academic culture in tertiary institutions. Currently, the academic cultural tradition as scholarly communication, both in research and publishing activities among lecturers, is still not optimal, demanding not only lecturers but also *Ma'had Aly* authorities, even the Ministry of Religion

to make efforts. This means that knowledge-sharing activities through publications can be achieved if there is program support that must become part of the academic culture at educational institution (Sarmadi et al., 2017). The demand to change the academic culture which requires performing research and publication activities is not an easy thing for *Ma'had Aly* lecturers to do, but as an obligation *Ma'had Aly* lecturers must try to conduct research and publishing activities as part of their academic activities (Zainuddin, 2017). Thus, despite being a religious institution of higher learning that bases its curriculum on Arabic Islamic classical books for each specialization, *Ma'had Aly* must also engage in academic activities as part of its status as a higher education institution. These activities include conducting research, organizing teaching and learning activities, and disseminating scientific works through journal publications (Behforouz et al., 2023).

Providing financial support for lecturers to do research activities is another serious problem. That universities provide financial support or research grants has become an important program. In addition, universities can also assist lecturers in finding and accessing other resources needed to carry out research, such as collaboration with other researchers, access to research databases, or collaboration arrangements with industry. *Ma'had Aly* does not have an adequate budget allocated for research and publication; and there is neither a research grant allocation from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. As a result, most lecturers rarely conduct research activities, which should also be an academic obligation for them. Accordingly, *Ma'had Aly* management and the Ministry of Religious Affairs should provide support by allocating a special budget to facilitate *Ma'had Aly* lecturers in conducting research activities. Almost all State Islamic tertiary institutions frequently allocate resources for lecturer facilitation. Therefore, organizational commitment is significant and needed to improve organizational performance, including organizations such as universities. Higher education leaders are not wise enough to only demand that their lecturers always try to improve their academic qualifications, but universities do not provide any support to their lecturers (Winarno & Hermana, 2019).

Although they understand that they have an obligation to conduct research, they rarely that these research efforts are still very rare, they continue to be conducted. *Ma'had Aly* lecturers typically conduct research on their own initiative, and they always aim to apply it without incurring significant costs. This is because neither the *Ma'had Aly* board nor the Ministry of Religious Affairs has granted a budget for scholarly activities, such as research. As a result, simple research undertaken by *Ma'had Aly* lecturers typically attempts to gather limited knowledge, such as upgrading teaching materials, as well as to facilitate conversation with fellow lecturers in events known as current topics discussion programs.

Insufficient experience in doing research and publication is another factor contributing to weakening the research quality. The lecturers should emphasize the critical aspect of insufficient experience in research. Conversely, regarding scholarly journal publication engagements among the lecturers, none of them had contributed their own works. It ought to receive backing from both the *Ma'had Aly* authorities and the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the form of accelerated programs designed to enhance the knowledge and publishing abilities of lecturers. The lack of experience in research is caused, among other things, by weak abilities in problem identification and research method. In identifying their research problems, the lecturers of *Ma'had Aly* encountered several challenges with regard to research activities. It is common knowledge that the identification phase is a critical and determining one in the process of conducting further research. The lecturers must possess the requisite knowledge and abilities to recognize research issues. Considerable endeavors are required to furnish lecturers with a variety of strategies to enhance their proficiency in carrying out research problem identification (Ikenwe & Anaehobi, 2020). Additionally, there is a lack of understanding regarding research methods. The dearth of research activity among lecturers can be attributed to their inadequate understanding of research methods. Due to the fact that there are still a significant number of lecturers who lack sufficient knowledge of research methods, they not only conduct research activities infrequently, but also conduct extremely basic studies for the sole pur-

pose of updating their teaching materials and facilitating regular lecturer discussions (Farkhan et al., 2023).

Almost all studies conducted by the lecturers use qualitative methods with a literature study approach by examining several books, both classic religious books (turats) and contemporary books. They never conduct qualitative research with a field approach or conduct research with quantitative methods using statistical analysis. Lack of knowledge about research methods requires the lecturers to make efforts to increase their research knowledge through several accelerated programs such as workshops and research training. Unfortunately, *Ma'had Aly* does not run any acceleration programs that can improve the implementation of research activities in the institution. Accelerated programs, both in the form of training and workshops, are needed not only to broaden research insights but also to sharpen the lecturers' ability to conduct research using appropriate methods and perspectives (Hernandez et al., 2023).

