

Madrasah Principal Policy in Developing High Achieving Madrasah at MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency

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Abstract

The study results concluded that the madrasah principal's policy-making process was carried out through agenda-setting, policy formulation, policy implementation, and policy assessment. Researchers support the theory of William N Dunn. The implementation of madrasah principal's policies is by increasing the human resources of educators and students through training and developing academic and non-academic values. Evaluation is carried out directly and indirectly.

Keywords: Madrasah Principal, Development, High Achieving Madrasah

1. Introduction

Quality education is influenced by strong leadership factors through existing policies. If there is no strong leadership factor, it will have an impact on the educational process that deviates from the vision, mission, and moves without clear direction (Velsor, McCauley, and Ruderman 2010). This will later have an impact on inadequacy. The costs spent will be gone without any results obtained. This reason is fundamental for the critical role of leaders in the education world (Middlewood 2005).

Regarding quality or characteristics, educational institutions in Indonesia are still far from standard, especially when compared to other countries. A Political and Economic Risk Consultant (PERC) review in 2000 on the teaching in Asian districts placed Indonesia twelfth behind Vietnam. A UNESCO report in November 2007 stated that Indonesia's position in education had decreased from 58th to 62nd position. In the position of 130 countries, Malaysia is at number 56, and South Korea is in fifth. The low quality of education in Indonesia is also due to human resources (HR) quality. This condition is caused by human resources who have competitiveness against the foundation, climate, instruments, and legal authority (Sholeh, Jannah, et al. 2021; Priyono 2010).

Many madrasahs do not meet general instruction guidelines. For example, educators and school staff who do not meet competency guidelines and competency standards (Sulfemi and Arsyad 2019). An indicator of decreasing cause in education quality in Indonesia is the absence of skills demonstrated by the principal (madrasah) as a manager in educational institutions. This sign needs to be shown that it is true that the principal, as a regulator, is the person who is responsible for driving everyone's awareness, learning techniques, forming a learning climate, etc. When these components do not develop, the first thing to blame is because of the inability of the principal to move his followers, whether the principal has made maximum efforts or is dishonest at work, even not trying in any way (Qomar 2007).

To get the high a quality madrasah, madrasah principals should take the right policies towards educators and students to improve the quality of education. Regarding policy, William N Dunn said that the policy-making process consists of agenda-setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, and policy assessment (Dunn 2017). Efforts that can be shown include greeting and actively communicating, going around classes, collaborating with BK educators, registering students with problems, and delegating educators to attend training.

Determination of research locations is based on the madrasah's high quality and becoming the favorite school for students' guardians. Parents are happy to send their children to these two madrasahs because, not only studying religion, students also study general knowledge. In addition, the graduates from these schools have a high opportunity to be accepted by lots of favorite senior high schools. The first research object is MTsN 1 Blitar City, an outstanding madrasah in Blitar City. The second research object is MTsN 1 in Blitar Regency, a high-achieving madrasah in Blitar Regency.

MTsN I in Blitar Regency achieved various awards and champion: 1) The 2nd place in Mathematics Olympiad competition in Blitar Regency, 2) The 1st place in Pop Singer at MAN in Blitar City, 3) The 1st place in Arabic Speech, 3) The 2nd place in MTQ at Islamic Vocational School 1 Blitar, 4) The 1st place in Biology KSM in SMKN 1 Blitar, 5) The 1st place at KSM Physics at MAN Wlingi, 6) The 1st place at KSM B England, 7) The 2nd place in KSM IPA at MAN Wlingi and others. MTsN I Blitar Regency principal, Aripin, S.Pd., M.A., in maintaining the institution's achievements, he develops eighteen extracurriculars and provides direct rewards and punishments. At MTsN I Blitar Regency, 40% of the students stay at Al-Kamal Islamic Boarding School, Kunir Village, Wonodadi District, Blitar Regency. It is certainly easier to provide control over the environment. If there is a lack of discipline, they are immediately given educational sanctions, for example, sweeping the floor and watering flowers. Likewise, if educators lack discipline, they are instantly reminded by the principal so that mistakes will never happen again. At MTsN I Blitar Regency, an extracurricular drum band attracts people's attention if

there is a carnival or other.

