

Research Article

Policy to Improve the Quality of Education in Islamic Boarding Schools

Isrok*, Dian Mohammad Hakim, Moh. Afifulloh

Universitas Islam Malang, Malang, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: Isrok18@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the implementation strategy of the quality improvement policy, the obstacles to implementing the quality improvement policy, and the solution to overcome the obstacles to implementing the quality improvement policy in MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan. The method of this research is to use a descriptive qualitative approach. The study results show the following: Implementation strategy for quality improvement policies at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan has been running for its establishment. This can be seen from several indicators, including the standards and policy objectives that have been achieved, the resources that support it, communication between the principal and teachers, employees, and students runs smoothly, inter organizations and inauguration activities are running well, the characteristics of implementing supportive agents, as well as social, economic, and political conditions that are conducive and support the implementation strategy of quality improvement policies. The obstacles that arise in implementing quality improvement policies are low student understanding of the importance of education, inadequate number of educators, inadequate learning infrastructure, and the economic condition of students' parents classified as middle to lower economic levels. Solutions to overcome obstacles in the implementation of quality improvement policies are providing an approach so that students want to continue their education to the next level, finding substitute teachers according to the subject, procurement of infrastructure facilities through BOS funds, providing the Smart Indonesia Program (PIP) for underprivileged students.

Keywords: Islamic Boarding School; Policy; Quality of Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in improving superior and competitive human resources in the face of the progress of the times. Education has an idealistic goal so seriousness is needed in building independence and empowerment that can support future education progress (Taufik, 2020). Education is a very important element in creating quality resources and being able to compete in the face of various changes and challenges of globalization that are and will occur. Education is important because it contributes greatly to social, economic, political, and cultural progress. Thus, education is an important sector that greatly influences a nation's image (Ardiansyah, 2021).

There are many problems regarding education in Indonesia, one of which is the low quality of education in Indonesia and the inadequate educational facilities. Under any circumstances, the government's commitment to improving the quality of education in Indonesia has not changed. Various programs have been implemented that have provided hope for the continuity and control of the quality of education in Indonesia (Cartoni Mancinelli et al., 2018). To achieve the expected educators, it is necessary to implement quality education. The government gives the right to citizens or communities to get quality education. Quality education will produce a good and quality young generation as well, impacting the development of good human resource improvement (Nugraha et al., 2022). Good human resources are needed to build a developed nation, so education is necessary. In this case, the school is expected to produce good and superior graduates.

The application of decentralization into education management presents the school as an institution that has authority and authority that no longer depends on centralistic policies and bureaucracy. Therefore, to anticipate the enactment of the concept of decentralization, it is necessary to understand strategies and management based on independence through School-Based Management (SBM) (Faisal & Kisman, 2020). The freedom of school power to determine school policies to improve quality and can accommodate the wishes of the local community (stakeholders), who seek to increase the role of schools and the surrounding community in education management (Hergüner et al., 2021) so that the implementation of education becomes better. The quality of graduates can be improved.

The management of education between schools can be different. Each school has different strategies and abilities in

improving the quality of education, each adjusted to the condition of its students. Arcaro (Ortiz & Huber-Heim, 2017) takes from the arguments of experts, stating that the basis of the mission of improving the quality of a school is to develop programs and services that meet the needs of users such as students and the community. To realize a quality school, it must begin with a mutual agreement from the actors in the school, in this case, the teachers, principals, school boards, administration, students, and the school community, to dedicate themselves to improving the school's quality.

His book also said that a policy that is taken and decided is usually based on problems in education. Problems usually arise when there is a gap between the ideal world (*das sollen*) and the real world (*das sein*). Meanwhile, education policy is carried out to reduce the gap (*description*) or bring closer the world of ideals (hopes) to the real world (reality) (Gupta, 2018).

