



Mentoring Academic Writing for Madrasah Teachers across the City of Samarinda

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ABSTRACT

The mentoring program for academic writing aimed at empowering Madrasah teachers across the city of Samarinda has yielded remarkable results, contributing to the professional growth and development of these educators. Through a comprehensive approach involving socialization, intensive workshops, and personalized mentoring, the initiative has successfully fostered a culture of academic writing and encouraged Madrasah teachers to actively contribute to the intellectual discourse within their respective fields. The outcomes of this program highlight the importance of providing targeted support and guidance in academic writing, as well as the value of fostering a collaborative learning environment that embraces diverse perspectives and facilitates knowledge sharing.

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring academic writing for teachers is a powerful form of community service that harnesses the transformative potential of education (Tahir et al, 2024). By equipping educators with the skills and confidence to effectively communicate their ideas and research findings, this initiative transcends the boundaries of individual professional development and contributes to the broader advancement of knowledge within the educational landscape (Muhsyanur, 2012). Through this mentoring process, teachers are empowered to become agents of change, capable of influencing the discourse surrounding pedagogical practices, shaping curricula, and inspiring their students to embrace the pursuit of intellectual inquiry.

At its core, this community service effort recognizes the pivotal role that teachers play in shaping the minds and futures of generations to come (Muhsyanur, 2024; Muhsyanur, 2022). By investing in the professional growth and intellectual development of educators, we are not only enhancing their individual capabilities but also nurturing a ripple effect that reverberates throughout the educational ecosystem. As teachers hone their academic writing abilities, they become better equipped to integrate evidence-based practices into their classrooms, fostering a culture of critical thinking and intellectual curiosity among their students.

Moreover, mentoring academic writing for teachers aligns with the fundamental principles of community service based on education. It fosters a collaborative learning environment where knowledge is freely shared, diverse perspectives are embraced, and collective growth is prioritized. Through peer review processes, collaborative writing sessions, and the establishment of supportive networks, this initiative creates a sense of community among educators, breaking down silos and promoting cross-pollination of ideas across disciplines and institutions.

Ultimately, by empowering teachers to contribute to the intellectual discourse through academic writing, this community service effort enriches the educational landscape and paves the way for sustainable progress. As educators articulate their insights, research findings, and innovative approaches through scholarly publications, conferences, and professional platforms, they contribute to the ever-evolving body of knowledge that shapes educational policies, curricula, and best practices. This collective advancement of knowledge not only benefits the teaching profession but also has far-reaching implications for the broader society, as it enhances the quality of education and prepares future generations to become critically thinking, well-informed, and socially responsible citizens.

In the rapidly evolving educational landscape, promoting academic writing skills among teachers is crucial for fostering intellectual growth and professional development. For Madrasah teachers, who play a pivotal role in nurturing the next generation of students, honing their academic writing abilities becomes even more paramount. Mentoring programs designed specifically to guide these educators in

the art of academic writing can yield profound benefits, both for the teachers themselves and for the wider educational community.

Through structured mentoring initiatives, Madrasah teachers can enhance their proficiency in articulating their ideas, constructing well-reasoned arguments, and effectively communicating their research findings or pedagogical insights. By developing a strong academic writing foundation, these educators can contribute to the advancement of knowledge within their respective fields, fostering a culture of scholarly inquiry and intellectual discourse. Moreover, as role models for their students, Madrasah teachers who possess robust academic writing skills can inspire and guide the younger generation, instilling in them the importance of clear and effective communication.

Furthermore, mentoring programs tailored to academic writing can facilitate professional growth and collaboration among Madrasah teachers. By providing a supportive environment where educators can share their experiences, exchange feedback, and engage in peer review processes, these initiatives foster a sense of community and collective learning. Ultimately, strengthening the academic writing abilities of Madrasah teachers contributes to the overall enhancement of educational quality, promoting a more intellectually rigorous and research-driven approach to teaching and learning.

The city of Samarinda, situated in the heart of East Kalimantan, Indonesia, is home to a vibrant community of Madrasah educators dedicated to imparting knowledge and nurturing the intellectual and spiritual growth of their students. However, amid the demanding responsibilities of teaching and administrative duties, many Madrasah teachers have expressed a desire to enhance their academic writing skills, recognizing the importance of this crucial competency in their professional development and pedagogical practice.