Many *Ma'had Aly* lecturers also use reading sources not only printed but also electronic books. After reading some material they usually hold discussions with their fellow lecturers. Ideally, the lecturers should make more efforts, like exchanging reading materials with fellow lecturers or other senior lecturers. In identifying their information needs, sometimes they also go to the *Ma'had Aly* library to read some reading materials and study them. Reading some of the reading materials in the library allows them to get some ideas related to the research theme they want to explore. However, they consider that the availability of reading sources, both privately owned and owned by the *Ma'had Aly* library, however, is very limited, especially regarding the updating of reading sources needed to carry out research activities.

This is an influential factor that discourages *Ma'had Aly* lecturers to do research. Because of the limited reading resources the lecturers cannot carry out an initial review of their research. *Ma'had Aly's* policy which tends not to allocate its budget for library development, has resulted in adequate reading resources. *Ma'had Aly's* inadequate budget also makes it difficult for libraries to develop their collections, as well as libraries not being managed by professional staff, library supporting facilities are still minimal and deficiencies. These problems created conditions that were not conducive for *Ma'had Aly* lecturers in conducting their research activities.

Of course, related to reading sources is the library collection that the institution should provide. *Ma'had Aly's* library collection that does not grow is also a factor that cause the lecturers not to do research. That library collection is not growing resulted from that almost all the libraries in *Ma'had Aly* are not managed by professional librarians. Some *Ma'had Aly* library is managed by a lecturer who also holds multiple positions.

Ma'had Aly's library is still considered as very poor which in turns causes the lecturers unable to improve their information literacy skills. This is a serious problem as the library is not managed professionally. It is impossible for the library managers to manage it seriously and professionally because they also have other duties, such as being a lecturer or administrative officer. Moreover, the absence of regular library budget allocations for the development and implementation of library collection is also a serious problem. Various activities in the effort to develop and organize library activities require a clear budget allocation. Collection development, library supporting technology facilities, and collaborative network development activities are some of the library activities that need to be carried out and require budget allocations. As the limited budget that *Ma'had Aly* library allocates, various library development activities cannot be carried out regularly. As a result, the existence of a library has almost no role and function in providing information capable of supporting learning and research activities for educational institutions.

Last, using the internet is also another problem faced by *Ma'had Aly* lecturers in carrying out their research activities and meeting information needs for various other academic activities such as teaching and actualizing knowledge. Almost all of *Ma'had Aly* do not subscribe to the internet, however, the lecturers subscribe to the internet independently. In the process of searching for information via the internet, they often faces several obsta-

cles. These obstacles include that not all *Ma'had Aly* subscribe to the internet which can be used widely, but in certain places. Besides the limitations of the internet network, in general *Ma'had Aly* also does not have access to network links or databases, both subscription access and open access, which provide various sources of information needed for their learning and research activities. As a result, the lecturers do not have the skills to find the sources of information. Searching for the information, they just type in a few keywords that they think can get the information they need. However, they do not get the information effectively, and have to spend more time browsing content providers to the intended information.

Prospects in Conducting Research & Publication Activities

The development of research activities and publication in *Ma'had Aly* becomes possible, as there are available supports and resources that all parties can access. These supports include, for example, *kyai's* authority, research workshop and training, targeted journals availability, and research collaboration.

In particular, *Ma'had Aly*, the tradition of full authority of the *kyai* is being transformed into a participation authority, which allows the lecturers to express their opinions and thoughts in order to promote the institution (Jannah, 2019). However, a *kyai* still has a central role in some traditional *pesantren* as a leader. A study conducted by Fauzi (2018) revealed that the *kyai's* authority, especially in terms of education and teaching, had a very significant role. So that the *kyai's* policies and advice became the basis for determining the academic policies of *Ma'had Aly*. As a leader in *Ma'had Aly*, *kyai* with his leadership skills plays a crucial role in improving the lecturers' performance, especially in matters of education, research, and publication. Therefore, his leadership can create a conducive academic atmosphere so that both students and lecturers can conduct various academic achievements (Khaeruman et al., 2022).