A policy will encounter many problems at the implementation stage. Therefore, the alternatives chosen by the policymakers must be implementable. The problem is often interpreted simply, even though the problem by one person may be beneficial to another. About the practical nature and the contained purpose in policy formulation, the implementation of policies is related to the actors' power, interests, and strategies (Mawitjere, 2023). If it is not implemented immediately, a policy cannot be known to the extent of its success for the public. The policy will only be neatly stored in a pile of other archives. According to (Mogale & Malatji, 2022), policy implementation is intended as a total of actions taken by individuals/officials or government or private groups to achieve predetermined policy objectives. These namely actions are efforts to transform decisions into operational terms or continuous efforts to achieve major and small changes mandated by policy decisions.

Based on the results of an interview with one of the MTs teachers. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan, whom we met, got some information about this school from the interview. According to the source, we met MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan has several policies made by schools aimed at improving the quality of graduates which will also have an impact on the quality of school quality. With this policy, MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan can also prepare students to be better prepared to face the Computer-Based National Exam (UNBK), where each student has a different character in learning. One of these policies is additional lesson hours (Tasharp). Additional lesson hours (Tasharp) are carried out with the hope that students, especially grade IX, will increase their learning achievements, and the increasing results of the National Exam show this. Improving education quality is seen not only from the quality of the Human Resources (HR) of the school concerned but also from the achievement of student learning outcomes, which is the benchmark for the success of education in the school concerned.

This research aims to describe the implementation strategy of the quality improvement policy, the obstacles to implementing the quality improvement policy, and the solution to overcome the obstacles to implementing the quality improvement policy in MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is descriptive research using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is more descriptive, where the data collected is in the form of words or pictures so that it does not emphasize numbers. The research was carried out at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan, which is located in Galba Hamlet, Village. Panjalinan Kec. Blega, Bangkalan Regency. Then, the research was carried out for 2 months, namely February 2025 to May 2025. The subjects in this study are one principal and three teachers at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan. The key informant in this study is the vice principal for academic affairs at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan. At the same time, the other subjects are supporting informants.

According to (Morgeson et al., 2019), data collection techniques are the most strategic step in research because the main goal is to find data. When viewed from the data source, it can be in the form of primary and secondary data. Still, when viewed from the data collection technique, the data can be obtained by observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The validity of the data in this study uses the following four criteria: (1) degree of credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) confirmability. To maintain the validity of the data, field observation techniques and source triangulation are used with consideration to obtain accurate information from informants, it is necessary to crosscheck between informants who are one with the other informant. The triangulation used by the researcher is a triangulation of techniques and sources. The data obtained will be analyzed qualitatively according to Milles and Huberman (Miles et al., 2018): data collection, reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation Strategy for Quality Improvement Policy at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan

Implementation Strategy for Quality Improvement Policy at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is implemented in several policies, including: Every policy must have standards and goals to be achieved. Based on Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005, graduate competency standards are graduates' ability qualifications, including attitudes, knowledge, and skills implementation strategy for quality improvement policies in MTs schools. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan has standards and

goals for school quality improvement policies. As revealed by several speakers in the interview above, it is because it is adjusted to the visions and missions of the Bantul regency, namely SMART MTs standards. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan has set the KKM score that has been determined at the beginning of the school year; students follow according to the schedule, and there is a development of grades from TPM 1, 2, and so on to the results of the national exam so that it can improve the quality of the school and is expected to improve the school's ranking position.

As for the goals, along with the vision of Bantul regency, namely SMART, these visions and missions are implemented in schools intended to be a reference for schools to maximize and improve school achievements, increase national exam scores, improve school rankings, and increase school output. Some of these things aim to improve the school's quality.

(Shaw et al., 2020) stated that the success of education in schools is largely determined by the principal's success in managing the educational personnel available. Therefore, from the interview results, the condition of human resources, namely education personnel at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan, namely teacher competence, must be seen from the teacher's background. Teachers at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is already competent in their respective fields.

Another resource that is no less important is the facilities and infrastructure that are important in the educational process. The Ministry of National Education (2008) distinguishes the definition of educational facilities and infrastructure. Educational facilities are devices or equipment used in the educational process. Meanwhile, infrastructure is a device that indirectly supports the learning process, such as the classroom.

