



Effectiveness of the Madrasah Development Team in Enhancing Educational Quality at MTsN 1 East Aceh

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the development team's role in improving the quality of education at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur. Utilizing a qualitative approach with a case study design, this research explores local dynamics and challenges faced during program implementation. The results indicate that the development team significantly contributes to increasing institutional attractiveness, transforming learning processes, and strengthening networks with various stakeholders. Despite managerial challenges such as resource limitations and increased workloads, adaptive strategies and the establishment of a quality assurance team are expected to address these obstacles. This research also highlights the importance of collaboration among managers, educators, and students in creating a conducive environment for quality improvement in education. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the collective role of the development team within the specific context of madrasahs. Future research is recommended to explore more integrated collaborative models and involve the perspectives of students and parents in program evaluations.

1. Introduction

Improving the quality of education is a crucial agenda in the development of Indonesia's national education system. In the context of madrasahs, this effort becomes even more vital given its strategic role in shaping a knowledgeable and noble generation. One of the strategies implemented to encourage the improvement of the quality of education in madrasahs is the formation of madrasah development teams.

Previous research has explored various aspects related to improving education quality and the role of school development teams. (Fitrah, 2017) emphasized the importance of the principal's leadership in directing the development team to improve education quality. This study underlines that effective leadership is a key factor in the success of quality improvement efforts.

Research (Sunanto, 2015) shows that the importance of a collaborative approach in quality improvement efforts. In his research, the school development team plays an important role in the process of planning, implementing and evaluating education quality improvement programs. The

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principal and school staff work together with the school committee and the community to improve the quality of education through effective collaboration and participation.

Meanwhile, (Mar'ati, 2022) analyzed the role of school committees in improving the quality of education, showing that the involvement of external stakeholders also contributes significantly to quality improvement efforts.

While these studies provide a strong foundation, there are some research gaps that need to be filled. First, the majority of previous studies have focused on the context of public schools, while the specific dynamics in the context of madrasahs, especially in regions such as East Aceh, have not been explored much. Secondly, the role of the madrasah development team as a collective entity in quality improvement efforts has not received adequate attention.

The state of the art in this study lies in the comprehensive exploration of the effectiveness of the role of madrasah development teams in the specific context of MTsN 1 Aceh Timur. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the local dynamics and unique challenges faced in efforts to improve the quality of education in madrasahs.

The novelty of this research lies in three main aspects. First, the focus on the madrasah development team as the unit of analysis, which enables a more holistic understanding of the collaborative process in quality improvement. Second, the contextualization of the research in MTsN 1 Aceh Timuropens up opportunities to uncover local factors that influence the effectiveness of the development team. Third, this research develops an analytical framework that integrates the perspective of Islamic education management with organizational development theory, providing a new perspective in understanding the dynamics of quality improvement in madrasah.

Several recent studies reinforce the urgency and relevance of this research. (Iskandar, 2017) highlighted that quality improvement strategies need to consider local characteristics and organizational culture. This research emphasizes that external and internal environmental analysis, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation are important stages in the implementation of effective strategic management.

Meanwhile, (Syafaruddin et al., 2016) emphasized the importance of developing teacher professionalism in an effort to improve the quality of madrasah education, which can be one of the focuses of the development team's work.

Furthermore, (Nisoh, 2019) underlined the important role of Total Quality Management (TQM) in integrating all organizational processes to achieve high quality. In the context of madrasah, TQM can involve various aspects such as the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, strong leadership, effective management of education personnel, quality culture, cohesive teamwork, and management transparency.

By considering the research gap, state of the art, and novelty that have been described, this study aims to analyze in depth the effectiveness of the role of the madrasah development team in improving the quality of education at MTsN 1 East Aceh. The results of this study are expected to contribute significantly to the development of more effective strategies in improving the quality of madrasah education in Indonesia, especially in areas that have similar characteristics to East Aceh.