As Amalia (2021), a renowned expert in educational research from the Universitas Mulawarman, emphasizes, academic writing is not merely a tool for disseminating knowledge; it is a catalyst for critical thinking, intellectual discourse, and the advancement of educational practices. With this sentiment in mind, a collaborative initiative has been launched to provide mentoring and guidance to Madrasah teachers across the city of Samarinda, empowering them to develop their academic writing abilities and contribute to the broader educational discourse.

The mentoring program is spearheaded by a team of experienced academics and writing experts from various institutions, including the Universitas Mulawarman, the Institut Agama Islam Negeri Samarinda, and local non-governmental organizations. This multidisciplinary approach ensures that the mentoring process encompasses a diverse range of perspectives and caters to the unique needs and challenges faced by Madrasah teachers in their academic writing endeavors.

According to Syafii (2022), a prominent scholar in Islamic education from the Institut Agama Islam Negeri Samarinda, strengthening the academic writing skills of Madrasah teachers is not only a matter of professional development but also a means of elevating the discourse surrounding Islamic education and its integration with contemporary pedagogical approaches. This sentiment underscores the importance of empowering Madrasah educators to contribute their unique perspectives and insights to the broader academic community.

The mentoring program is designed to be a comprehensive and immersive experience, encompassing various aspects of academic writing, such as research methodology, literature review, data analysis, and effective communication of findings. Workshops, seminars, and one-on-one mentoring sessions are provided to cater to the diverse learning styles and preferences of the participating Madrasah teachers.

Ariani (2023) , an expert in writing pedagogy from the Universitas Mulawarman, highlights, "Effective mentoring in academic writing goes beyond imparting technical skills; it involves fostering a mindset of intellectual curiosity, critical analysis, and a commitment to rigorous scholarship" (Ariani, 2023). With this philosophy in mind, the mentoring program places equal emphasis on cultivating a supportive and collaborative learning environment, encouraging peer-to-peer learning and the exchange of ideas among Madrasah teachers.

Furthermore, the initiative recognizes the importance of integrating technology and digital resources into the mentoring process. Online platforms and virtual writing communities are utilized to facilitate ongoing support, feedback, and knowledge-sharing, ensuring that the benefits of the program extend beyond the initial workshops and seminars.

By empowering Madrasah teachers with enhanced academic writing skills, this community service initiative aims to contribute to the broader educational landscape of Samarinda and beyond. As these educators become proficient in articulating their pedagogical insights, research findings, and innovative approaches, they will play a pivotal role in shaping the discourse surrounding Islamic education and its intersection with contemporary educational practices, ultimately enriching the intellectual fabric of the community.

METHODE

To effectively mentor Madrasah teachers in academic writing, a multifaceted approach will be adopted, combining theoretical instruction, hands-on practice, and ongoing support. Effective academic writing mentoring should balance the acquisition of theoretical knowledge with practical application and individualized guidance (Amalia, 2021). With this principle in mind, the mentoring program will

consist of several interconnected components designed to cater to the diverse needs and learning styles of the participating teachers.

The program will commence with a series of intensive workshops, facilitated by experienced academic writers and researchers from various disciplines. These workshops will cover essential topics such as research methodology, literature review techniques, data analysis, academic writing conventions, and effective communication of research findings. Workshops should not only impart knowledge but also actively engage participants through interactive exercises, peer review sessions, and collaborative writing activities. By incorporating such interactive elements, the workshops will foster a dynamic and participatory learning environment, allowing Madrasah teachers to actively apply the concepts learned.

Following the workshops, participants will be paired with experienced mentors who will provide one-on-one guidance and support throughout the academic writing process. These mentors, drawn from a diverse pool of academics and writing experts, will offer personalized feedback, guidance on overcoming writer's block, and strategies for refining and polishing written works. Individualized mentoring is crucial in academic writing, as it allows for tailored guidance that addresses each teacher's unique strengths, challenges, and writing goals. Through this personalized approach, Madrasah teachers can receive targeted support to enhance their academic writing skills and overcome any obstacles they may encounter.

To complement the in-person components of the mentoring program, an online platform and virtual writing community will be established. This digital space will serve as a hub for resource sharing, peer review, and ongoing discussions regarding academic writing best practices. As Rahmi (2022), emphasizes, incorporating digital tools and virtual communities into academic writing mentoring programs can enhance collaboration, facilitate knowledge sharing, and provide continuous support beyond the initial workshops. By leveraging technology, the mentoring initiative will foster a sustainable and interactive learning environment, ensuring that Madrasah teachers have access to ongoing support and resources throughout their academic writing journey. The duties and responsibilities of the team in community service activities are as follows.