MTs Infrastructure Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is in accordance with SPL; each class has an LCD projector, internet, UNBK lab room, and language lab, even though it is now not used due to expensive maintenance costs. Other equipment is a companion module, VCD pieces for CBT exams, LKS books, etc. It can be concluded that the facilities and infrastructure resources are quite adequate despite the damage to equipment, but the facilities and infrastructure available at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan supports the policy of improving quality in schools because, in its implementation, it can run well.

Good communication between school residents will impact improving the quality of a school. According to (Booker et al., 2021), communication is the most basic thing in the success of implementation because, through good communication, it will be able to condition the atmosphere of the implementation process in accordance with the goals and benefits that have been set. Furthermore, (Nolan & Molla, 2017) added that policy decisions can be implemented properly and optimally if they have met the implementation requirements, one of which is the need for strong coordination between implementing agencies. In implementing quality improvement policies in schools, the principal becomes a channel of communication in the school environment he leads.

In the strategy for implementing the MTs school principal's quality improvement policy. Al Akhyariyah Communication, in general, can be carried out through briefings or meetings with teachers and employees; it can be specifically teachers' or employees' smooth communication at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan can be seen from the form of communication carried out by the principal with teachers and employees, namely by involving all teachers and employees in making quality improvement policy decisions (Adam et al., 2024).

Quality improvement policy at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is established at the beginning of the new school year. A quality improvement policy requires cooperation between inter-organization schools, especially principals, teachers, and employees so that its implementation and results will be good by the standards and goals that have been set. The policy was determined from discussions and deliberations between the principal and the curriculum waka. Then, the policy results discussed are held and socialized with teachers and employees, whether the policy is to the current condition of students (Ardiyanti et al., 2021). The form of the inauguration of the quality improvement policy is a quality improvement implementation team decree. After being formulated together, if approved, the policy will be ratified and determined as a policy to improve the quality of MTs schools. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan, there will be a decree from the principal, which the quality improvement team will follow up on.

In the implementation strategy of the school quality improvement policy, the principal, teachers, employees, and school committee are the implementing agents. As policy-implementing agents, teachers must have professional teacher competencies, namely pedagogic, personality, social, and professional competence. According to the theory of Georg C. Edward (Sahabuddin et al., 2022), if the implementing agent has good characteristics, then they can implement policies well to meet the expected goals. Teachers as policy-implementing agents must also be able to educate children, teach, motivate them to learn, set good examples in attitudes, behaviors, clothing, and discipline, knowing students' interests and talents. School principals, teachers, and employees are competent in their respective fields; they succeed in carrying out their responsibilities through their duties and abilities so that the goal of quality improvement policies in schools can be achieved (Marfan & Pascual, 2018).

In the implementation strategy of the quality improvement policy at SMP Negeri 1, social, economic, and political conditions are external factors that influence the implementation of school quality improvement policies. This is related to the extent to which the support of the school committee and the surrounding environment supports the successful implementation of the policy. The school received support from the parents of the students and the school committee; in this case, the situation of the parents of the students mostly consisted of a weak economic society, with diverse livelihoods such as fishermen, farmers, sand and stone miners, laborers and so on but the enthusiasm to send their sons and

daughters to school was quite high.

It can be said that the social, economic, and political conditions in implementing quality policies support implementing quality improvement policies at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan. The school also received support from the local government, especially the Bantul Regency Regional Government, which was very real. The Bantul Regency Regional Government is very concerned about the welfare and achievements of teachers, employees, and students in various forms, such as welfare or intensive money for teachers, employees, and student scholarships.

Obstacles That Arise in the Implementation of Quality Improvement Policies

Implementation strategy for school quality improvement policies at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan said there are obstacles to standards and policy objectives, namely, problems for teachers and students because the minimum standard for achieving average scores of exam results must be the same as last year, so some teachers are optimistic, and some are pessimistic, lacking enthusiasm. Personal interests constrain teachers; besides that, because students have different backgrounds, they automatically have various obstacles.

