



THE DEVELOPMENT OF MADRASAH-BASED MADRASAH REFORM PROGRAM IN INDONESIA: STUDY OF IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGY ASPECTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to demonstrate how madrasah reform is implemented in madrasahs and the strategies for managing madrasahs through the Madrasah Reform Program. Data collection in this study used in-depth and semi-structured interviews with madrasahs' heads and teachers regarding the implementation of the Madrasah Reform Program and madrasah management strategies at three levels of education. This study shows that the strategy of managing and developing madrasahs through the Madrasah Reform Program in three madrasahs in Indonesia has positively impacted the quality of madrasahs. However, there are still aspects that require development. This proves that Madrasah Reform Program is a program that can be implemented in Madrasahs to improve the quality of madrasah management in the digital era while continuing to carry out simultaneous improvements and evaluations of the program.

Keywords: Madrasah Reform Program; Islamic boarding school

1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, the development innovations in the Indonesian education sector continuously to be carried out as an effort to deal with the context of the times. In the sector of education, there are several models or innovations originating from the use of technology in supporting all forms of activities ranging from technology-based learning

to the application of several innovations in improving the quality of education (Aslamiyah et al., 2019).

In 2019, the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia has issued a Manual for Organizing Digital Madrasas as the main guidelines for each madrasa in developing its institutions based on the times (Badarwan & Rustang, 2021). The Digital Madrasah Program is one of the programs launched by the Indonesian government in an effort to maximize the performance of madrasas in the digital era. One of the achievements is that madrasas are able to be integrated with the world of technology both in terms of management and the learning process.

Both in terms of management and the learning process. Through the Directorate General of Islamic Education, the Ministry of Religion in 2020 launched a new program, the Reform Madrasas Program in supporting the Digital Madrasah program. This program has full support from the World Bank and aims to improve the quality of madrasah education in Indonesia. There are four main components in the Reform Madrasah program, namely; 1) Implementation of a national electronic-based madrasa work plan and budget system. 2) Application of the learning achievement assessment system at the MI level for all grade 4 students nationally. 3) Policy and continuous professional development for teachers, madrasa heads, and madrasa education staff, and 4) Development of EMIS (Education Management and Information System) (Kemenag, 2020).

The Madrasah Reform program is one of the programs to achieve the 2017-2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 2020-2024 RPJMN targets. The formulation of the Quality Education policy in the 2017-2030 SDGs and 2020-2024 RPJMN is an increase in teacher competence in the field of Mathematics, assistance for strengthening quality assurance, and other strategic issues, such as improving the quality of teaching and learning, accelerating efforts to reduce disparities in access and quality of education, changes in the mindset of education actors and the development of integrated governance (Azizah et al., 2022).

The presence of the Madrasah Reform program is a response to Islamic education institutions in Indonesia in facing challenges in the digital era. As is the case with the digital madrasah concept, the madrasah reform program is a separate form of support in efforts to integrate the world of education with technology in the digital era as a whole, or known as educational technology. This concept is interpreted as a form of a combination of aspects of learning, development, management, and technology that are applied to help solve an educational problem (Hilir & Kom, 2021). Educational technology has a significant role in designing, developing, and utilizing various learning resources so that it can facilitate and accommodate a person to learn regardless of

space and time in any way and learning source that suits their conditions and needs (Efgivia, 2020).

In facing the educational technology through the madrasa reform program, madrasahs are expected to implement separate steps or strategies in terms of managing madrasahs based on their respective learning environments. Strategy is essentially planning and management to achieve a goal (Haddade, 2021). However, to achieve this goal, strategy does not function as a road map that only shows direction, but must be able to show tactics and operations (Efrata Tarigan, 2020). Meanwhile, management is defined as the process of organizing something to determine success based on the goals to be achieved. Therefore, it can be said that the management strategy in research is a set of steps including tactics and operations that are applied in making arrangements to achieve goals.