Based on the description above, this study aims to analyze the policy-making process, policy implementation, and policy evaluation of madrasah principals in developing high achieving madrasahs that become the research object, MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency.

2. Methods

This research is a descriptive qualitative study with a multi-site design located in MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency. This research is a study aimed at describing the events that occur in the field following what conditions are related to the policy of the madrasah principal in developing high achieving madrasahs at the two institutions.

The researcher determined the informants: madrasah principal, vice-principal of public relations, vice-principal of curriculum, vice-principal of facilities and infrastructure, students, students' guardians, committees, and teachers with certain criteria in MTsN I Blitar city and MTsN I Blitar district. Data collection techniques are through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation related to the policy-making process, policy implementation, and policy evaluation of madrasah principals in developing high-achieving madrasahs.

Data analysis using milles huberman model (Huberman n.d.) includes data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion. Meanwhile, the data validity is checked through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 The Process of Policy-Making by Madrasah Principals in Developing High Achieving Madrasah at MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency

Madrasah principals make a policy for developing high-achieving madrasah through the Adiwiyata program. At MTsN I Blitar City, the policy is contained in the mission statement: developing a culture of environmental conservation, preventing, and overcoming environmental damage and pollution. In MTsN I Blitar Regency, the mission point is to create a climate with a healthy and beautiful environment. This is one of the points of elaboration of the vision adopted from the Adiwiyata program. There are four basic approaches to leading effectively: 1) pioneer characteristics, 2) information, abilities, and capacities (information, abilities, and capacity), 3) vision, and 4) vision execution (Locke 1991).

The policy-making model is in line with the concept formulated by Dunn, named the normative model, which states that the normative model is an effort to establish and process a decision or policy, which is a policy-making process that begins with identifying good things to do by the leader (madrasah principal). Then

proceed with the preparation of guidelines on how a leader makes decisions (Dunn 2017).

The description of the madrasah principal's policy on the development of high achieving madrasah shows that the madrasah principal makes policies by using them simultaneously in the implementation of education. Regarding the formulation of the policy agenda, it must be carried out based on the level of importance and essence of the policy, and the involvement of stakeholders in their respective madrasah (Sholeh, Jannah, et al. 2021; Sholeh, Aziz, and Kholis 2021). The policy-making process carried out by the two madrasahs is through agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, policy assessment, policy adaptation, policy succession, and policy termination.

The strategy for achieving policy objectives is to develop a Community Work Plan (RKM)/Medium Term Work Plan (RKJM) to develop high-achieving madrasahs. In their duties as principals, they design and formulate strategies for achieving the goals, ideas, and bright concepts that the madrasah principals have and want to be realized in the context of developing high-achieving madrasahs. For this reason, they formed a team that would be invited to discuss their ideas. The team that has been formed is gathered and invited to a meeting together (Sholeh, Patoni, and Aziz 2021). They started the meeting by evaluating and analyzing the situation and potential to look for existing weak points and strengths. *Das sollen* and *das sein* must be balanced. Thus, they can determine the right strategic plans to realize the development of high achieving madrasah.

The policy formulation at MTsN Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency was carried out to prioritize programs: improving the quality of educators and education personnel, quality inputs, superior and competitive systems, and implementing the learning credit system contained in the RKM/RKJM.

MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency principals, based on spiritual intelligence, have drawn up good plans. A great designer must also have great spiritual intelligence because being a designer is closely related to the ideas that pop up in his mind (Gunter 2001; Sholeh, Patoni, et al. 2021f; Sholeh 2021). MTsN I Blitar City principal has the competence to understand the community in depth. It will be easy to respond to various situations that arise within the organization and then determine strategic and effective-efficient steps to develop high-achieving madrasah.

Likewise, MTsN I Blitar Regency principal is not allergic to change. The education world must follow the flow and conditions of the times. In addition, the principal must have a paradigm of thinking that the existing world is a series of processes that are constantly changing. Even the thinking paradigm of the leader must understand that a successful leader/principal is a leader who constantly evolves

towards and seeks new challenges by carrying out various research-based creative innovations for the development of high-achieving madrasah.