2. Methodology

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, focusing on the effectiveness of the role of the madrasah development team in improving the quality of education at MTsN 1 East Aceh. The choice of this approach allows in-depth exploration of complex phenomena in a specific context (Creswell, 2014).

The research location is MTsN 1 Aceh Timur, with research subjects including members of the madrasah development team, the madrasah head (Drs. H. Saifullah MN), coordinators of four main sections (curriculum, student affairs, facilities and infrastructure, community relations), and representatives from each sub-section. Participants were selected using purposive sampling technique to ensure representation of various perspectives (Patton, 2014). Data collection was conducted through:

1. Semi-structured in-depth interviews with the madrasah head, development team coordinator, and representatives from each sub-section.
2. Participant observation of madrasah development team activities, including evaluation meetings and program presentations.
3. Document analysis, including the development team's work plan, RAB, evaluation reports, and documents related to the vision and mission of MTsN 1 East Aceh.
4. Focus group discussion (FGD) with members of the development team to discuss challenges and strategies for program implementation.

Triangulation of sources and methods was applied to enhance data credibility (Flick, 2018). The main instrument was the researcher himself, supported by interview guidelines, observation sheets, and validated document analysis protocols.

Data analysis used an interactive model including data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. The coding process adopted a thematic approach, focusing on themes such as the program planning process, implementation, challenges and impact on education quality.

To ensure data validity, the research applied triangulation, member checking, peer debriefing and audit trail. Research ethics were maintained through informed consent, assurance of confidentiality and secure data storage.

3. Results

3.1 Madrasah Development Team Structure and Formation

The formation of the Madrasah Development Team at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur represents the implementation of strategic management in the development of Islamic education institutions. The initiative to form this team was motivated by two fundamental aspects: first, as a strategic instrument in improving the quality of education, and second, as an operational mechanism in achieving the vision and mission of the madrasah. This is in line with Sodikin's view, which emphasizes the importance of quality improvement strategies that consider the social and cultural context in which the institution operates (Sodikin et al., 2024).

In the selection process of team members, the madrasah head applies a multiple criteria approach that integrates administrative and competency aspects. The first criterion was the employment status of civil servants, a strategic decision based on considerations of program sustainability given the absence of a special budget allocation for team honorarium. The second criterion focuses on individual competencies relevant to the development needs of the madrasah, reflecting a deep understanding of the principle of "the right person in the right place" (Susiyani, 2017). This approach is in line with findings showing that selecting the right team members can improve the effectiveness of educational organizations (Connolly et al., 2019).

The organizational structure of the Madrasah Development Team is designed with a divisional approach that allows for functional specialization as well as program integration. Under the direct supervision of the Head of Madrasah, Drs. H. Saifullah MN, the team is divided into four main divisions with specific and measurable division of tasks:

1. Curriculum Division

Led by Khalidah, S.Pd.I, this division integrates three strategic functions: teacher and education personnel development, learning management, and literacy development. This structure reflects the understanding that improving the quality of education must start from strengthening the capacity of educators and developing effective learning systems.

2. Student Affairs Division

Under the leadership of Nurdin, S.Pd.I, this division manages a broad spectrum of student development activities, from student organizations to counselling services. The division's structure demonstrates a holistic approach in developing learners' potential, in line with the concept of education that pays attention to cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects.

3. Facilities and Infrastructure Division

Coordinated by Ridlwan, S.Pd.I, this division manages physical infrastructure and learning support facilities. The division of tasks in this division reflects the understanding that the quality of learning is inseparable from the availability and management of adequate infrastructure.

4. Public Relations Division

Under the leadership of Rus'an, S.Pd.I, this division plays a vital role in building networks and communication with external stakeholders. This structure indicates the madrasah's awareness of the importance of building an educational ecosystem that involves community participation.

