

Innovation of the Internship Program and Its Implications for the Soft Skill Development of Prospective Islamic Religious Education Teachers at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The objectives of this study are (1) to analyze the innovation in the implementation of internship activities at FITK and (2) to analyze the impact of internships on the soft skill development of prospective PAI teachers.

Design/methods/approach – This study is qualitative research. The background of the research is the PAI Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah Sciences, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The informants of this research are four (4) laboratory managers, four (4) field supervisors, and 14 students of the PAI Study Program at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Data collection techniques used in-depth interviews, FGDs, and documentation. Data analysis techniques included the stages of data condensation, data display, and concluding/verification. The validity test of the data used a triangulation technique, which included two ways, namely source triangulation and technique.

Findings – First, the innovation of the Integrative Internship program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training has been applied in the form of giving students more freedom to choose a place and formulating the type and form of internship according to the conditions and needs in the field where they are interning. Second, implementing the Integrative Internship program has had advantages in developing students' soft skills. The developed soft skills have included six types, namely communication and relationship-building skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, teamwork skills, leadership skills, stress management, and creativity.

Research implications/limitations – Implementing the integrative independent internship program has provided broad authority to students. This authority has implications for developing students' soft skills. Therefore, the granting of this authority can be continued in the future. Improvements must be made by optimizing the role of DPL, *pamong* teachers, and schools/madrasas in providing services and guidance more optimally so that the development of students' hard skills and soft skills can be maximized.

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Introduction

Internship programs provide experience for prospective teachers in real-learning situations (Kelik & Topkaya, 2017) and opportunities for them to practice the learning competencies and management of educational activities that they have acquired in teacher education programs (Marasigan, 2018; Mardhiyyah, 2019; Nazarudin, 2020). Internship programs can provide prospective teachers with real-life experience in how they manage learning activities, develop effective teaching skills, manage the classroom, and design curriculum and other educational activities (Welsh & Schaffer, 2017). Moreover, this internship program also makes a valuable contribution to the development of prospective teachers' identity (Nghia & Tai, 2017; Zhao & Zhang, 2017), personal growth, sense of self-reliance (Wolf et al., 2010), and socio-psychological adaptation to the school environment for future teachers (Bocharova, 2018). Therefore, internship programs should be well managed with sufficient time duration and selection of competent mentors (Filiz & Durnali, 2019).

However, when schools enacted online learning, the implementation of apprenticeship programs for prospective teachers faced unprecedented serious problems (Eisenbach et al., 2020). Face-to-face learning activities in schools were transferred into online learning from home using various online media platforms (Bhamani et al., 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020; Zaharah & Kirilova, 2020). The change from the face-to-face learning system to online learning was a challenge for the implementation of the internship program for prospective teacher students at the Faculty of *Tarbiyah* and Teacher Training at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

The internship program for prospective teachers has different characteristics and demands compared to other theoretical courses. The learning of theoretical courses can be held online, while the internship program cannot be fully conducted online. The internship program requires practice in real situations in schools or madrasahs. Meanwhile, when learning in schools was transferred to online, internship programs faced many obstacles (Scull et al., 2020) and unique challenges (Moyo, 2020). Accordingly, appropriate strategies were required following the situation and challenges faced. It is in line with the research findings of Shelton et al. (2020), which stated that prospective teacher education needs to provide varied field experiences according to the type and time faced. Higher education institutions that educate prospective teachers are expected to be able to make innovations in educating students so that they are better prepared after carrying out their duties as teachers in schools/madrasahs.

The Faculty of *Tarbiyah* and Teacher Training at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University innovated an internship program known as the Independent Integrative Internship Program from Home (DR). This internship program was developed by the manager of the Education Laboratory of the Faculty of *Tarbiyah* and Teaching Training, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University in order to respond to the situation and conditions existing in the field. This internship program has been principally different from the previous internship programs. One of the differences was students carried out the

internship program from their respective residences and they were given the widest possible authority in choosing the place of internship implementation. Moreover, students were also given a number of alternatives to carry out activity programs, both related to learning and educational internship activities and community service activities. The provision of broad authority to students has had an impact on the development of student soft skills. Therefore, it is very interesting to study.