The condition of MTs school resources. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan has met operational standards for the facilities, but some facilities are damaged so that they cannot be used; the minimum service has been sufficient. Teachers' and employees' conditions are competent and strongly support the policy. In addition, teachers have also met the standards; this is evidenced by teachers who have been certified so that teachers can be said to be competent, but there is still pessimism from teachers, and there are differences in interpretation between teachers and others, which is a common thing in schools. From the student side, there are still students who are lazy in learning, students who do not have goals for the future, and students who are immature in the sense that they do not realize the benefits of education.

The classroom facilities and learning media used in the learning process are adequate. It's just that the use of facilities is still lacking; it can be seen that the English laboratory is no longer used because the damage caused by students' awareness to care for and maintain facilities at school is still lacking, besides that because the expensive maintenance cost factor makes it an obstacle for the school to use it as a means of teaching and learning activities (Priando Purba et al., 2021). If the language laboratory is used to the maximum, the ability of students to learn foreign languages will increase. Communication between the Principal and Teachers, Employees and Students

Communication between principals, teachers, employees, and students on implementing school quality improvement policies at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan does not encounter significant obstacles. Obstacles do exist, but they are not so meaningful; every time there is a policy, there must be pros and cons. It is a common thing. Communication with teachers, employees, and students has been smooth because every week, there must be a briefing or regular meeting, even though not all teachers and employees can participate. At the beginning of the year, a workshop will be held with teachers (Eyob Kenta, 2019).

Interorganizational constraints and inauguration activities are part of the strategy for implementing quality improvement policies at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan. With every policy or change that occurs, there will be pros and cons for individual teachers. Some teachers are against the change because teachers do not understand the impact of the quality improvement system. Still, for teachers who understand the impact of quality improvement, most teachers support the policy or change. This happens because every decision on each policy always involves teachers and school employees.

Characteristics of quality improvement policy implementing agents at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is indeed an obstacle despite the small percentage. As implementing agents, teachers have the main task of implementing policies for students. The problem goes back to the teacher's condition; some have different characters, which for us is an obstacle, but the percentage is very small. It is very good for teachers to carry out their duties; at the time of implementation, some teachers cannot teach or attend because they conflict with personal and social interests (Ramlah et al., 2022).

Here, the problem of the economic and social conditions of parents, the status of parents who have various backgrounds, on average, 50% of the community, is downward; some children have poor parental backgrounds, so children become less attentive. In addition, regarding financing, some parents cannot contribute funds. In addition, at the beginning of the school year, parents agreed to donate funds, but at the end of the school year, this was not realized. This happens because the economic condition of students' parents is classified as low economy.

Solutions to Overcome Obstacles to Implementing Quality Improvement Policies

Solutions for those carried out on the standards and policy objectives of improving the quality of schools at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan. With a predetermined schedule, it is hoped that it will unite the shortcomings in teachers and students; for example, some teachers have permission to find a replacement for students who are given other tasks immediately, and students who skip school are immediately given coaching. With the schedule that has been prepared, teachers, employees, students, and parents are expected to be able to quickly work together to overcome existing problems to improve student and school achievement.

The condition of school resources in implementing the school quality improvement policy at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is by operational standards; it can be said that there are no problems in implementing quality improvement policies. Therefore, schoolwork needs to unite optimism and pessimism so everyone remains optimistic. For students to always be given directions to understand the importance of education, the more often they are given the understanding of direction, the more mature their thinking will be, and the student will feel guilty. Because if there is confidence to succeed, the policy implementation will get positive results (Hidajat et al., 2023).

Solutions regarding communication problems with school principals, teachers, employees, and students on implementing school quality improvement policies at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is by holding a meeting at least once a week; for the students themselves communication is carried out during the flag ceremony where necessary. In addition, school principals take advantage of the technology developing today. Almost everyone has a communication tool, so we use it to establish communication between school principals, teachers, and employees. Every time there is a meeting the results of the meeting must always be informed via WA or E-mail. So, suppose several members cannot attend and do not miss information from the school. Overall, communication with the principal, teachers, employees, and students has been quite smooth because there are always meetings; it is also helped by the technology that exists at this time (Nabilah Mokhtar et al., 2023).

