

EDUCATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN WEST SUMATRA, INDONESIA

Ika Sandra¹, Rama Arya Kurniawan², Muhammad Alfian³

¹Universitas Negeri Padang, ²Universitas Negeri Padang,

³Universitas Negeri Padang,

¹ika.sandra@fis.unp.ac.id, ²ram44rya@gmail.com,

³muhammadalfianfc@gmail.com,

ABSTRACT

This study examines the governance and implementation of Islamic education within Indonesia's decentralized education system, focusing on West Sumatra, particularly the cities of Padang and Padang Panjang. The transition from a centralized to a decentralized governance structure in 1999 granted local governments greater authority over educational management, enabling them to adapt policies to local socio-religious contexts. This research explores the role of local governments in managing Islamic education across different types of institutions, including public schools, Islamic boarding schools, and pesantren. Adopting a qualitative research design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders such as education officials, school principals, and teachers as well as through document analysis of relevant government and institutional policies. The findings reveal varied approaches to the implementation of Islamic education across institutional types, reflecting differences in governance structures, curricular integration, and religious orientation. The study also identifies key challenges faced by local authorities, particularly in balancing national curriculum requirements with local Islamic values and institutional autonomy. Despite these challenges, educational institutions demonstrate considerable flexibility and adaptability in responding to decentralization policies. This research highlights the dynamic interaction between policy, local governance, and religious values in shaping the practice of Islamic education in West Sumatra.

Keywords: decentralization; islamic education; islamic boarding schools; pesantren; local governance

A. Introduction

Indonesia underwent significant governmental transformation in 1999, marked by a shift from a centralized to a decentralized system. This transition, formalized through Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government,

granted greater authority to regional governments, including in the management of education. The reform emerged in response to the limitations of the centralized system, which was widely perceived as rigid, unresponsive, and restrictive of local

participation and innovation. Decentralization, as highlighted in studies such as Sutapa's work, was expected to improve governance efficiency and reduce regional disparities by enabling more context-sensitive policymaking.

Within this framework, Islamic education holds a strategic position in Indonesia's national education system. Beyond its role in intellectual development, Islamic education contributes significantly to the formation of moral, spiritual, and social values. This role is particularly in regions such as West Sumatra, where Islamic traditions strongly influence social and cultural life. Consequently, the implementation of educational policies under decentralization must consider the interaction between national standards and local religious values.

Against this backdrop, this study focuses on the implementation of Islamic education within a decentralized system in the cities of Padang and Padang Panjang, West Sumatra. It examines how local government policies related to Islamic education are managed, interpreted, and implemented across different types of educational institutions,

including public schools, Islamic boarding schools, and pesantren.

Using a qualitative approach, this research explores the perspectives of key stakeholders—such as education officials, school principals, and teachers regarding these policies, as well as how they are integrated into everyday educational practices. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the interaction between formal policy frameworks and local institutional realities.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how decentralization shapes the governance of Islamic education at the local level. It also contributes to broader discussions on how education policies can accommodate community needs while preserving religious values within an increasingly autonomous educational system.

B. Research Methods

This research focuses on the implementation of Islamic education in two cities in West Sumatra, Padang and Padang Panjang chosen for their representation of different school types such as general public schools, Islamic boarding schools, and pesantren (traditional Islamic

schools). These cities were selected based on the fact that they represent various educational practices, with a specific focus on junior high schools governed by local authorities, as opposed to senior schools regulated at the provincial level (Kodrat Setiawan, 2017). Public schools in these cities follow the national curriculum strictly, while Islamic boarding schools integrate national curricula alongside religious-based programs. Pesantren, on the other hand, is a traditional form of Islamic education that focuses primarily on religious subjects, and its practice differs from region to region.

To explore how decentralization influences the implementation of Islamic education in these cities, the study adopts a qualitative research approach. Qualitative methods are particularly suited for this research as they provide rich, descriptive narratives, making it easier to compare and understand the research process as well as interpret the perspectives of those involved (Bryman, 2012). The main data collection tools used in this study are interviews and document analysis, which allow for a comparison of perspectives from the inside,

capturing both the experiences of those directly involved in the implementation process and the official documents issued by various institutions.