Many researchers have conducted studies on implementing internship programs for prospective teachers. Among these studies were Holtz & Gnamb's (2017) research on improving the quality of prospective teachers' learning during field experience in Germany and Adu-Yeboah & Kwaah (2018) studied experiential practices for prospective teachers in preparation for practicum in primary schools in Ghana. Asmiyati (2018) examined the improvement of pedagogic competence of PAI teachers at Piyungan Bantul Elementary School. Mustofa (2018) scrutinized the effectiveness of ICT student program training in improving the competence of prospective PAI teachers. McGee (2019) worked on the mentor teacher training program to support prospective teachers in the teaching internship program. Other research on developing student competence through the effectiveness of the educational internship program was conducted by Ismail et al. (2018). Another study was Moyo (2020), examining the future of teacher education practicum in Zimbabwe which focused on practicum assessment using technology. Assunção Flores & Gago (2020) studied teacher education in Portugal with a focus on the challenges, disruptions, and opportunities faced. Brinia & Psoni (2021) examined teaching practicum with fellow pre-service teachers acting as online students in Greece. Hill (2021) studied pre-service teachers' experiences during learning practice activities.

None of the above studies have specifically examined the development of internship programs associated with the development of soft skills of prospective teacher students. Therefore, this study was directed to complement and enrich the existing writings by focusing on internship program innovation and its impact on the soft skill development of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The research questions discussed in this article were: 1) How is the innovation carried out by the manager in organizing internship activities at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teaching Training? 2) How is the impact of the internship program on the development of soft skills of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers?

Methods

This study was qualitative research. The purpose was to analyze the form of innovation of the internship program for prospective PAI teachers at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teaching Training (FITK) at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University (UIN) Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and its impact on developing soft skills of prospective PAI teachers. The informants of this study were four (4) laboratory managers, four (4) field supervisors,

and 14 students of the PAI Study Program at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The subject determination technique used purposive and snowball sampling.

Data collection used in-depth interviews, forum group discussions (FGDs), and documentation. Researchers conducted interviews with laboratory managers, field supervisors, and students of the PAI Study Program at FITK UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Data analysis used interpretative descriptive analysis. The analysis steps included data condensation, data display (data presentation), and conclusion drawing/verification. Researchers tested the validity of the data using a triangulation technique, including two modes or ways of triangulation of sources and techniques.

Result and Discussion

There were two themes of discussion as a result of the study findings, namely the innovation of the internship program developed at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teaching Training at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta and its impact on the soft skill development of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers.

1. Independent Integrative Internship Program Innovation from Home (DR)

The internship program is very important and is one of the requirements for students who will complete the undergraduate program (S1) at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training of UIN Sunan Kalijaga. The Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teaching Training at UIN Sunan Kalijaga has innovated by developing an internship program called the Independent Integrative Internship Program from Home. This internship program has an academic weight in semester credit units (credits) of 8 credits. The implementation time is between 50 to 60 days. The time allocation includes debriefing activities, surveys of the location, preparation of reports, implementation of activity programs, and final exams. This internship program is labeled with the term integration because it combines learning and educational practice activities with community service activities (PkM).

The integration pattern of the internship program was born from the awareness of the importance of integrating the two activities carried out simultaneously, making the student (prospective teachers) role a nation-building and an agent of accelerating development, at the same time well implemented. Students, as prospective scholars, can participate in the development process by going out of the lecture hall and library to implement theory and work in the field. Simultaneously, students carry out learning and educational practice activities, allowing them to gain experience in teacher competencies, which include pedagogical competence, professional competence, social competence, personality competence, and real leadership competence.

Meanwhile, the labeling of this internship program with the term independent from home (DR) as students are given broad authority to choose and determine the place of internship (schools/madrasas and communities), as well as the type and form of program to be implemented. This condition is different from the previous period where the selection of the internship place was fully determined by the manager. Now, the choice

is left to the students. It is intended to provide flexibility and convenience, as well as train students to build good communication with school/madrasah and community managers. Students are given the freedom to select schools/madrasas and community environments that will be chosen as places for implementing learning, education, and community service practices. They communicate with the school/madrasa through known teachers/employees to confirm their willingness and readiness as their internship site. Based on the results of student communication, the manager of internship activities follows up by submitting an official letter to the school/madrasah and community chosen by the student.

