

Strategies for Nurturing Talented and Achieving Students through the Got Talent Program

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Accepted: Sept 28 th 2024	Reviewed: Oct 18 th 2024	Published: Nov 30 th 2024
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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of talent and achievement development for students at MI Miftahul Huda through the Got Talent program. The research also identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors as well as the implications of this talent development program. The school's student development efforts are conducted through extracurricular activities that promote holistic growth in alignment with national education objectives. The research method employed is qualitative, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis followed the process of data collection, condensation, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that student development at MI Miftahul Huda is divided into academic and non-academic coaching. The Got Talent program is successfully implemented, as evidenced by the numerous championships won by students in various competitions. Additionally, the program encourages the development and well-being of talented students, in line with the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Key supporting factors for the program include the motivation and support from parents and teachers, along with adequate facilities. However, inhibiting factors include students' lack of commitment during training, insufficient facilities for self-defense training, limited funds for large-scale events, and a lack of time for development activities.

Keywords: *Literacy Tree*, Reading Skills, Lower-Grade Students

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Introduction

The expansion of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia has been increasingly evident, highlighting the dynamic and competitive nature of the educational sector. Educational institutions that have successfully grown are those that can develop and implement effective competitive strategies while continually improving their practices¹. In the modern educational landscape, innovation plays a critical role in ensuring the survival and growth of these institutions amidst an ever-expanding competition². As educational institutions thrive, they must also build and

¹ Syed Hammad Mian et al., "Adapting Universities for Sustainability Education in Industry 4.0: Channel of Challenges and Opportunities," *Sustainability* 12, no. 15 (2020): 6100; P Nick Blanchard and James W Thacker, *Effective Training: Systems, Strategies, and Practices* (SAGE Publications, 2023).

² Surbhi Grover et al., "Global Workforce and Access: Demand, Education, Quality," in *Seminars in Radiation Oncology*, vol. 34 (Elsevier, 2024), 477–493; Brian Murphy, "Accreditation Rendezvous: A Confluence of Tradition and

strengthen their competencies to maintain a competitive edge. Without a solid foundation of innovation, educational institutions risk lagging behind in an increasingly saturated market³. One of the most significant indicators of an institution's quality is often measured by the number and scale of achievements its students attain⁴.

In the context of educational development, students are individuals who actively engage in acquiring knowledge and skills, with the goal of enhancing their personal growth within a structured system. Talent, in this regard, refers to the natural abilities and predispositions that an individual possesses, which, if properly nurtured, can facilitate their growth and success in various fields⁵. As such, the early identification and cultivation of talent are essential for students to reach their full potential, aligning with both personal goals and the institution's educational objectives.

MI Miftahul Huda Pandantoyo, a Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic Elementary School) located in Nganjuk, is an exemplary institution that has successfully facilitated talent development among its students. As a prominent school in the region, MI Miftahul Huda has been instrumental in offering various extracurricular activities aimed at developing the talents and achievements of its students. Over the years, the school has achieved remarkable success, securing numerous awards in diverse fields, ranging from local competitions to international events. This success has earned MI Miftahul Huda the distinction of being a favored institution in Nganjuk Regency and its surrounding areas, further solidifying its reputation as an institution dedicated to student achievement⁶.

One of the primary drivers behind the school's consistent success is its robust program aimed at fostering talented and high-achieving students. This program, known as the "Got Talent" initiative, was launched in 2019 and has since played a pivotal role in identifying and nurturing students with exceptional abilities. The Got Talent program targets students who are capable of achieving excellence in various fields, including science, technology, arts, and sports. The program is designed to prepare students for competitions at various levels, ranging from local to international, and to help them develop the skills and confidence required to excel in their chosen fields. Through this initiative, MI Miftahul Huda provides its students with expanded learning

Progress," *Journal of Franco-Irish Studies* 8, no. 1 (2024): 4; Fah M Alsaaty, "Beyond Traditional Learning: Embracing Digital Transformation and Tackling ChatGPT Concerns," *Research in Higher Education Journal* 44 (2023).