Each division has a clear hierarchical structure, with specific job descriptions and performance targets. This reflects the application of modern management principles in the context of Islamic education, where the division of tasks is systematic yet flexible (Nidaul Jannah et al., 2022). The implementation of this structure also shows the integration between modern management approaches and Islamic education values, which pay attention to character development and Islamic values in every program run (Hasibuan et al., 2018).

The success of this organizational structure is supported by a tiered coordination system that enables effective information flow and decision-making. This system facilitates continuous monitoring and evaluation, and ensures accountability of each element in the organizational structure of the Madrasah Development Team. Research shows that a good management system can improve organizational commitment and educational quality outcomes (Basnet, 2020).

Thus, the establishment of the Madrasah Development Team at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur serves not only as a tool to improve the quality of education, but also as a management model that integrates modern principles with Islamic education values, which in turn can contribute to the effective achievement of the madrasah's vision and mission.

3.2 Program Implementation and Coordination Mechanism

The program implementation and coordination mechanism of the Madrasah Development Team at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur demonstrate the application of modern management principles integrated with Islamic education values. The developed system creates harmony between top-down and bottom-up approaches, resulting in a collaborative and sustainable development ecosystem. This is in line with research showing that school-based management (SBM) can improve the quality of education by giving wider authority to madrasahs, thus enabling decision-making that is more responsive to local needs (Anwar, 2021).

1. Systematic Coordination Mechanism

The coordination system implemented at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur adopts a tiered approach, which allows for effective information flow and decision-making. This approach is in line with the Total Quality Management (TQM) concept proposed by Hidayat et al. (Hidayat et al., 2020), where the integration of all organizational processes is key to achieving high quality. This coordination mechanism is implemented through three main levels: operational, tactical and strategic levels. At

the operational level, the program coordinator is responsible for daily program implementation and monitoring. At the tactical level, the team leader supervises and coordinates across programs within a division, while at the strategic level, the madrasah head provides policy direction and makes strategic decisions.

The evaluation system is structured with monthly and semi-annual evaluation cycles, which allows for better monitoring of program achievements and strategic planning. This shows that systematic evaluation is very important in improving the quality of education in madrasahs, as also revealed in other studies that show the importance of evaluation in education management (Agustina et al., 2024).

2. Integrative Flagship Program

The excellent programs developed by each division reflect a holistic approach in improving the quality of education, in line with the madrasah vision to realize “the profile of Islamic students who are of high quality in faith and piety, mastering science and technology, and able to actualize themselves in community life.”

Table of Main Programs of MTsN 1 Aceh Timur

Divisi	Main Program	Program Details
Curriculum	Competency and literacy	Continuing professional development (CPD) program, literacy program
Student Affairs	Holistic potential development	Leadership development, student protection and welfare
Facilities and Infrastructure	Supporting infrastructure	Digitalization of education, strengthening learning facilities
Public Relations	Image strengthening and collaboration	Madrasa culture, Digital communication management

The curriculum division, for example, focuses on strengthening competencies and literacy through continuous professional development, learning management and literacy programs. Research shows that teacher competency development and innovative learning systems have a significant impact on improving education quality (Subaidi et al., 2023).

The student affairs division also plays an important role in developing learners' holistic potential through student leadership and protection programs. These programs are designed to create a learning environment that supports students' character development and well-being, which are important aspects of character education. In addition, the infrastructure division focuses on digitizing education services and strengthening learning facilities, which are highly relevant to the needs of modern education today (Sarjito, 2023).

The Public Relations division focuses on image strengthening and collaboration, which includes the development of madrasah culture and digital communication management. This is important to increase community participation and support for madrasah programs, which in turn will support the successful implementation of flagship programs (Chaerat et al., 2022).

The implementation of these flagship programs is supported by a structured monitoring and evaluation system, enabling continuous improvement and adaptation of the programs according to the needs and challenges faced. This approach reflects the madrasah's commitment to developing a

quality and competitive education system, in line with research showing that good education management can improve the overall quality of education services (Agustina et al., 2024).