The DR Independent Integrative Internship Program aims to (1) prepare prospective teachers to have good soft skills and competencies, (2) train students to implement, integrate, and interconnect the knowledge that has been obtained on campus in schools/madrasas and the community, (3) improve the managerial skills of prospective teachers in the management of education, religion, society, social and health, and (4) improve the ability of prospective teachers to interact socially and solve social-religious and health problems. Meanwhile, the benefits of the DR Independent Integrative Internship Program for students are (1) increasing students' understanding and appreciation of the learning and education process in schools/madrasas and the community, (2) gaining experience in how to think and work interdisciplinarily, so that they can understand the interconnectedness of science in overcoming managerial problems in schools/madrasas and the community, (3) increasing students' concern for the situation and conditions in the community that require a helping thought, (4) obtaining experience on how to think and work in an interdisciplinary manner, so that they can understand the interconnectedness of science in overcoming various educational problems, (5) gaining experience in interacting directly and learning with the community in person in finding, formulating, solving, and overcoming problems in the community in a pragmatic and interdisciplinary manner, and (6) facilitating or streamlining the student study period.

The DR Independent Integrative Internship Program has been grouped into three activities, namely (1) education, literacy, and health activities, (2) social-religious activities, and (3) social community activities. In more detail, the various types of DR Independent Integrative Internship activity programs are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Type of Independent Integrative Internship Program from Home

No.	Activity Group	Activity Type
1	Education, Literacy, and Health	Learning media making Preparing teaching materials following the field of study Online learning assistance Clean and healthy living education Online teaching volunteer Articles on education, literacy, and health

2	Social-Religious	Islamic learning media (Islamic religious moderation) making Preparation of teaching materials for Islamic religious moderation education Preparation of Islamic religious preaching materials for teenagers, parents, and children Assistance in religious activities for the community Volunteer for online religious preaching Writing social-religious articles
3	Social Community	Providing assistance/product manufacturing/distribution of aid Volunteering to prevent the spread of disease in the community

Looking closely at the formulation of the objectives and activity programs offered in the DR Independent Integrative Internship Program activities developed by the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teaching Training of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, it can be seen that the activities are broadly directed at two things, namely activities related to learning and educational practices and activities related to community service (PkM). Of the two groups of activities, a larger portion is directed to community service activities (PkM). The learning and educational practice program is not clearly described. The form of learning and educational practice activities that must be carried out by students is unclear. It will unquestionably confuse students to carry them out in the field. This condition is different from the provisions for the implementation of learning and educational practices in the preceding period. Previously, there was clarity regarding the form of activities, targets, and success criteria. This learning and educational practice activity has been the core of the internship program activities that students must undergo to obtain provisions as prospective professional teachers. When these learning and educational practice activities are not optimal, they certainly impact the development of students' main competencies as prospective professional PAI teachers.

2. The Impact of the DR Integrative Internship Program on Soft Skill Development of Prospective PAI Teachers

The independent integrative internship model from home (DR) gives students the freedom to carry out internship activities independently from their homes or residences. This student independence starts from determining the location for the internship that is affordable from their place of residence, choosing a field supervisor, and implementing and reporting the internship activities. This internship model has advantages in training and developing students' soft skills as prospective teachers. The finding is in line with the study results by Ghosh et al. (2012) concluding that greater autonomy in the work and education environment, including more independent decision-making, contributes to the improvement of soft skills like leadership, communication, and problem-solving. Research

by Heckman & Kautz (2012) also found that an environment that gives individuals the freedom to organize and choose their own activities can improve abilities like self-discipline, motivation, and interpersonal skills.

There are six types of soft skills that are most prominent in the independent integrative internship model from home. The six types of soft skills are essential abilities to be trained to the prospective Islamic Religious Education teacher students so that after graduation, they can carry out their duties as teachers professionally. The six types of soft skills are communication and relationship-building, critical thinking and problem-solving, teamwork, leadership, stress management, and creativity.