Before the plenary meeting, we invited the principal staff (WaKaKur, WaKaSis, student affairs, curriculum, public relations, and infrastructure) to think about formulating policies that we will implement if some shortcomings and advantages can be processed at that time. So, the idea is not only from one person, not only from me; the policy will be better if, in the formation of the policy, there is a difference in interpretation; it will be deliberated together to take the best to improve the quality of the school.

Implementation strategy for quality improvement policies in MTs schools. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan has obstacles. Therefore, for the policy to be implemented properly, the solution taken by the principal takes a personal approach to invite the teacher concerned to talk about the problems experienced in the principal's room so that they are more open. From there, it will be seen whether the community has economic and social problems. Because if there are teachers who have problems, it will affect the teacher's performance in teaching (Ridwanto et al., 2020).

Overall, teachers can carry out their duties well, only if there are teachers who cannot teach, a replacement teacher must be found, teachers who are by the subject of teachers who are unable to attend, if there is no suitable, a replacement from the picket teacher is found. The picket teacher will give a replacement task previously coordinated with the teacher concerned. The solution is to conduct a home visit by the BK team, for the problem of financing constraints with the existence of the government PIP (Smart Indonesia Program) program that supports education. So, if the source of funds from parents is felt that they cannot take from government programs to support quality improvement policies, it can still be implemented.

4. CONCLUSION

Policy implementation strategy at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is seen from several aspects: Achievement of standards and goals, namely setting KKM scores, students on the importance of education, participating in activities according to schedule, there is a development of grades in TPM and UN, and the goal is to improve national exam results, and improve the school's ranking position. School resources, namely teachers and employees, are placed according to their educational background, maximizing physical and learning support facilities such as computers, projector screens, and VCD chips in the learning process. Communication with teachers, employees, and students, namely smooth communication during decision-making by involving all teachers in determining policies. Interorganization and inauguration activities at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan in designing policies, inviting stakeholders (vice principals in various fields) and all teachers to design policies; after the policy is set, the principal issues a principal's decree (SK). Characteristics of implementing agents in MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is the background of educators and education staff at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is known that the average teacher has an S1 degree and is competent in their field. Teachers in this school are placed according to their educational background and competence. Socio-economic and political conditions related to the implementation of policies in schools, especially regarding financing policies, are seen first as economic ability and financing ability from students' parents.

Obstacles are faced in the implementation of the quality policy of the implementation of the improvement policy at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan is seen from: Obstacles to achieving standards and goals, namely low student understanding of the importance of education and student discipline, are relatively low. Teachers cannot attend learning in the classroom, and learning infrastructure facilities cannot be used in the learning process. Communication with teachers, employees, and students, namely the presence of teachers who cannot attend meetings or briefings. Interorganization and inauguration activities, namely the occurrence of pros and cons between policymakers. The characteristics of implementing agents, namely, each teacher has different backgrounds, needs, and principles. Most people know that students have a middle to lower economic level in social, economic, and political conditions. The solution is to overcome the obstacles to implementing the quality improvement policy at MTs. Al Akhyariyah Panjalinan, seen from: Achievement of standards and goals, namely

providing an approach so that the student wants to continue their education to the next level, as well as conducting home visits or visits from the committee and BK for the students concerned. School resources, namely finding substitute teachers who are by the subjects taught or making picket teachers as substitute teachers; the use of infrastructure facilities alternately, and periodic maintenance is carried out using BOS funds. Communication with teachers, employees, and students, namely informing the results of meetings and briefings through WA so that teachers or employees who cannot attend can still find out the decision of the meeting directly. Interorganization and inauguration activities, namely deliberations, are done together to make the best. The characteristics of implementing agents are to take a personal approach, especially to teachers who have obstacles in implementing quality improvement policies. Social, economic, and political conditions, namely the Smart Indonesia Program (PIP), are provided for students who have a lower middle-class economic background.

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