Efforts to increase the competence of *Ma'had Aly* lecturers in improving their research abilities through workshops and training are urgently needed. These efforts should be carried out in sustainable programs, like training and workshops on research and publication. Many tertiary institutions have already run acceleration programs for their lecturers every year. Although the limited budget that can be allocated by *Ma'had Aly* to organize accelerated workshops and training activities is still a constraint, the institution can plan and run such programs on a small scale. However, training or workshops to increase competency in conducting research need to be followed up with more concrete and relevant programs supported by *Ma'had Aly* and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The lecturers hope that in the future the institutions' administrators or managements will allocate sufficient budget regularly each year to facilitate them to conduct research like lecturers at other tertiary institutions. The Ministry of Religious Affairs should create a concrete program that provides a special research budget to develop a research tradition among the lecturers as efforts to create a research-based academic culture at *Ma'had Aly* (Farkhan et al., 2023).

Currently, research and publication in Islamic disciplines are necessary to conduct to provide the community with advancements and solution towards the social issues. Therefore, *Ma'had Aly* lecturers' research should be published in international journals to share their ideas and opinion to the world. The importance of *Ma'had Aly* lecturers' scientific work publication in academic journals stems not only from their obligations as lecturers but also from the fact that the published works are studies that refer to various classic Islamic books that are well-known (*muktabarah*) and in high demand in Islamic society. Research activities and publications of both scientific and popular publications become significant theoretically and practically; it is not merely about fulfilling the academic obligation (Kemenristekdikti, 2012).

As the publication of scientific works of *Ma'had Aly* lecturers is relatively rare in scientific channels such as books and journals, both printed and electronic media, the institutions should drive the lecturers to publish their research in journals or other media that are

easily accessed. Their various research works are only stored on *Ma'had Aly's* official website, on their laptops or PC computers and on their blogs and in *Ma'had Aly's* library.

Publishing scientific works, especially in scientific journals, is a must for lecturers in any higher education institutions. As part of the community of official higher education institutions, *Ma'had Aly* lecturers also have an obligation not only to conduct educational activities but also to conduct research and disseminate scientific works to the scientific community (Regan & Julie-Anne, 2012). *Ma'had Aly* lecturers must equip themselves with various skills and knowledge to publish their research work. Therefore, *Ma'had Aly* must assist them to acquire knowledge and skills on how to conduct scientific publications of their research, both publishing books and journal articles. *Ma'had Aly's* management and the Ministry of Religious Affairs also have the responsibility and obligation to improve the competence of lecturers in publishing scientific papers. Therefore, various programs are needed to accelerate the publication of scientific papers in academic journals.

Acceleration programs to increase the quantity and quality of scientific publications can be organized by *Ma'had Aly* management or in collaboration with the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Such programs can invite speakers who have qualified experience and have a reputation for publishing their various works in reputable scientific journals. They share their practical experiences and tips for publishing works in scientific journals with the lecturers who should publish their research articles. Publishing articles is an obligation for lecturers as a part of the global academic community (Undang-Undang, 2012).

However, before publishing their articles, the lecturers must know about the targeted journals, including their scopes and coverage, writing styles, and other technical policies which usually are available in the author guidelines. If they miss such information, the targeted journals applying the Open Journal System (OJS) must reject their works. The targeted journals that become their article destination can be national or international. For the national journals, the lecturers can publish their article in regular or reputable journals with different regulations or requirements to meet. To know whether national journals are reputable, the lectures can identify their accreditation status of having Sinta 1-6 for reputable ones, and not having Sinta level for regular ones. Likewise, to know the quality of reputable international journals, the lecturers can identify whether they were indexed by Scopus with Quartiles (Q1), (Q2), (Q3), (Q4) and so on. Currently, there are many journals with such an international or national reputable status that become the destination of their articles as individual or collaborative works.

In addition, that research activities enable *Ma'had Aly* lecturers to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective fields is another prospect that they can manage. Through conducting research, they can explore new theories, ideas, and concepts that can be shared with their students and the wider academic community (Gan, 2021). Therefore, efforts to enhance the lecturers' research quality are vital for the provision of quality education. They play a vital role in delivering quality education to students. *Ma'had Aly* should make sure that the lecturers have equipped themselves not only with the latest teaching methodologies, subject expertise, and effective communication skills but also research activity skills. This leads to a better learning experience for students. Therefore, *Ma'had Aly* should provide them with opportunities to expand their knowledge, improve their teaching techniques, and by conducting research activities regularly stay updated with advances in their respective fields. This promotes their personal and professional growth, leading to a higher level of job satisfaction and motivation.