Interviews, as a primary method, enable an in-depth exploration of how different stakeholders in the education system perceive and implement Islamic education. Through interviews, a wide range of ideas and experiences regarding the decentralization of education can be gathered. The intention behind conducting these interviews is to gain insight into the experiences of those involved in the education system, as such experiences are key to understanding the assumptions underlying the policy (Seidman, 2013). The research interviews target key actors in the decentralized education system, including education authorities, school principals, teachers, and other education practitioners, to capture a variety of perspectives.

The interviews will be semi-structured, allowing for flexibility in responses while ensuring that key topics are covered. A set of guiding questions will be used, but the conversation may evolve depending on the interviewee's responses, with

additional questions arising to explore specific topics of interest in more detail (Bryman, 2012). For instance, when discussing decentralization, the researcher may ask participants about their views on Islamic education and how decentralization influences their experiences as educators, parents, or administrators.

In addition to interviews, document analysis will also be employed. This includes analyzing official documents from government institutions such as regulations, policy statements, and other relevant government correspondence, which provide valuable information regarding the implementation of Islamic education policies. These documents can reveal biases, perspectives, and strategies related to decentralization, and they offer a textual representation of reality (Bryman, 2012). Furthermore, documents from private educational institutions involved in Islamic education will be analyzed to understand how decentralization is reflected within the local context. Such documents can include meeting minutes, internal communications, and reports that offer insight into the ethos and practices of these institutions.

The combination of interviews and document analysis provides a comprehensive method for understanding the implementation of Islamic education within the decentralized system in West Sumatra. By gathering data from diverse sources, this research aims to offer a holistic view of the educational landscape, focusing on both the formal policies and the lived experiences of those affected by them.

C. Result and Discussion

The process of implementation in the bureaucracy context: in Padang and Padang Panjang

At this stage, local government in both cities most likely act as an observer to see a role of schools on implementing Islamic education, which is under local government supervision such as Kesra, and education department. Theoretically, the implementation process is giving power from local government to headteachers to managing Islamic education and that Islamic education should be aligned with education policy established by the local government. This program would be executed by other related institutions

such as Kesra and education department. Kesra has responsibility from planning to implementing Islamic education, with practical help from the education department. The role of the education department is to provide data and information from schools about the practicing of Islamic education and monitoring process. Hence, the bottom-up process will be dominant in the implementation process. As it mentioned in the organizational learning theory that bottom-up process is about delegating a mandate to institutions at the bottom level, which is school. Local government, as the institution in the top-level, is more like a support system to support schools for the implementation. Schools are the main actor on this process, to make sure the implementation effectively carried to students.

To some extent, to see the process of implementation, local government conducted a monitoring which is regularly done with various ways such as observing to schools, making compulsory events, gathering documents through headmasters and responsible teachers. Those monitoring process aims to know the progress and also how schools'

strategies on implementing Islamic education. As a technical department of education department in Padang, Mr. Syamdani stated that:

“Education department obeys the rules established by Social Welfare about Islam education. This program is shown by letter of assignment and meeting before Department of Education instructs to the Primary and Junior Secondary Schools”.

And it is also clarified by the head of education department Padang Panjang, Mr. Desmon cited that:

“The implementation of Islamic Education in Padang Panjang is fully managed by Kesra and then socialized to schools through the education department after obtaining official instruction from Kesra or the Mayor”.

As quotes above stated, the process of implementation is started from local government through Kersa. Then, Kesra instructs education department, by then, education departments directly instruct schools to implement Islamic education themselves. By this process, it seems like local government institutions in Padang and Padang Panjang are not too dominant; they act more as proponents. Meanwhile, schools, on

implementation, have a full responsibility to actively organize implementation process, which ensures that Islamic education can be well implemented to students. Concerning the implementation process, it shows how top-down and bottom-up process work. The top-down process can be seen when the institutions in the top instruct the institution below them. On this case, the local government pointed the Kesra as an assistant, while Kesra also gets help from the education department to be observed in the implementation. And the schools will execute Islamic education after getting an official instruction from the local government through the education department. The authority is given by the local government to schools, where schools play active roles in making and organizing the process of implantation Islamic education, which is considered as a bottom-up process.