This research has its own limitations with previous research, namely focusing on how the madrasa management strategy through the madrasa reform program improves the quality of madrasahs. This study formulates two main questions: 1) how is the implementation of madrasa reform in madrasahs?; and 2) what is the madrasa management strategy through the madrasa reform program? The two formulations of the problem are the main benchmarks for finding topics of discussion in research as well as exploring educational issues at the madrasah level through the madrasa reform program.

The assumptions of this research are more towards the possibility of the reformed madrasa program giving its own difficulties to madrasahs, especially in terms of management based on the use of technology. Inhibiting and supporting factors in the management of madrasahs through the madrasa reform program is a necessity faced by madrasahs in each region based on the conditions of their respective learning environments. Nevertheless, the madrasa certainly has its own strategy for carrying out the madrasa reform program based on the context of each madrasa as an effort to overcome all obstacles in implementing the program.

2. METHODS

This study describes the strategy for managing and developing madrasahs through the madrasa reform program, including aspects of implementation through the program. Now, the madrasa reform program is one of the projections as well as educational innovations within the scope of Islamic education institutions in improving quality, especially education in madrasahs in the digital era. This research has been carried out in three madrasahs that have implemented the madrasa reform program in Gowa, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, namely: Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Madani, Madrasah

Tsanawiyah (MTs) Madani, and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Madani Alauddin. The significant difference from the three madrasahs in terms of the implementation of the reform madrasah program lies in the four components of the reformed madrasah. First, the application of an electronic-based work and budget system for all madrasah levels from MI to MA. Second, implementing the learning outcomes assessment system is only intended for students in grade 4 MI. Third, policy and professional development for developing education management and information systems focuses on all levels of education in madrasahs.

This study is a type of qualitative research with an emphasis on descriptive data that focuses on two aspects (Nur & Utami, 2022). First, the madrasa response to the implementation of the madrasa reform program includes four main components in the program. Second, the madrasa management strategy carried out by the madrasah through the madrasa reform program includes the steps taken in overcoming the inhibiting aspects.

This study emphasizes the strategic aspects of madrasa management implemented by the madrasa in dealing with the reform madrasa program. The data in this study are data sourced from participatory observation and in-depth interviews with informants which are determined based on the level of understanding of the research topic and are categorized as primary data. The informants in this study were the heads of MI, MTs, and MA Madani madrasahs, teachers, and students. Interviews with madrasah heads focused more on madrasa management strategies through the madrasa reform program. Meanwhile, interviews with teachers focused more on aspects of learning in the classroom related to the reform madrasa program including changes to the learning model before and after the reform madrasa program was implemented. Interviews with students focused more on aspects of the impact of learning that was felt after the madrasa implemented the madrasa reform program. Furthermore, to support primary data, this study also uses secondary data sourced from documents related to madrasa governance including the learning model and curriculum applied.

In this study, there are three main steps taken in analyzing the data that has been collected. First, data reduction, this step is in the form of carrying out a special classification of data that focuses on research problems and topics. Second, the display and presentation of the data, that is, after carrying out the classification, then the data is visualized using the help of N-Vivo Software to map the data thoroughly and elaborate further (Adu, 2019; Mortelmans, 2019). Third, verification and drawing conclusions, the verification technique used is data that has been transcribed and then double-checked with each informant by contacting and sending the transcription and to draw conclusions, the step taken is to integrate all data based on the formulation of the problem in the research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study is based on two main issues, namely: 1) implementation of madrasah reform in madrasahs; and 2) madrasa management strategy through the madrasa reform program. The data related to the two research problems are described in more detail below.