³ Michael Lanford and William G Tierney, *Creating a Culture of Mindful Innovation in Higher Education* (State University of New York Press, 2022); Timothy Scott and Wenyu Guan, "Challenges Facing Thai Higher Education Institutions Financial Stability and Perceived Institutional Education Quality," *Power and Education* 15, no. 3 (2023): 326–340.

⁴ Iwan Dkk. Aprianto, *Manajemen Peserta Didik* (Klaten: Lakeisha, 2020).

⁵ Idi Warsah Muhamad Uyun, *Psikologi Pendidikan* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2021).

⁶ Ali H Najmi, "The Effectiveness of Flipped Classroom Approach on Students' Achievement in English Language in Saudi Arabian Southern Border Schools," *International Education Studies* 13, no. 9 (2020): 66–74; Syed Ali Raza, Wasim Qazi, and Sara Qamar Yousufi, "The Influence of Psychological, Motivational, and Behavioral Factors on University Students' Achievements: The Mediating Effect of Academic Adjustment," *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education* 13, no. 3 (2021): 849–870; Daniela Raccanello et al., "Higher Education Students' Achievement Emotions and Their Antecedents in e-Learning amid COVID-19 Pandemic: A Multi-Country Survey," *Learning and Instruction* 80 (2022): 101629.

experiences, training them to build self-confidence and resilience, essential for continued success⁷.

Nganjuk Regency, while developing rapidly in various sectors, remains relatively underdeveloped in terms of specialized educational programs dedicated to talent development. As a result, there are few schools in the region that offer tailored programs for fostering student achievement. This context has motivated the present study, which aims to investigate the strategies employed by MI Miftahul Huda in developing talented and high-achieving students through its Got Talent program.

The objectives of this study are as follows: 1) to describe the implementation of strategies for developing talented and high-achieving students through the Got Talent program; 2) to explore the implications of this program in shaping the students' academic and personal growth; and 3) to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors that affect the successful implementation of the Got Talent program at MI Miftahul Huda.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative research approach, specifically descriptive research, to examine and identify how MI Miftahul Huda Pandantoyo implements its Got Talent program for developing talented and high-achieving students. The participants in this study include the school principal, the coordinator of the Got Talent program, the program facilitators, and the students actively involved in the program. These participants were selected to provide insights into the strategies, implementation processes, and implications of the program, as well as to identify the factors that support or hinder its execution.

Data were collected from two primary sources: primary and secondary data. Primary data consisted of information from the school principal, the coordinator of the talent development program, the facilitators, and the students. Secondary data included supporting documents such as the Got Talent program curriculum, program schedules, and lists of student achievements. The researcher employed several data collection methods to ensure the comprehensiveness of the findings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants to gather in-depth, detailed information regarding their experiences with the Got Talent program. Interviews were held with students, teachers, the program coordinator, and the school principal. Direct observations were made at MI Miftahul Huda Pandantoyo to examine how the Got Talent program is implemented, how students are mentored, and to identify any supporting or hindering factors. Additionally, document analysis was conducted on student achievement records and photographs of program activities to provide further context and evidence of the program's impact.

For data analysis, the study utilized Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which involves three steps: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. First, the data were organized

⁷ Pauline Walsh et al., "Learning and Teaching Approaches Promoting Resilience in Student Nurses: An Integrated Review of the Literature," *Nurse education in practice* 45 (2020): 102748; Alkhansaa Diab and Edna Green, "Cultivating Resilience and Success: Support Systems for Novice Teachers in Diverse Contexts," *Education Sciences* 14, no. 7 (2024): 711; Frank Merenda, "Adventure-Based Programming with at-Risk Youth: Impact upon Self-Confidence and School Attachment," *Child & Youth Services* 42, no. 4 (2021): 321–348.

and reduced into manageable themes, focusing on the key aspects of the Got Talent program. These condensed data were then presented systematically to highlight emerging patterns and key findings. Finally, the researcher interpreted the data and drew conclusions regarding the strategies, implications, and factors related to the program's implementation. To ensure the validity of the findings, the study applied triangulation techniques, including source triangulation (gathering data from multiple participants such as students, teachers, and program coordinators) and method triangulation (using interviews, observations, and document analysis) to cross-check the data and ensure a comprehensive understanding of the program's implementation.