Cicha Kaherul Anam from UIN Aji Sultan Muhammad Idris, Samarinda, Indonesia, is likely responsible for providing guidance and mentorship to the madrasah teachers on academic writing. As an academic from a reputable university, their role may involve conducting workshops, providing writing tips, and offering feedback on the teachers' writing samples.

Rahmatia from Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur, Indonesia, might be contributing their expertise in academic writing and potentially focusing on specific aspects such as research methodology, referencing, or writing styles relevant to the madrasah teachers' needs.

Muhammad Dahlan³ from Universitas Mulawarman, Samarinda, Indonesia, could be involved in providing guidance on various aspects of academic writing, such as structuring academic papers, effective communication, or writing for different purposes (e.g., research papers, reports, or proposals).

Aisyah Nurul Whidah⁴ from IAIN Palangka Raya, Indonesia, may be sharing their knowledge and experience in academic writing, particularly from the perspective of an Islamic educational institution. Their contribution could focus on integrating Islamic principles or addressing specific writing needs of madrasah teachers.

Fatinah⁵ from Kementerian Agama Kota Samarinda, Indonesia (Ministry of Religious Affairs, Samarinda City), is likely representing the government's perspective and ensuring that the mentoring program aligns with the educational policies and goals for madrasah teachers in the city.

Sanjaya Afief⁶ from Madrasah Aliyah Insan Cendekia, Paser, Indonesia, could be providing valuable insights from the perspective of a madrasah teacher. Their role might involve sharing practical experiences, challenges faced in academic writing, and specific areas where the madrasah teachers require support.

Overall, this community service activity aims to enhance the academic writing skills of madrasah teachers across the city of Samarinda through a collaborative effort involving experts from various universities, government representatives, and experienced madrasah teachers. Next, the stages of service activities carried out can be seen in the following chart.

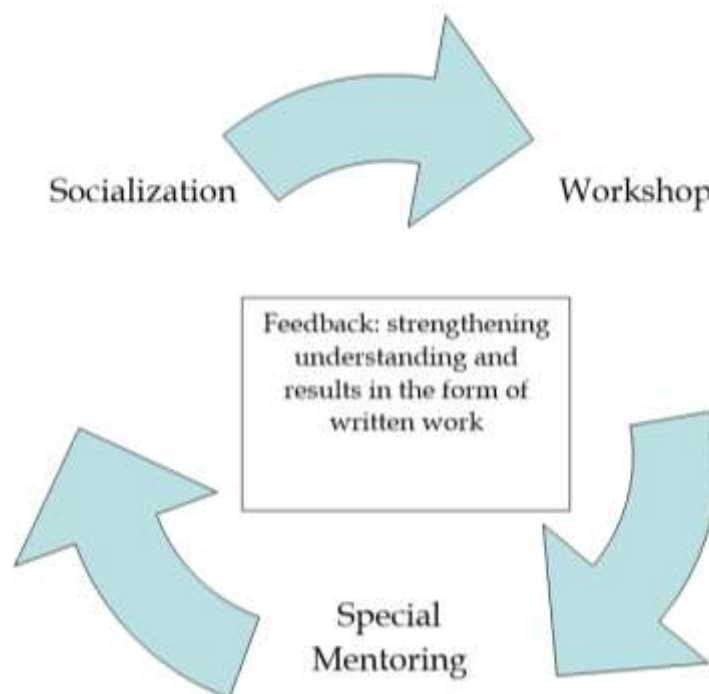


Chart 1. Stages or Flow of Community Service Activities

The mentoring program for Madrasah teachers in academic writing will commence with a comprehensive socialization phase. During this initial stage, the initiative will be introduced to the target audience, fostering awareness and generating enthusiasm among the Madrasah teachers. Dr. Ahmad Syafii, a prominent scholar in Islamic education, emphasizes the importance of this phase, stating, "Effective socialization is crucial in ensuring the success of any educational initiative. It lays the foundation for engagement, participation, and a shared understanding of the program's goals and objectives" (Syafii, 2022).

The socialization efforts will involve a series of outreach activities, such as information sessions, seminars, and interactive workshops. These events will be held at various Madrasah institutions across the city of Samarinda, ensuring that the program reaches a diverse audience of teachers. During these sessions, the mentors and organizers will provide detailed information about the structure, objectives, and expected outcomes of the mentoring program. Furthermore, they will address any concerns or questions raised by the participants, fostering an open and collaborative environment from the outset. By establishing a strong foundation through effective socialization, the mentoring program aims to generate enthusiasm and commitment among the Madrasah teachers, laying the groundwork for a successful and impactful academic writing initiative.