3.2 Implementation of Madrasah Principal Policies in the Development of High Achieving Madrasahs at MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency

After the policy is designed, supported/approved, and conveyed to the general public, the policy can be implemented. Policies that have been determined and implemented seriously and reliably, these policies can be used to achieve the goals that have been set before (Birkland 2015). This implementation is a refinement of the instruction strategy passed, depending on how it is implemented in the field. Policy implementation at MTsN I Blitar City and at MTsN I Blitar Regency includes:

First. Human Resource Development for Educators. The policies implemented by the two madrasah principals on the human resource development of educators are through training, workshops, and technical guidance. At MTsN I Blitar City, there have been IT skills training, workshops on the preparation of learning implementation plans (RPP), curriculum workshops, Adiwiyata technical guidance, and during this pandemic to empower educators by a webinar that has been held.

Furthermore, the implementation of the madrasah principal's policy at MTsN I Blitar Regency is also in the form of training for educators, including workshops on RPP preparation, curriculum workshops, technical guidance for the Adiwiyata program. This is the right step in implementing the madrasah principal's policy towards the development of high achieving madrasah.

One of the requirements for the madrasah principal's policy in assisting the development of high achieving madrasah is the existence of good correspondence and coordination between partners in their respective organizations. This also requires good correspondence and coordination between the various components or organizations involved in the program. Hood and Cristopher state that to achieve outstanding implementation, it is necessary to create a single unified framework to make good coordination (Hood 1976).

Second. Human Resource Development for Students is by optimizing Academic Values. MTsN I Blitar City has math and science olympiad classes by adding hours of lessons and collaboration with LBB (study tutoring institutions) from outside. In addition, to take part in the competition, there is a cooperation between parents and math and science experts from Malang City. This is conducted so that it can always maintain its quality as a madrasah with its consistency in obtaining mathematics olympiad achievements at the East Java level. Meanwhile, the achievements of MTsN I Blitar Regency are: 1) The 2nd place in Mathematics Olympiad competition in Blitar Regency, 2) The 1st place in Pop Singer at MAN in Blitar City, 3) The 1st place in Arabic Speech, 3) The 2nd place in MTQ at Islamic Vocational School 1 Blitar, 4) The 1st place in Biology KSM in SMKN 1 Blitar, 5) The 1st place at KSM

Physics at MAN Wlingi, 6) The 1st place at KSM B England, 7) The 2nd place in KSM IPA at MAN Wlingi and others

Extracurricular Optimization. Extracurricular scouting activities at MTsN I Blitar City have many achievements and are a center for raising SD/MI activities throughout Blitar Raya held every year. Alumni of MTsN I Blitar City are skilled in scouting. This is because it is an extracurricular mandatory for all students and is carried out with full discipline. Meanwhile, the extracurricular activities at MTsN I Blitar Regency are in the form of a drum band which is certainly a special attraction, especially for the communities around the school. There are 18 extracurricular activities held by MTsN I Blitar Regency, including *tahfiz Qur'an*. This is to maintain the purity of *Qur'an*.

Program Literacy. The activity carried out by students of MTsN I Blitar City is literacy. In addition to the literacy class, every student who is a member of literacy must write a book, be it poetry, short stories, or other written works. This literacy program is carried out by educators and students. At MTsN I Blitar Regency, many students have written books. According to the research results conducted by Sholeh, a special group for student literacy was formed to facilitate communication and evaluation of writing (Sholeh, Aziz, et al. 2021). Direct examples from leaders and educators have a positive impact on the character and motivation of students (Sholeh 2016; Sholeh 2018).

The findings show that students of MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency in digital literacy are also very mastered. This is encouraged because students live in the digital era and must master the technology. In general, mastering digital literacy means understanding how to use information in digital channels. In the digital context, it is not only concerned with how someone can process information, but how to access, assemble, and disseminate that information deserves special attention.