2.1. Communication and relationship-building skills

The DR independent integrative internship model trains students to communicate verbally and in writing and build relationships with others. The first step students take is communicating to determine the location of the internship site, namely educational institutions (schools/madrasas/pesantren) and communities close to where they live. Furthermore, students seek permission to carry out internship activities. The next step is observation, communication, and coordination regarding the program they would carry out following the needs of partner institutions. When learning practice activities begin, students practice communicating and building relationships with students in these educational institutions. In one of the student internship activity reports, it is explained:

“After the deployment event to the internship site, we students of the internship program at MTs Ihsaniyah Banyumudal Moga Pematang began to carry out the entire series of activities. First was communication and coordination with subject teachers and homeroom teachers. The result of communication and coordination was that we were asked to assist teachers in preparing media and teaching materials for online learning for classes VII.1 and VIII.1 PAI subject and assisting in teaching.”

It is in line with the respondent (R01):

“At the time of the internship, selecting the internship location was carried out by the students themselves since learning was carried out online at that time and many students returned to their respective hometowns. With this policy, we are required to be able to learn to communicate and build relationships with the school management and teachers there. From here we can learn how to communicate well through WA media or directly to the school”.

The students need to continuously hone these communication and relationship-building skills when carrying out community service programs. To do so, they coordinate with community leaders and residents, as well as local government officials, at least the head of the Neighborhood Association (RT), and the mosque takmir management. This coordination is carried out to communicate and discuss the planning and implementation

of the community service activity program so that it follows the conditions and needs of the community where the community service activity is carried out (Doc. Internship Activity Report). Apart from oral communication skills, students also practice communicating in writing. This written communication is trained when students compile educational and community service work programs and write reports on DR independent integrative internship activities.

Communication skills are important competencies in the professional field (Gallego Ortega & Fuentes, 2015; Mačiūnienė & Merkytė, 2019). Nagy (2019) and Tang (2018) also stated that the ability to communicate is one of the essential soft skills to support one's career success. Communication skills are the ability to deal with complex interpersonal interactions and to use and understand people efficiently (Aydın, 2016). Communication plays a crucial role in building and supporting healthy interpersonal relationships. Khan et al. (2017) stated that teachers' communication skills have a significant role in students' academic achievement. Accordingly, prospective teachers must have the ability to communicate well and effectively. Those communication skills include active listening, writing, and effective speaking with students, family, colleagues, and peers (Aydın, 2016).

Communication skills for teachers are geared toward creating an effective and efficient learning environment (Gisewhite et al., 2021), controlling unwanted behavior, and an efficient teaching-learning process (Tutkun, 2015). Therefore, according to Navickienė et al. (2019), teachers need to improve their communication skills continuously. Likewise, for prospective teachers, there should be specific communication skills training. The communication training can be done during the learning process in the classroom and enriched with activities in the field (Fuentes et al., 2017). Eva Latipah (2021) also argued that a PAI teacher must have good psychological knowledge and skills to implement PAI learning effectively. Among these psychological knowledge and skills are communication skills.

2.2. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills

The implementation of DR independent integrative internship activities provides space for students to practice critical thinking and find solutions to problems faced in the field while conducting learning practices in schools, as well as carrying out community service activities. This is in line with the purpose of implementing the internship program, which is to provide students with the experience to be sensitive to the surrounding environment and provide solutions to problems in society. Another goal is for students to implement, integrate, and interconnect the knowledge, professional abilities, and skills that have been obtained on campus into real situations.

Since the initial socialization of the DR independent integrative internship program, students have been directed to contribute and enlighten the community. According to students, when undergoing the internship program, they are trained in critical thinking and problem-solving skills. While implementing internship activities, they start by conducting field observations to identify existing problems and needs. Furthermore, they try to

formulate work programs, whether related to the implementation of learning practices, school practices, or community service activities. As respondent (R03) stated:

“For the last community service, I focused on developing the Al-Quran education (TPA). In the early stages, I saw the condition of the TPA in the area where I served. The TPA has not been well managed, both in terms of teachers and teaching materials. Based on the results of these observations, I tried to develop by providing training to teachers and compiling teaching materials used for learning at the TPA.”