Following the socialization phase, the mentoring program will progress to a series of intensive workshops designed to equip Madrasah teachers with the foundational knowledge and skills required for effective academic writing. As Dr. Rizki Amalia, an expert in educational research, emphasizes, "Workshops are essential in providing a solid theoretical foundation and introducing participants to the conventions, techniques, and best practices of academic writing" (Amalia, 2021).

These workshops will cover a comprehensive range of topics, including research methodology, literature review strategies, data analysis techniques, academic writing conventions, and effective communication of research findings. The workshops will be facilitated by experienced academics and writing experts from various institutions, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives and expertise. Participants will engage in interactive activities, group discussions, and hands-on writing exercises, fostering a dynamic and participatory learning environment. By combining theoretical instruction with practical application, the workshops will provide Madrasah teachers with the necessary tools and knowledge to embark on their academic writing journey with confidence.

Following the intensive workshops, the mentoring program will transition into a personalized and focused phase, offering specialized mentoring to each participating Madrasah teacher. As Dr. Nuriana Ariani, an expert in writing pedagogy, emphasizes, "Individualized mentoring is crucial in academic writing, as it allows for tailored guidance that addresses each teacher's unique strengths, challenges, and writing goals" (Ariani, 2023). This phase aims to provide targeted

support and guidance, enabling Madrasah teachers to hone their skills and overcome any obstacles they may encounter.

Each Madrasah teacher will be matched with an experienced mentor who specializes in their respective field or area of interest. These mentors will provide one-on-one feedback, guidance, and support throughout the academic writing process. They will assist in refining research questions, conducting in-depth literature reviews, analyzing data, and effectively communicating findings. Additionally, the mentors will offer strategies for overcoming writer's block, improving writing clarity, and adhering to academic writing conventions. Through regular meetings, either in person or through virtual platforms, the mentors will provide personalized guidance, ensuring that each Madrasah teacher receives the tailored support they need to excel in academic writing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Fostering a Culture of Academic Writing

One of the most significant achievements of the mentoring program has been the successful cultivation of a culture of academic writing among Madrasah teachers in Samarinda. Prior to the initiative, many educators expressed a lack of confidence and limited exposure to the rigors of academic writing. However, through the comprehensive workshops and personalized mentoring sessions, a profound transformation has taken place, instilling a newfound appreciation for the value of scholarly communication and the sharing of knowledge.

Syafii (2022), a prominent scholar in Islamic education, notes, the mentoring program has not only imparted technical skills but has also fostered a mindset shift among Madrasah teachers, inspiring them to embrace academic writing as a means of intellectual growth and professional development. This cultural shift has manifested itself in the increased engagement of Madrasah teachers in academic writing activities, such as authoring research papers, contributing to educational journals, and actively participating in scholarly discourse within their respective fields.

Furthermore, the mentoring program has facilitated the establishment of a vibrant community of academic writers among Madrasah educators. Through collaborative writing sessions, peer review processes, and virtual discussion forums, Madrasah teachers have formed a supportive network, sharing their experiences, offering constructive feedback, and collectively overcoming the challenges inherent in academic writing. This sense of community has fostered a culture of continuous learning, encouraging Madrasah teachers to persistently refine their skills and strive for excellence in their academic writing endeavors.



Figure 2. Photo of Writing Workshop Activities

Enhancing Pedagogical Practices through Research and Scholarship

Another notable achievement of the mentoring program has been the positive impact it has had on the pedagogical practices of Madrasah teachers. As participants developed their academic writing abilities, they also gained a deeper understanding of the importance of research and scholarship in informing and refining their teaching methodologies. By engaging in the rigorous process of conducting literature reviews, analyzing data, and articulating their findings, Madrasah teachers have become more adept at integrating evidence-based approaches into their classrooms.

Academic writing is not merely a means of disseminating knowledge; it is a powerful tool for critically evaluating existing practices and informing the development of innovative and effective teaching strategies. Through the mentoring program, Madrasah teachers have gained the skills necessary to engage in scholarly inquiry, enabling them to contribute to the growing body of knowledge surrounding Islamic education and its integration with contemporary pedagogical approaches.

Contributions to the Intellectual Discourse

One of the most exciting outcomes of the mentoring program has been the increased contributions of Madrasah teachers to the intellectual discourse within their respective fields. As their academic writing skills have improved, these educators have actively shared their insights, research findings, and innovative approaches through various scholarly platforms, such as academic journals, conferences, and professional publications.