The development of educator and student resources is critical in the education world towards developing high achieving madrasah. The implementation of the madrasah principal's policy must be carried out effectively and efficiently. If there is a problem, a solution is immediately found. This is so that all problems can be overcome. The development of educator and student resources is essentially directed towards the development of high achieving madrasah in educational institutions (Dessier 1997).

3.3 Evaluation of Madrasah Principals' Policies in Developing High Achieving Madrasahs at MTsN I Blitar City and MTsN I Blitar Regency

According to William N Dunn, evaluation has several characteristics that distinguish it from other policy analysis methods. The characteristics of policy evaluation proposed by William N Dunn inform that policy evaluation is not only collecting information about policies that can be anticipated and which cannot be

anticipated, but the evaluation is directed to provide information on the past, present, and future. In addition, policy evaluation is stated that a particular policy or program has achieved the highest (or low) level of performance for all individuals, groups, and communities if actions are taken to address the problem. Therefore, William N Dunn's theory was chosen because it was the most appropriate to evaluate the implementation of madrasah principal's policies in developing high achieving madrasah. These distinguishing characteristics are divided into four: value focus, value fact interdependence, present and past orientation, and value duality (Dunn 2017).

The findings of the evaluation of the madrasah principal's policy at these two institutions were through direct and indirect evaluations. At MTsN I Kota Blitar, evaluation meetings are conducted conditionally or according to needs. This is because each vice-principal has coordinated and evaluated directly to the educators. If something needs to be evaluated, the madrasah principal holds a joint meeting. The madrasah principal carries out a direct evaluation by arriving early to *mushafahah*, welcoming the presence of educators and students, evaluating their discipline, and indirectly asking the vice-principal regarding the discipline of personnel in their institutions.

The routine evaluations at MTsN I Blitar City are held ahead of the UTS, UAS, and other exams. In addition, meetings for the evaluation of the madrasah are held through *anjangsana* (special visitation) to the educator's house every two months and during the educator's refreshing program. Likewise, in MTsN I Blitar Regency, meetings are held conditionally, during *anjangsana*, and a recreation program with all personnel. Indirect evaluation carried out by the MTsN I Blitar City principal is by monitoring the WhatsApp group starting from the discipline of collecting assignments according to the existing checklist or going around to classes every morning before entering the headmaster's office. Madrasah principal evaluates in the future, the madrasah is getting better, or its performance is getting worse. He compares the achievements of last year, now, and in the future.

The evaluation criteria above are used to measure the things that should be measured, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, reliable (trustworthy), objective (there is no personal element that influences), consistency (accuracy), which is the accuracy of the test scoring system. The multiple-choice test form is more objective in value than the description test form. Continuous (continuous), in which the test is carried out not only once or twice, is to get a picture of students' understanding of the material.

There are many benefits of holding an evaluation of madrasah policies, being used as one of the functions of controlling and supervising by the madrasah principal so that the policies formulated can run according to plan. Monitoring evaluation is an

activity that allows positive interventions in checking the direction taken and evaluating results or deviations from previous plans (Hellriegel, Jackson, and Slocum 2008).

The evaluation of the madrasa principal's policy must be carried out honestly, including the evaluation of students. In MTsN I Blitar City and this district, in preparing data when the madrasah self-evaluation (EDM) data was valid according to actual conditions. Likewise, data related to educators and students is done honestly, as it follows the madrasah conditions. The key to evaluation is talking about the improvement itself and the supervision/evaluation given to educators and students. Here is clearly seen the implications of societal changes that have consequences in how teaching improvement measures are set up (Rahmawati and Sholeh 2021).

4. Conclusion

The ability of a principal to realize high achieving madrasah requires careful planning through policymaking by creating a vision and mission following the institution's characteristics and according to the needs of the times. The next stage is to formulate a superior program. Implementation of madrasah principal's policies is by increasing human resources for educators and students through training, developing academic and non-academic values. Evaluations are carried out directly and indirectly, including regular meetings, joint meetings, madrasah exams, visits to educators' homes, during recreation, visits to classes, one-on-one evaluations, and evaluations from external institutions.

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