The Implementation of the Madrasah Reform Program in Madrasahs

The implementation of Madrasah Reform is an educational innovation in seeking educational reform that aims to renew Indonesia's Islamic education system. Generally, the implementation is carried out in five main stages, namely: 1) Establishing Cooperation with Related Parties; 2) Setting Education Standards; 3) Teacher Training and Development; 4) Implementation of Curriculum; and 5) Evaluation and Assessment. At Madrasah Islamic Boarding Schools, at the MI, MTs and MA levels, in the implementation of the Reformed Madrasah Program, three main aspects were applied based on the situation and conditions of the madrasahs: improving the quality and performance of madrasa heads, teacher skills, and technical guidance and outreach as shown in Figure 1.

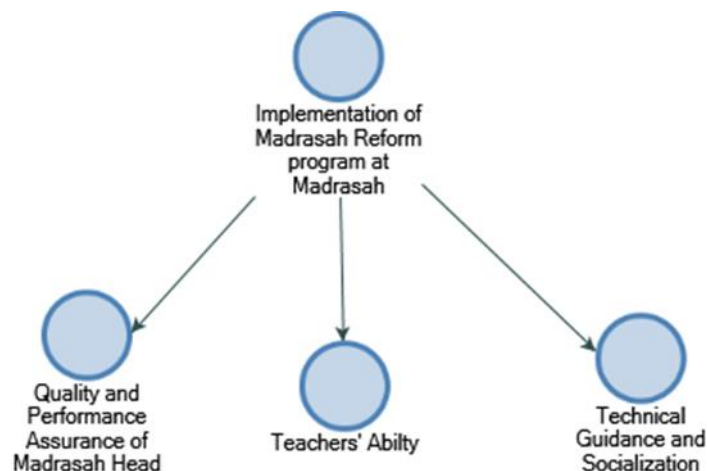


Figure 1. The implementation of Reform Madrasahs Program in Madrasah Madani

The figure demonstrates the steps taken by the Madrasah Madani in implementing the Reform Madrasah Program. For the Madrasah Madani, improving the quality and performance of the madrasa head is a concrete effort that must be committed first because considering that all aspects of the madrasa both in terms of governance and output of the madrasa depend on the madrasah head. One of the programs included in

the Madrasah Reform Program is the quality of madrasa principals, which is a top priority in measuring the level of success of the program, including training programs in the use of electronic-based performance reporting applications.

In addition, the Madrasah Reform program also requires educators and education staff to be able to operate and integrate learning based on applications so that Madrasah Madani also implements special programs aimed at increasing the ability of teachers and this is facilitated directly by the government through the provision of training assistance, as expressed by Abu Bakar as the head of MI Madani:

"The Reform Madrasah Program is already running in terms of improving the quality of teachers, madrasa heads, and education staff through the help of POKJA (Madrasah working groups), such as teachers getting KKG assistance for MI teachers as much as 15 million to improve teacher quality, MGMP (subject teachers) if 30 million MTs and MA teachers, 30 million KKM (madrasah working groups) for madrasa heads from the madrasah reform program."

The educators and educational staff at Madrasah Madani are required to participate in a quality improvement program through working groups that have been formed in each region by the implementers of the Madrasah Reform program. It aims to develop a learning process that is oriented towards improving the ability of students. Through the working groups that are formed, teachers can share with each other about innovations and learning designs that are suitable for learning conditions in madrasas. Next is the implementation of technical guidance and socialization which focuses more on the management of learning in the classroom. In this aspect, the teacher is given full authority in developing learning based on the needs and interests of students. This technical guidance is carried out every semester as an effort to carry out further evaluation of the methods that have been applied so that it is possible that there is always a development model based on the learning environment of each madrasah.

In addition, the role of the madrasa head is also a top priority in the process of implementing madrasa reform. Therefore, madrasa heads through the madrasa reform program are also given special guidance and training on madrasa managerial in order to achieve the objectives of implementing reform madrasas in improving the quality of education according to the context of the times.

The Madrasah Management Strategy through the Madrasah Reform Program

The management strategy is a separate method applied by an institution in responding to a policy based on considerations of the institutional environment in achieving the desired goals. As is the case with Madrasah Madani, there is a specific

strategy implemented in terms of managing madrasas through the Madrasah Reform Program as illustrated in Figure 3 below.