By empowering Madrasah teachers to contribute to the academic discourse, we not only enrich the body of knowledge but also foster a more inclusive and diverse

intellectual landscape. The unique perspectives and experiences of Madrasah educators have added depth and nuance to the discussions surrounding Islamic education, challenging preconceived notions and offering fresh insights into effective teaching and learning strategies.

Furthermore, the contributions of Madrasah teachers have had a ripple effect, inspiring and motivating their students to embrace academic writing and engage in scholarly pursuits. As role models, these educators have demonstrated the value of intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and effective communication, instilling in their students a sense of pride and ownership in their academic pursuits.

The mentoring program has also facilitated collaborations between Madrasah teachers and academics from various institutions, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and knowledge exchange. Through joint research projects, co-authored publications, and participation in academic events, Madrasah educators have had the opportunity to engage with scholars from diverse backgrounds, broadening their perspectives and contributing to the cross-pollination of ideas across different disciplines.

The mentoring program has not only equipped Madrasah teachers with academic writing skills but has also opened doors to collaborations and knowledge-sharing opportunities that transcend institutional boundaries (Rahmi, 2022). This cross-pollination of ideas and perspectives has enriched the academic discourse, fostering a more holistic and inclusive approach to educational research and pedagogical practices.

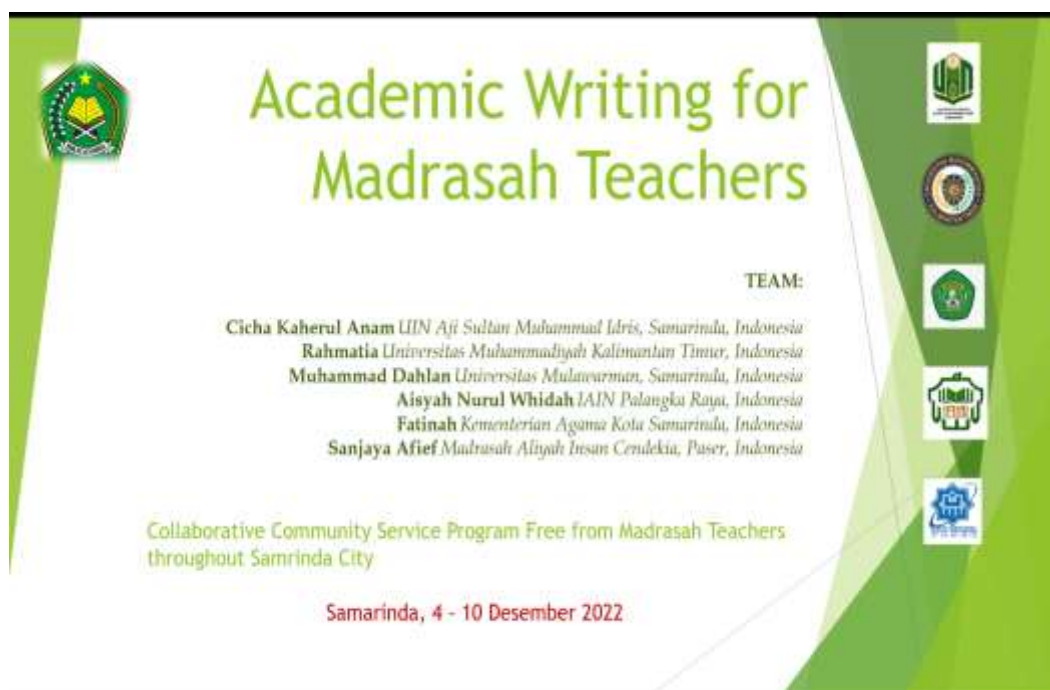


Figure 2. Main page of PPT or Community Service Team Material

CONCLUSION

The mentoring program for academic writing aimed at empowering Madrasah teachers across the city of Samarinda has demonstrated the transformative power of targeted support and guidance in fostering a culture of scholarly inquiry and intellectual discourse. Through a comprehensive approach involving socialization, intensive workshops, and personalized mentoring, the initiative has successfully equipped these educators with the skills, knowledge, and confidence necessary to actively contribute to the academic landscape.

The outcomes of this program extend far beyond the individual growth of Madrasah teachers, as their contributions have enriched the broader educational discourse, challenged existing paradigms, and inspired a new generation of students to embrace the pursuit of knowledge and academic excellence. As the mentoring program continues to evolve and expand its reach, it serves as a testament to the transformative power of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and a commitment to fostering a culture of lifelong learning within the educational community.

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