3.3 Program Effectiveness and Challenges

The effectiveness of the program initiated by the Madrasah Development Team at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur is the result of strategic planning based on specific indicators. The table below presents the Madrasah Development Team's Program Effectiveness Indicators, which are the main guidelines in measuring the success of program implementation. Each indicator is accompanied by a detailed description to provide a clear picture of the aspects being assessed.

Table of Madrasah Development Team Program Effectiveness Indicators	
Indicator	Description
Institutional Attraction	Increased number of learners and public trust in madrasah
Learning Transformation	Improved teacher capacity, technology integration and literacy culture
Network Strengthening	Collaboration with stakeholders, including madrasah committees and health institutions
Managerial Challenges	Optimization of workload and limited resources
Adaptive Strategy	Priority-based program management and optimization of internal resources
Structural Innovation	Establishment of a Quality Assurance Team for continuous evaluation and development

Based on these indicators, a further study was conducted to analyse how the program implementation impacted on improving the overall quality of madrasah education. This analysis not only covers the program achievements that have been realized but also identifies the challenges faced in the process.

1. Analysis of Program Effectiveness

An in-depth study of the implementation of the Madrasah Development Team program at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur shows a significant pattern of effectiveness in the context of Islamic education management. The level of program effectiveness can be measured through several key indicators that reflect the transformation in the madrasah education ecosystem.

a) Institutional attractiveness

One of the most striking indicators of success is the increased attractiveness of madrasahs, which is reflected in the demographic expansion of learners. This phenomenon shows that the catchment area of madrasahs has expanded beyond the administrative boundaries of the sub-district, indicating the building of public trust in the quality of education offered. This is in line with research showing that a good management information system can improve the competitiveness of Islamic education institutions (Chusnul Chotimah et al., 2023), as well as the importance of institutional branding in attracting public interest (Kuntoro, 2019).

b) Learning Transformation

The effectiveness of the program can also be seen in the transformation of the learning paradigm to be more adaptive and innovative. The identified transformative indicators include improving teachers' pedagogical capacity through structured CPD programs, integrating technology in the learning process, and developing a culture of literacy. This approach is in line with findings that good education management can improve the overall quality of education (Warcham & Sa'diyah, 2021).

c) Strengthening institutional networks

Tim Pengembang berhasil membangun jejaring kolaboratif dengan berbagai stakeholder strategis, menciptakan ekosistem pendukung yang solid. Keterlibatan aktif komite madrasah dan kolaborasi dengan institusi lain menunjukkan pentingnya manajemen berbasis komunitas dalam meningkatkan efektivitas program pendidikan. Sinergi dengan institusi kesehatan dan lembaga pendidikan tinggi juga memperkuat pengembangan kompetensi guru dan kualitas pendidikan secara keseluruhan (Deraman et al., 2022).

2. Challenge Analysis and Mitigation Strategies

The analysis of challenges and mitigation strategies in madrasahs requires a structured and integrated approach. The challenges faced not only involve technical aspects, but also managerial, adaptive and innovative dimensions. In this context, a systematic and evidence-based approach is an important foundation in formulating strategic measures.

a) Managerial dimension

The research identified several significant managerial challenges, including workload optimization and resource constraints. Challenges in time and energy management and distribution of responsibilities are important issues that need to be addressed. Budget limitations that depend on BOS funds require creativity in program prioritization and the search for alternative funding sources. Previous research shows that effective management can help educational institutions overcome resource constraints (Iqbaltullah et al., 2021).

b) Adaptive Strategy

In facing these challenges, the Development Team developed innovative adaptive strategies. Priority-based program management is one of the approaches taken, by categorizing programs into priority, main, and supporting programs. This is in line with educational management principles that emphasize the importance of managing resources efficiently to achieve educational goals. Optimizing internal resources is also a focus, including empowering the competence of non-team developer teachers and utilizing technology for work efficiency (Muhammad Arsyad, 2022).

c) Structural Innovation

To improve long-term effectiveness, the madrasah is planning a structural transformation through the establishment of a Quality Assurance Team. This team will serve as a catalyst for sustainable program development and an independent evaluator of program effectiveness. This structural innovation reflects institutional awareness of the importance of a systematic and sustainable quality assurance system, as well as a commitment to continuous improvement in madrasah development (Supriani et al., 2022).