By undertaking research, the lecturers can broaden their knowledge, learn new skills, and contribute to their personal development. This not only benefits them but also improves their ability to give high-quality instruction to students. Engaging in research allows them to stay current on the latest advancements and trends in their subjects. This knowledge may be directly applied to their teaching, making lectures more relevant, current, and interesting for students. Research-informed teaching guarantees that students

receive up-to-date and correct knowledge, hence improving overall educational quality. The value of research efforts extends beyond satisfying academic duties as lecturers. More importantly, research efforts contribute to knowledge advancement, teaching quality improvement, professional growth, and institutional reputation. This allows them to incorporate current and relevant knowledge into their lessons, ensuring that their pupils receive the most accurate and valuable education (Tosepu, 2018). Taking part in research activities allows academics to improve their profile and gain respect within their academic communities. Publishing research papers, giving presentations at conferences, and collaborating with other scholars can help a lecturer raise their profile and establish themselves as an authority in their subject. This can lead to a variety of professional opportunities, such as invitations to speak at conferences or collaborate in research initiatives.

Although efforts to increase knowledge and skills in conducting research activities are the obligation of every lecturer, higher education institutions must also strive to make various efforts to help their lecturers. Universities have an important role in improving the competence of lecturers to conduct research activities. *Ma'had Aly* can learn best practices from many universities to improve the competence of lecturers in carrying out their academic duties which not only comprise teaching activities but also research and publication of scientific papers.

Ma'had Aly can build a conducive research environment by providing adequate research facilities such as laboratories, complete libraries, and access to electronic resources. *Ma'had Aly* can also provide training and mentoring for the lecturers, such as in the fields of research methodology, data analysis and scientific publications as organized by many other universities. Such a training will help improve lecturers' understanding and skills in conducting quality research. Research collaboration between *Ma'had Aly* lecturers and others in mono-disciplines, multidisciplines, or inter-disciplines can be an alternative that overcomes the reluctance to conduct research activities. By collaborating, the lecturers can exchange knowledge, experience and research methods which can improve the quality of the research.

The last thing that *Ma'had Aly* can do to increase the research activities is by providing the lecturers with rewards and incentives. The provision of rewards and incentives to the lecturers who conduct high-quality research could be an additional motivation for them to continue to improve their research abilities.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals problems or challenges that cause lecturers to rarely conduct research activities and publish their scientific papers can be classified into those that belong to the lecturers and those that belong to the institutions (*Ma'had Aly*). The problem faced by lecturers is that besides they do not have adequate knowledge and skills in conducting research and publications; they are also given excessive teaching hours and assigned to handle various other non-academic activities, such as social and religious activities. Because of inadequate knowledge and skills regarding research and scientific publications, most *Ma'had Aly* lecturers only do simple research, like descriptive research. They have never done field research either by using test or no-test instruments, survey, or observation as data collection techniques. None of their research has been published as books or journal articles. The lecturers keep their research results in several places, such as the institutional repository and library, the personal blog, and their personal computers or laptops. Institutionally, *Ma'had Aly* does not create conducive academic atmosphere for the lecturers to have sufficient opportunities to perform research and publication. The limited budget allocated became a serious problem that the institutions rarely carry out accelerated programs to improve their competence and skills in conducting research and publication.

The prospects that the institutions and the lecturers can manage include, for instance, research and publication policy, research workshop and training, targeted journals, and

research collaboration. *Ma'had Aly* can establish research and publication policy comprising the guidelines and restrictions for doing research and publishing the results. These rules frequently include ethical norms, processes for obtaining research funding, expectations for academic integrity, and requirements for authorship and publication. They ensure that research undertaken at the institution meets high standards of quality, ethics, and transparency. *Ma'had Aly* can conduct research workshops and training sessions to help researchers develop the skills and knowledge they need to do high-quality research. These workshops address a variety of research topics, including research design, data collection and analysis, literature reviews, academic writing, and publishing ethics. Collaborating with other academics, both inside and outside of the university, to answer complicated research problems and deliver high-impact results is also necessary. It promotes interdisciplinary interchange, broadens research networks, and improves the quality and relevance of research products. Collaboration can take many forms, including as cooperative research initiatives, co-authorship of publications, membership in research consortiums, and the sharing of resources and knowledge. To help the lecturers publish their articles, *Ma'had Aly* frequently gives them access to academic databases and journal subscriptions to help with the publication process. This access allows them to choose appropriate publications for their work, increasing the likelihood of successful publication.

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