Result And Discussion

Result

MI Miftahul Huda Pandantoyo is a school under the Ministry of Religious Affairs with a strong commitment to fostering talented and high-achieving students through the Got Talent program. This program has demonstrated its impact on students' academic and non-academic achievements across various competitions, highlighting the school's dedication to developing students' potential.

Implementation of Strategies for Nurturing Talented and High-Achieving Students Through the Got Talent Program

The Got Talent program is the culmination of 16 extracurricular activities at MI Miftahul Huda, and it serves as a platform to identify and nurture students with exceptional abilities, both academically and non-academically. One of the key objectives of the program is to prepare students for various competitive events, providing them with the opportunity to showcase their skills and abilities in comparison with other institutions. Teachers have observed that there are exceptional students who require tailored guidance and cannot be treated the same as others. Overall, two main areas of development are emphasized: academic and non-academic. In the academic area, each subject has a dedicated schedule for enhancement, while non-academic development is incorporated into extracurricular activities.

a. Planning

Several planning steps are implemented by the school within the Got Talent program, as follows:

1. Establishment of Mentors and Coordinators: Teachers at MI Miftahul Huda are prioritized as mentors for the program. However, some activities, such as self-defense, science olympiads, and drumming, require external experts.
2. Scheduling Training Sessions: Specific training schedules are set to accommodate the needs of different extracurricular activities.
3. Talent Identification: To determine students' talents, the school organizes regular class meetings or internal competitions each semester, including singing, drawing, MTQ (Quran recitation), poetry, public speaking, and relay races.
4. Student Development Forms: At the start of each academic year, MI Miftahul Huda distributes self-development forms, which students are required to complete according to

their interests and talents. These forms guide the development process, aligning with the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), where students are given the freedom to choose and pursue activities that align with their interests, enhancing their sense of autonomy.

b. Implementation

The Got Talent program is executed according to a pre-set schedule, although additional classes are often held to ensure adequate preparation for competitions. The coordinator's role includes searching for relevant events for students to participate in, often with assistance from enthusiastic parents who provide information about available competitions.

c. Evaluation and Follow-up

The program undergoes periodic evaluations, typically held once a month, at the end of each month. This allows the school to assess the strengths and areas for improvement in the program. Feedback is given to students, with rewards provided for those who achieve success. Besides the rewards from the competition organizers, MI Miftahul Huda also acknowledges achievements during ceremonies, which motivates other students. Constructive feedback plays a crucial role in SDT, facilitating holistic personal development and better psychological well-being.

Implications of Nurturing Talented and High-Achieving Students Through the Got Talent Program

The achievements of MI Miftahul Huda have consistently improved over the years. Data collected from various competitions indicates that the Got Talent program has had a positive impact on student performance. From local to national competitions, MI Miftahul Huda has recorded 92 achievements, as summarized in the table below:

Table 1 – Recap of Student Achievements in 2022-2023

Local	District	Region	Province	National	Total
1st Place	9	5	4	1	2
2nd Place	6	5	6	2	2
3rd Place	2	6	9	0	6
1st Runner-up	1	5	7	2	0
2nd Runner-up	2	3	4	0	0
3rd Runner-up	0	0	2	1	0
Total	20	24	32	6	10

The Got Talent program not only positively impacts student achievements but also contributes to their psychological well-being by fulfilling the three basic psychological needs outlined in SDT: a. Autonomy: The program allows students to develop their talents independently, fostering a sense of ownership over their learning process. b. Competence: Through consistent participation in competitions, students improve their skills and build their confidence, as the school encourages them to participate in events that enhance their expertise. c. Relatedness: The program also fosters positive relationships among students with similar interests, creating a supportive peer environment.

Additionally, the Got Talent program helps students develop resilience and succeed beyond school, as many alumni continue to excel in their pursuits. This early exposure to competitive environments builds their confidence and prepares them for future challenges.