Another respondent (R04) stated:

“While implementing online learning practices, I found several students who were less active. Then I tried to analyze and find a solution to the problem. What I did was coordinate with the subject teacher and give rewards to students in the form of additional marks for those who are active. In this way, less active students become more active.”

Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are part of the necessary skills of the 21st century. They include reasoning effectively, using systems thinking, making good judgments and decisions, and solving problems (Germaine et al., 2016). These skills should be possessed by teachers/prospective teachers, and they should be able to train their students. Özelçi & Çalışkan (2019) stated that teachers must have critical thinking skills, and it is expected that the effects of teachers' critical thinking personalities will impact students to also have critical thinking abilities. The results of Hursen's research (2021), found that prospective teachers who stated that through the acquisition of higher-order thinking skills, they felt themselves ready for the teaching profession. This finding is in line with the results of research conducted by Urbani et al. (2017) stating that learning practice activities can improve the critical thinking skills of prospective teachers. When they make preparations for student learning, they are trained to think critically. Likewise, when they reflect on their own teaching practices, examining students' work encourages them to think critically. The benefit of practicing their lesson plans with their peers in class and receiving critical feedback, not to mention developing student lesson plans requires them to think critically about the diverse needs of students. Developing critical thinking in pre-service teacher education is an effort to encourage and facilitate evaluative and reflective skills. Such skills are essential in the teaching profession to support the realization of continuing education. Therefore, it is the duty of teacher education institutions to equip student teachers with critical thinking skills (Straková & Cimermanová, 2018).

2.3. Teamwork skills

The realization of the DR independent integrative internship program requires students to be able to cooperate with fellow friends and related parties such as school principals, supervising teachers, leaders, and community members where community

service is carried out. Teamwork is an important aspect of DR's independent integrative internship activities. Teamwork determines success in a series of internship activities, starting from selecting and determining internship locations, program planning, implementation, and evaluation to preparing internship activity reports. Without such cooperation, students cannot realize the pre-formulated activity programs. Such conditions can train students' attitude toward cooperating with other parties as stated by the following respondents.

Another respondent (R06) said:

“The successful implementation of this internship program is greatly influenced by the cooperation between students and the school and field supervisors (DPL). My friends and I learned how to build cooperation between one another. When the school gives assignments, we work together and help each other. When there are friends who find it difficult to do the task, we proactively help so that all these tasks can be done well.”

Another respondent (R07) stated:

“In carrying out community service activities in groups, we must be able to interact with group members, then build cooperation, and must help each other, help each other. When one student cannot do his job, he is assisted by another, so we are learning to be able to work together.”

The integrative internship program from home can train students' skills in building cooperation with other parties. This skill is essential for prospective teachers in pursuing a career in the community. This finding is in line with the results of Main's research (2010), stating that prospective teacher students in Australia have the opportunity to practice teamwork during their university education. The development of teamwork competencies during university studies for prospective teachers has the potential to promote reflective skills when undergoing their profession (Lakkala et al., 2017). Zordo (2019) also noted that the quality of relationships in practicum teams is a source of emotion for further development. Teamwork skills are central soft skills in the 21st century that play a major role in supporting educational progress (Baker et al., 2013; Tang, 2018). Effective teamwork skills are essential for success in an increasingly team-based workplace (Britton et al., 2017; Strom & Strom, 2011). In the field of education, according to research by Polega et al. (2019), school principals consider teamwork very important. The ability to work together is a competency that is needed by teachers in carrying out their duties (Šteh et al., 2021).

2.4. Leadership skills

Students' leadership skills have been honed since the beginning of the internship process. The processes of implementing the internship program include problem identification, formulation of work programs, implementation of work programs,

monitoring and evaluation, and reporting. The successful implementation of the internship program requires students to have a leadership spirit. Students are required to coordinate with fellow students, student teachers, principals /madrasah, not to mention leaders and community members related to the implementation of the internship activity program. Students are required to be able to organize and coordinate these activity programs. They are also required to be able to direct, influence, and mobilize the people involved in these activities to jointly implement the formulated programs. Those processes can directly train students' leadership skills. It is supported by the respondents' statements as follows.