3.4 The Role of Stakeholders in Madrasah Development

The role of stakeholders in the development of MTsN 1 Aceh Timur can be seen from two main perspectives:

1. The Role of Non-Team Development Teachers

The role of non-team developer teachers shows a significant contribution to madrasah development through three main aspects. First, active participation in the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program is an indicator of teachers' commitment to competency improvement. The CPD program is tailored to teachers' needs, demonstrating a bottom-up and responsive development approach. This reflects the understanding that improving the quality of education must begin with developing the capacity of educators (Abinnashih & Nurfuadi, 2023).

Secondly, in the aspect of developing learning innovations, non-team teachers showed an increase in quality as seen in more innovative learning methods. Teachers are encouraged to develop

soft skills in learning, which has an impact on increasing student interest in learning. This learning innovation is a concrete manifestation of efforts to improve the quality of education at the classroom level (Abdul Ghani et al., 2023).

Third, teachers' involvement in the sub-program development team reflects an effective system of responsibility distribution. Although the main responsibility lies with the development team, the involvement of non-team teachers in various programs creates a sense of shared ownership of the madrasah development efforts. This system allows for broader and more comprehensive program implementation.

2. The Role of Madrasah Committees.

Meanwhile, the role of madrasah committees appears to be very strategic in three main areas. First, the mediation function with external stakeholders shows the committee's role as a bridge between the madrasah and the wider community. The madrasah committee facilitates communication and coordination with various external parties, ensuring wider support for madrasah programs. Previous research emphasizes that collaboration between madrasahs and the community is crucial to improving education quality (Zaini & Prasetya, 2023).

Secondly, the committee's support in handling programs outside the madrasah's jurisdiction is a significant plus. The committee plays an active role in resolving problems involving parents/guardians, the sub-district, the police and the military. This role is very important considering that some madrasah programs require the support and involvement of these parties.

Third, collaboration with the Regional Leadership Communication Forum (Forkominda) shows the committee's capacity to build a wider network. This collaboration opens the madrasah's access to resources and support from various government agencies at the sub-district level, strengthening the madrasah's position in the local education ecosystem.

The effectiveness of the role of these two stakeholders is supported by several factors. First, the existence of a clear organizational structure with a specific division of tasks and responsibilities. Second, a good communication and coordination system between the development team and stakeholders. Third, a periodic evaluation mechanism involving all stakeholders. Research by Nurafni shows that good management and regular evaluation can improve the quality of education in madrasahs (Nurafni et al., 2022).

The positive impact of the active role of stakeholders can be seen from several indicators of success. The increasing interest of students from outside the sub-district, the implementation of innovative programs, and the establishment of a comprehensive support system indicate the effectiveness of collaboration between stakeholders in developing madrasahs.

However, there are several challenges that need to be overcome. Budget constraints, time coordination, and increased workload require a more efficient management strategy. For this reason, several recommendations can be considered: (1) Strengthening the communication system between stakeholders, (2) Developing the capacity of internal stakeholders, (3) Diversifying funding sources, and (4) Documenting good practices of stakeholder collaboration. Research by Sabilulhaq emphasizes the importance of diversifying funding sources to support the sustainability of education programs (Sabilulhaq et al., 2021).

The madrasah development model involving the active role of non-development team teachers and the madrasah committee at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur shows an inclusive and sustainable approach. The collaboration that is built not only strengthens the implementation of the program, but also creates a solid supporting ecosystem for improving the quality of madrasah education in a sustainable manner.