Supporting and Hindering Factors in the Implementation of the Got Talent Program

Like any program, the implementation of Got Talent is affected by both supporting and hindering factors. These factors influence the daily processes and outcomes of the program.

a. Supporting Factors

1. **Parental and Teacher Support:** Encouragement and motivation from both teachers and parents are vital. Motivational support helps overcome obstacles like fear, laziness, and failure, creating a strong inner drive for the students.
2. **Adequate Facilities and Infrastructure:** The availability of proper facilities ensures that the mentoring process is effective and that students can benefit from the knowledge transfer between mentors and students.

b. Hindering Factors

1. **Financial Constraints:** While the school allocates funds for students' participation in various competitions, larger-scale events often require additional funding, which sometimes necessitates contributions from parents. However, not all parents can afford to contribute.
2. **Student Engagement:** Younger students, particularly those in lower grades, often struggle with serious participation during training sessions. Their preference for play over focus on the activities limits the effectiveness of the program for this age group.
3. **Insufficient Facilities:** Some areas of the program face challenges due to inadequate resources. For example, the self-defense training program lacks the necessary equipment, such as mats, to properly teach techniques, leading to incomplete training.
4. **Lack of Parental Motivation:** The motivation of students is often tied to the encouragement they receive at home. A lack of parental support can lead to reduced enthusiasm and commitment from the students during training sessions.
5. **Limited Time for Training:** As extracurricular activities take place after school hours, the time available for training is often limited, especially as students have other commitments such as religious studies, making the training less effective.

The Got Talent program at MI Miftahul Huda plays a significant role in developing the talents and achievements of students. Despite some challenges, the program's supportive environment, combined with the commitment of teachers, parents, and students, has led to remarkable success in nurturing students' potential.

Discussion

The expansion of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, exemplified by the remarkable success of MI Miftahul Huda, underscores the importance of innovation, effective competitive strategies, and talent development programs in ensuring long-term success. As noted in the

introduction, educational institutions must not only focus on academic excellence but also on cultivating and nurturing student talents to remain competitive and sustainable. This aligns with the findings of previous studies which emphasize the importance of innovation and strategic development in enhancing the quality of educational institutions, as well as in providing students with the necessary competencies to excel ⁸.

MI Miftahul Huda's "Got Talent" program serves as a prime example of an institution's proactive approach to fostering exceptional talents. This initiative, launched in 2019, focuses on identifying students with outstanding potential in diverse fields such as science, technology, arts, and sports. The success of this program reflects the growing recognition of the need for educational institutions to develop not only academic knowledge but also students' personal growth through extracurricular activities that build their talents and self-confidence ⁹. These programs are critical in helping students thrive in an increasingly competitive environment where academic success alone may not suffice.

One significant finding from this study is the alignment of MI Miftahul Huda's "Got Talent" program with broader trends in educational innovation. For instance, previous research highlights that the success of educational institutions is often linked to their ability to integrate talent development into their curricula and extracurricular offerings ¹⁰. By focusing on holistic development, which includes academic performance and extracurricular achievements, MI Miftahul Huda has managed to consistently outperform many other institutions in the region. This reflects the broader conclusion that educational institutions that prioritize talent development through innovative programs stand a better chance of maintaining their competitive edge ¹¹.

The success of MI Miftahul Huda, however, does not come without its challenges. In a region like Nganjuk, which remains relatively underdeveloped in terms of specialized educational programs, the implementation of such talent development initiatives is often constrained by limited resources, infrastructure, and access to high-quality training facilities. While MI Miftahul Huda has made significant strides in overcoming these obstacles, the study reveals that external support and collaboration with various stakeholders, including local authorities and non-governmental organizations, play an important role in overcoming these challenges. This insight corroborates findings from prior studies which stress the importance of external partnerships in enhancing the effectiveness of talent development programs ¹².