A statement by student (R08):

“I was appointed by my friends as the group leader. I tried to coordinate with my friends and also the school and community where the internship was carried out. I tried to coordinate with my friends and motivate them to carry out their tasks well. For example, when my group was given the task by the supervising teacher to make a learning video media, I divided the tasks among my friends, some took pictures, and others edited and so on so that the task could be completed properly and could be submitted to the supervising teacher.”

Another respondent (R09) said:

“My tips as group leader were trying to spark my fellow students' creativity and building teamwork. We communicated and divided tasks between group members, regardless of limited communication media. I invited my friends to help each other”.

Teacher leadership competence is an indispensable requirement to be an effective teacher (Afanasjeva et al., 2019). These competencies are essential in the educational process to improve their professional competence (Zhang et al., 2021). Teacher leadership is a key component of school reform (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Teacher leadership occurs inside and outside the classroom to influence learning practices throughout the school (Harris & Jones, 2019). The role of teacher leadership is critical in a changing educational environment (Green, 2019). Such conditions require teachers to have leadership competencies to play a role in decision-making and policy formation, as well as to be pioneers, creators, and implementers of educational change (Harris & Jones, 2019; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). It is therefore crucial to promote the importance of teacher leadership and teach its basic principles as early as possible through the education of prospective teachers at the university education level (Berestova et al., 2020).

2.5. Stress management skills

The DR independent integrative internship program provides an opportunity for students to carry out two activities simultaneously, namely learning and educational practices in schools/madrasahs and community service activities (PkM) in the community. The integration of these two activities is a challenge for students. On the other hand,

students are required to be able to adjust their conditions with fellow teammates and adapt to partner institutions where learning practices, teachers, and online learning systems. They can all be a pressure for students. The activities carried out by students as a series of online learning implementations include online learning preparation and implementation. At the same time, there is also a requirement for the students to plan and implement PkM activities. This condition requires and trains students to manage the stress they experience well. According to students, the stress management that students did was good cooperation between group members, field supervisors (DPL), teachers, and community leaders. Another way was by applying time management and doing relaxation exercises in the form of channeling hobbies, praying, and breathing exercises.

One respondent (R11) stated:

“At the beginning of the internship, I felt confused and depressed because the explanation from the faculty was not very clear about what activity programs should be carried out. What exactly were the activities I had to do since the implementation of internship activities during the COVID-19 pandemic was indeed carried out suddenly? Then, to overcome this problem, I coordinated with homeroom teachers and subject teachers, as well as discussions with fellow friends who were also doing internships and consultations with field supervisors (DPL).”

Another respondent (R12) stated:

“I experience phases of stress due to the abundant tasks. My own way to overcome it was to manage my time as well as possible, prioritizing which tasks we had to complete first. Then my next trick to overcome stress was to do refreshing, which could take the form of doing simple things that are my hobby, for example just feeding pets, watering plants, and so on. And, of course, what I do was praying to be given ease in carrying out my tasks. That way I become refreshed and could do my duties well again.”

Many recognizes teaching as one of the most stressful activities, especially for novice teachers. Reports on the prevalence of stress among teachers have shown that the pressure they face is increasing. Numerous identified sources of teacher stress have remained consistent over time, despite constantly changing sociological factors (Taris et al., 2017). Teacher stress can be conceptualized as an imbalance between risk and protective factors (Ekornes, 2017). Stress that comes from risk factors may occur at the personal, interpersonal, and organizational levels. When risk factors exceed protective factors, teachers' ability to cope with adversity is hampered, possibly resulting in stress (Prilleltensky et al., 2016). Interpersonally, stress results from conflicts with coworkers, superiors, parents, and students. Teacher stress is the collective responsibility of teachers, principals, training programs, and supervisors. Much can be done at the personal, interpersonal, and organizational levels (Prilleltensky et al., 2016). School organizational climate and poor teacher relations are potential causes of stress in teachers (Ouellette et

al., 2018). Therefore, teachers and prospective teachers need to be provided with skills to manage stress. Among these stress management tools are deep breathing exercises, yoga instruction, modifying self-talk, and strengthening communication skills (Smith, 2021).