3.5 Development Plan

Analysis of the development plan of the MTsN 1 Aceh Timur Madrasah Development Team shows a strategic focus on strengthening the internal quality assurance system. This plan includes the formation of a quality assurance team that will function as a supervisor and evaluator of the performance of the madrasah development team. This step is a systematic effort to institutionalize the continuous quality improvement process in the madrasah organizational structure. Research shows that school-based management (SBM) can be an effective strategy in improving the quality of education, with an emphasis on the involvement of all stakeholders in the evaluation and quality improvement process (Aziz, 2015).

The challenges faced by the development team currently include budget limitations sourced from BOS funds, which results in not all programs being implemented optimally. In addition, the increasing workload requires a more structured monitoring system. The formation of a quality assurance team is expected to answer this challenge through a more systematic evaluation and recommendation mechanism. In addition, other studies emphasize that a good internal quality assurance system can strengthen collaboration between managers, educators, and students, thereby creating a conducive environment for quality improvement (Jamaris, 2023).

The planned quality assurance team will have a strategic role in overseeing the implementation of madrasah development programs. The current evaluation system is carried out in stages every month by the team leader to the coordinator, with a comprehensive evaluation at the end of the semester with the madrasah principal, teachers, and education personnel. The presence of a quality assurance team is expected to strengthen this process by providing data-based recommendations for continuous improvement. Research by Sudaryanto et al. shows that the implementation of an effective internal quality assurance cycle can improve the overall quality of education, by involving all school members in the evaluation process (Sudaryanto et al., 2018).

The effectiveness of this development plan is supported by several factors, including the organizational structure of the development team that has been arranged with a clear division of tasks in four main areas: curriculum, student affairs, facilities and infrastructure, and public relations. In addition, the collaborative culture that has been built also plays an important role in the successful implementation of this plan. Support from external stakeholders, including the madrasah committee, is also crucial in facilitating relationships with external parties. Research shows that support from external stakeholders can increase the effectiveness of educational development programs (Brown et al., 2020). However, the implementation of this development plan needs to pay attention to several critical aspects. First, there needs to be a clear coordination mechanism between the quality assurance team and the existing structure to avoid overlapping authority. Second, the formation of the quality assurance team must be balanced with the development of adequate human resource capacity in the field of educational quality assurance. Third, there needs to be a good documentation system to ensure the sustainability of the program. Recommendations for optimizing this development plan include the preparation of clear standard operating procedures, the development of standardized monitoring and evaluation instruments, and increasing human resource capacity through educational quality assurance training (Barlan, 2023).

4. Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that the madrasah development team at MTsN 1 Aceh Timur has a significant role in improving the quality of education. One of the most striking indicators of success is the increase in institutional attractiveness, which is reflected in the increasing number of students and increasing public trust in the madrasah. In addition, the transformation of learning is

also seen through the increase in teacher capacity, technology integration, and the growing culture of literacy in the madrasah environment. This study also underlines the importance of strengthening networks, where solid collaboration with various stakeholders, including the madrasah committee and health institutions, contributes to the effectiveness of education programs.

However, managerial challenges such as optimizing workload and limited resources are still obstacles that need to be overcome. Therefore, adaptive strategies are needed, including priority-based program management and the formation of a quality assurance team for continuous evaluation and development. The novelty of this study lies in its in-depth focus on the role of the madrasah development team as a collective entity in the specific context of MTsN 1 East Aceh, which provides a more holistic understanding of local dynamics and unique challenges faced in efforts to improve the quality of education.

For further research, it is recommended that the focus be on developing a more integrated collaborative model between madrasahs and other stakeholders, as well as further exploration of the long-term impact of the programs that have been implemented. Research can also consider involving student and parent perspectives in evaluating the effectiveness of the program, so that it can provide a more comprehensive picture of the quality of education in madrasahs. With a systematic and evidence-based approach, this study emphasizes the importance of strategic steps in improving the quality of education in madrasahs, as well as the need for support from various parties to achieve these goals.

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