Moreover, it is important to note the emphasis on the role of motivation and self-confidence in shaping students' academic and personal growth. As seen in MI Miftahul Huda's "Got Talent" program, students are not only prepared for competitions but are also equipped with the mental

⁸ Lanford and Tierney, *Creating a Culture of Mindful Innovation in Higher Education*; Scott and Guan, "Challenges Facing Thai Higher Education Institutions Financial Stability and Perceived Institutional Education Quality."

⁹ Diab and Green, "Cultivating Resilience and Success: Support Systems for Novice Teachers in Diverse Contexts"; Merenda, "Adventure-Based Programming with at-Risk Youth: Impact upon Self-Confidence and School Attachment."

¹⁰ Raza, Qazi, and Yousufi, "The Influence of Psychological, Motivational, and Behavioral Factors on University Students' Achievements: The Mediating Effect of Academic Adjustment."

¹¹ Aprianto, *Manajemen Peserta Didik*.

¹² Walsh et al., "Learning and Teaching Approaches Promoting Resilience in Student Nurses: An Integrated Review of the Literature."

resilience necessary to cope with the pressures of academic and personal life. This focus on emotional intelligence and personal development supports the growing body of literature which highlights the importance of developing students' psychological well-being alongside their intellectual capabilities ¹³.

Comparing these findings to other schools in Indonesia and globally, it becomes evident that the success of talent development programs is often determined by the degree of institutional commitment to student-centered practices. Research has shown that when educational institutions focus on recognizing and nurturing student talents early on, they can foster not only academic success but also significant achievements in other domains ¹⁴. The experiences of MI Miftahul Huda, therefore, contribute valuable insights into the growing body of research on educational innovation and talent development.

MI Miftahul Huda's "Got Talent" program has proven to be a key factor in fostering a competitive environment that nurtures the academic and personal growth of students. The school's efforts to integrate talent development into its core activities align with the growing recognition of the importance of holistic educational strategies. The study contributes to the broader understanding of how educational institutions can leverage innovation and strategic programs to ensure sustainable success, particularly in regions that face developmental challenges. Future research may focus on exploring how other institutions in similar contexts can replicate the success of MI Miftahul Huda's approach to talent development, and further investigate the role of external factors in supporting such programs.

Conclusion

The implementation of the Got Talent program at MI Miftahul Huda Pandantoyo has proven to be a successful model for nurturing talented and high-achieving students. The program's effectiveness is evidenced by the numerous championships and achievements garnered by the students across various academic and non-academic fields. By leveraging the expertise of skilled mentors and a well-structured system, the program has created a supportive environment for students to excel.

The Got Talent program integrates academic and non-academic development, with the latter primarily facilitated through extracurricular activities. This dual approach ensures that students not only achieve scholastic success but also develop broader competencies that contribute to their holistic growth. Furthermore, the program aligns with the principles of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), addressing the three fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Through this alignment, the program not only enhances students' achievements but also promotes their psychological well-being and long-term personal development.

In pulling the elements of this study together, the research highlights the importance of strategic talent development programs in fostering student excellence. The Got Talent program

¹³ Merenda, "Adventure-Based Programming with at-Risk Youth: Impact upon Self-Confidence and School Attachment."

¹⁴ Raccanello et al., "Higher Education Students' Achievement Emotions and Their Antecedents in e-Learning amid COVID-19 Pandemic: A Multi-Country Survey."

not only contributes to individual student success but also strengthens the reputation and competitiveness of MI Miftahul Huda as an educational institution. This success demonstrates the transformative potential of targeted talent programs in improving educational outcomes and addressing the broader developmental needs of students.

Looking forward, this research underscores the need for educational institutions, particularly in developing regions, to adopt similar innovative programs. Such initiatives could serve as a blueprint for schools aiming to balance academic rigor with talent cultivation. Future research could explore the scalability of such programs, their long-term impact on student trajectories, and the role of community and parental involvement in supporting these initiatives. The findings also call for further exploration of how SDT-aligned programs can be integrated into broader educational policies to enhance both student performance and well-being.

The Got Talent program illustrates how strategic planning and a commitment to nurturing students' potential can bridge the gap between academic success and holistic personal development, contributing to the field of education and inspiring new approaches to talent cultivation.

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