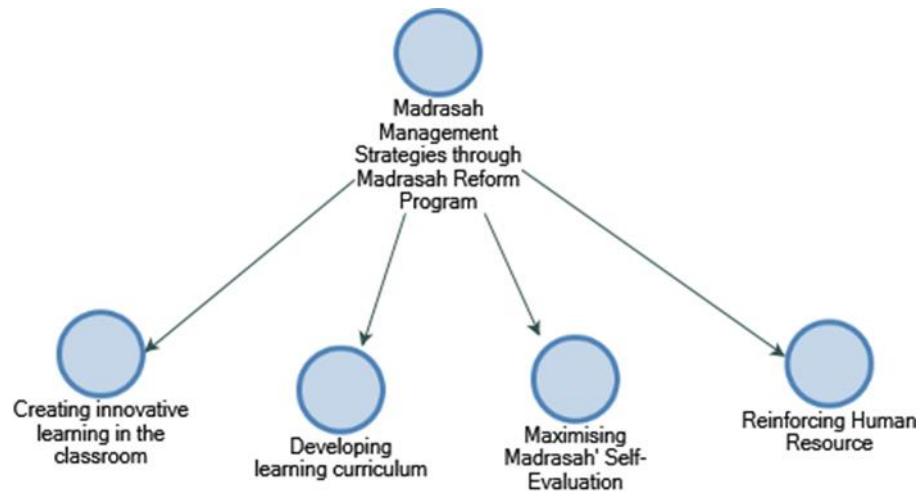


Figure 2. Madrasah management strategy through the Madrasah Reform Program

The figure illustrates the madrasah management strategy implemented by Madrasah Madani in dealing with the Madrasah Reform Program. There are four specific strategies implemented in Madrasah Madani as an effort to support the Madrasah Reform Program based on the objective conditions of the Madrasahs. First, creating an innovative learning situation, this concept is an integral part of the Madrasah Reform Program which gives teachers full authority and freedom to create conducive learning and is able to increase students' knowledge as expressed by Junaedi as a grade 4 teacher at MI Madani:

"We create fun learning in the classroom. An example of learning is by making learning media that we think are already digital-based. And from the help of the Madrasah Reform program, we procure digital learning media such as Android TV, WIFI network, LCD, speakers to create fun learning, so if the children are studying history, the teacher explains it and now with the help of the Madrasah Reform program, children in the class can watch directly through Android TV and learning materials can be accessed via the internet and children can also be creative and easily explain what they have watched related to learning".

The learning conditions that are considered pleasant for students at Madrasah Madani are by using the help of learning media such as Android TV and LCD projectors. By using digital learning tools, students at Madrasah Madani feel a relaxed learning atmosphere and interest in continuing to know something related to the topic of

learning. A learning model that is able to attract students' interest in learning is a distinct achievement of the Madrasah Reform Program in improving the quality of human resources in madrasas. Second, the development of the learning curriculum as strategy is carried out by teachers by utilizing the facilities provided by the Madrasah Reform Program, such as the WI-FI network. So that they can easily access learning materials and occasionally carry out the process of upgrading learning content while still prioritizing aspects of students' interests. Third, maximizing madrasah self-evaluation, one of the criteria for obtaining assistance from the Madrasah Reform Program is that the madrasa regularly reports on program developments every semester. The reporting is committed through the application provided, as explained by Zainal 'Alim as the head of MA Madani:

"We continue to fix and upload all the activities in the madrasa in terms of making EDM (Madrasa Self-Evaluation), then proceed with making ERKAM, so from the EDM, we can see the programs we have planned beforehand and we evaluate them to find out how far the programs implemented or not".