2.6. Exercising creativity

When participating in internship activities, students sharpen their creativity. While carrying out online learning assistance activities, they are assigned by the supervising teacher to prepare lesson plans (RPP) and make audio or video-based learning media. Also, several of them are assigned to compile teaching materials and assessment instruments. While performing community service activities, they also make media products, such as clean-living posters. These assignments encourage and train students to be creative.

It is in tune with the respondent (R13) statement:

“For us, the experience of this independent integrative internship activity has taught students to be more creative. We can learn to make learning media in the form of videos, whereas previously we could only make PPTs. This internship requires us to learn independently to create media from YouTube with the Kenmaster application.”

Creativity is part of the 21st-century skills (Lucas, 2016). Creativity is an essential component of problem-solving and other cognitive abilities (Plucker et al., 2004). Creativity is defined as the interaction between talents, processes, and environments where individuals or groups produce new products that are useful to society (Plucker et al., 2004). In the field of education and learning, teacher creativity is a crucial competency. Teachers' creativity is recognized as an important element that influences the learning process in producing creative and innovative students (Ripki et al., 2020). This kind of creativity is known as pedagogical creativity, which is the ability of teachers that is closely related to their willingness to generate new ideas to ensure the effectiveness of the education and learning process (Stoykov, 2021). This creativity needs to be trained since they undergo education as prospective teachers. Choe et al. (2016) explained that to encourage creative teaching behavior, the curriculum for the education of prospective teachers must focus on developing the creativity and teaching skills of prospective teachers. Stoykov (2021) also asserted that the formation of the personal creativity of primary teacher candidate students aims for the further manifestation of their pedagogical creativity and also facilitates the development of their creative potential.

Referring to the exposure and analysis of the data above, the results of this study found that the DR integrative independent internship program conducted by the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training UIN Sunan Kalijaga has advantages that are closely related to the soft skill development of PAI teacher candidates. The development of these soft skills is essential to foster the employability of graduates of educational institutions (Rebele & St. Pierre, 2019; Tang, 2019), especially in the context of an ever-changing environment (Succi & Canovi, 2020). Soft skills play a crucial role alongside hard skills

(Barton & Hirsch, 2019; Pereira & Costa, 2017; Yan et al., 2019). Soft skills are skills related to personal qualities and attitudes, as well as social and management skills (De Pietro & Altomari, 2019). Soft skills are personal skills that consist of personal attributes and interpersonal abilities that encourage a person's potential for sustainable growth and improve individual social interaction, job performance, and career prospects (Pachaiyappan & Sadayakumar, 2018). Melser (2019) stated that soft skills are attributes a person possesses that allow them to communicate, cooperate, and get along with others.

These findings have further strengthened the theory and research results presented by previous researchers. The types of soft skills that are important to be trained for students' job preparation, in general, are teamwork skills and information management skills (Tan & Tang, 2015); Students' communication skills, critical thinking skills, and ethical awareness (Rebele & St. Pierre, 2019). Kerja tim, komunikasi, kepemimpinan, dan pemecahan masalah (Ritter et al., 2018); Teamwork, communication, leadership, and problem-solving (Bartel, 2018). Communication skills are essential skills required in strong job candidates (Bartel, 2018). Communication skills, problem-solving skills, conflict resolution, working well with others, and ensuring customer satisfaction (Tribble, 2009). Attitude, work ethic, time management, and communication skills are all soft skills (Bates & Morgan, 2018).

Conclusion

The innovation of the DR Integrative Independent Internship Program carried out by the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at UIN Sunan Kalijaga relates to selecting schools/madrasas and communities where internships are held and types and forms of programs carried out by students. Students can choose and determine the place of internship (school/madrasah and community) and their field supervisors. The types and forms of activities, in general, include (1) educational, literacy, and health activities, (2) religious and social activities, and (3) community social activities. The proportion of activities in the Independent Integrative DR Internship Program is given more in community service activities (PkM) compared to learning and education practice programs.

The implementation of the DR Integrative Independent Internship Program developed by the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta has had advantages in developing the soft skills of PAI teacher candidates. They can be the result of giving wider authority to students to choose and develop independent internship programs. Soft skills that stand out in this development process have included six types, namely communication and relationship-building, critical thinking and problem-solving, teamwork, leadership, stress management, and creativity.

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