Fourth, improving the quality of resources, this strategy is carried out as an effort to maximize the Madrasah Reform Program, especially in terms of quality improvement both in terms of institutions and people. One form of improving the quality of human resources implemented in Madrasah Madani through the Madrasah Reform Program is to create a learning atmosphere based on students' interests, such as providing class outings, namely learning outside the classroom like under a tree. This step is a form of utilizing the madrasa environment as a learning space, such as the teacher taking students out and ordering them to record all types of plants in the madrasa environment, after recording the data then entering the class. And all students are given the opportunity to explain what has been found and seen outside. This learning model is considered to be able to develop students' critical thinking.

The Madrasah Reform Program is a program that aims to improve the quality of education in madrasas. Several madrasah management strategies through the Madrasah Reform Program can be implemented (Susanto, 2022). First, improve the quality of teachers. Qualified and professional teachers are the key to successful education in madrasas. Therefore, the Madrasah Reform Program focuses on training and developing teachers in order to improve their competence and performance in teaching (Munif, 2022).

Second, improve the quality of learning. The Madrasah Reform program also focuses on developing innovative and effective curriculum and learning. Madrasas are required to be more oriented towards active and competency-based learning in order to produce graduates who are ready to compete in the world of work. Third, strengthening madrasah management is the key to successful madrasah management (Mahmud, 2019;

Martani, 2023). The Madrasah Reform program provides training and support in management, finance, and administration so that madrasahs can operate effectively and efficiently.

Fourth, improve the accessibility of madrasahs. The Madrasah Reform program also focuses on increasing the accessibility of madrasahs for the community. This is committed by building new madrasahs, increasing the number of classes and facilities, and developing a scholarship program for underprivileged students. Fifth, increasing the role of madrasahs in nation building means madrasahs are expected to become educational institutions that produce quality graduates and participate in nation-building (Panjaitan, 2022). Therefore, the Madrasah Reform Program also develops programs that can integrate madrasahs with society and the industrial world.

The Madrasah Reform program is expected to help improve the quality of education in Madrasahs so that they can produce graduates who are ready to compete in the world of work and participate in nation-building (Masykur et al., 2022). Furthermore, the Madrasah Reform Program has been implemented predominantly in madrasahs in Indonesia, although it has not been carried out in its entirety. In its application, each madrasah should have its strategy or tactic in implementing the program as found in this study that as an effort to support the success of the Madrasah Reform Program a long adaptation process is required so that to get around this, the madrasahs, especially Madrasah Madani, apply a special strategy based on the context and needs of madrasahs while continuing to adopt the concept and implementation framework of the Madrasah Reform Program.

CONCLUSION

The Madrasah Reform Program is a new innovation in the world of Islamic education in Indonesia, where so far there are still several obstacles in terms of implementation in each madrasa. The findings in this study indicate that: 1) the implementation of the Madrasah Reform Program in Madrasahs still has problems with several components in the program, especially in terms of technology-based learning processes. In Madrasah Madani, several things were carried out in implementing the Madrasah Reform Program, namely as a first step to focus more on improving the quality and performance of madrasah principals, the ability of teachers, and to increase the process of socialization and adaptation to the learning environment. 2) The Madrasah Madani management strategy through the Madrasah Reform Program is carried out through several specific strategies, namely creating innovative learning based on the interests of students in the classroom, developing a technology-based learning curriculum, maximizing madrasah self-evaluation, and increasing resources in madrasahs.

The findings in this study offer a roadmap for madrasahs in implementing the Madrasah Reform Program through strategic formulation based on the objective conditions of each madrasah. Furthermore, this research provides a new view for madrasa managers regarding the working model of the Madrasah Reform Program so that it can be used as a reference in maximizing the program. This study only focuses on aspects of management and development strategy so that for further research to focus more on analyzing the impact of the program and research is limited to only three madrasahs in South Sulawesi that have implemented the Madrasah Reform Program for less than two years so that future research is also expected to explore other aspects that are not discussed in this study.

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