Another significant point in implementing Islamic education in schools is a need of highly qualified teachers who are capable of working well according to Islam education vision, despite the fact that West Sumatra is a Muslim majority province with strong traditional Minangkabau

culture. Based on the interview with Mayor of Padang, Mr. Mahyeldi said that it is not difficult for West Sumatra to practice Islam values in education:

"Human resources are not a significant problem because the society is already prepared for Tahfid Program and other Islamic education programs, where there are many well-educated teachers in this field. Instead, this program is considerably lack of platforms or places rather than the teachers".

The interview result proves that the implementation of Islamic education in Padang is supported by adequate resources. Hence, the interest of Mayor on fulfilling the needs of societies in Islamic education can be well implemented, because the will of Mayor meets with the needs of people and good resources owned by the region. Moreover, in Padang Panjang, the resources also not become a problem, as the place where Islamic education started, the human resources on the implementation of Islamic education adequate for the implementation process. This means Islam education polices in West Sumatra is decent enough in which it has been not only local government purpose but also society. As a result,

the program could work as planned. Moreover, the interview results conducted in West Sumatra further said that the local government also plays a role in improving the quality of teachers who involved in Islamic education, by certifying the ability of teachers in various fields such as Tahfidz, Tajwid, and Tahsin. 110 So that the teachers involved are teachers who have a special composition in Islamic education.

On this case, the mayor also takes part in monitoring, with directly going to the schools in order to know how the students practice Islam education. To be specific, in an effort of supporting Islam education program, Mayor of Padang established a complementary program such as Quran memorization or Tahfid Quran. If students are able to memorize recommended verses, they are allowed to attend a favorite school without following a highly competitive selection process. This regulation is written as a regional regulation No 33, the year of 2013 about the recital and memorizing the verses of Quran. 111 It is confirmed by the interviews with the education department of Padang Panjang, Mr. Barlius stated that:

"In the Tahfiz Quran program, primary schools and junior

secondary schools' students who memorize 3 Juz, they can freely choose the schools based on their neighborhood zone. Another an excellent program is an 1821 Program. It educates family especially parents to gather the children starting from 06.00 PM till 09.00 PM, and the innovation of this program is still in progress, where the best family implementing the 1821 program will be rewarded from every district. The program is similar to golden time for children with their parents. Television and handphone should be turned off, having dinner at home, praying to a near mosque, reciting the Quran, doing homework until 09.00 PM. All those activities are mentioned before to strengthen family values, along with collaboration with neighborhood association, and mosque caretakers. Beginning from August 2018, the program has been going and the standard of procedure also has been introduced by Department of Women Empowerment and Child Protection and Family Planning in West Sumatra".

The Mayor of Padang also gives the same explanation. He stated that the local government will always continue

to support the implementation of Islamic education in anyways. For example is by making innovate policies that can give privilege for the schools, students, and parents. The purpose of the policies is to encourage the implementation of Islam education. With the hope that schools, students and Minang societies will take Islamic education as part of education seriously.

Moreover, for the city of Padang Panjang based on an interview with the education department and the principals explained that the city of Padang Panjang has no specific rules from the Mayor which explained the opportunity for students who were able to recite the Quran like what Padang has. However, some schools consciously make schools regulation to give students who can memorize the Quran, by giving a chance to choose the schools without any school's tests. As it stated below:

“There is no such a regulation stated that there will be an opportunity for these students to choose schools without schools’ test (education department)”.

“Schools will give a reward for students who want to study here

without a test if they can recite Quran (public school)”.

“One of the requirement on school’ test is reciting the Quran, so when the students can recite Quran, they automatically will pass the test (Islamic boarding school)”.

From the quotes above, in Padang Panjang, there are no such regulations stated that there would be a privilege for those students who recite the Quran like what Padang has. Because the way how Padang and Padang Panjang set Islamic education in each city is different. In Padang, for example, students can get free access to choosing schools since they have recited the Quran based on what was said in the local policies. Even though in Padang Panjang, there is no formally written into a policy for those students can recite Quran. But some schools made their regulation on choosing their students one of which by Islamic education rule (Quran). By this, students in Padang Panjang can get the same privilege as same as students in Padang.

To conclude the implementation process on bureaucracy, it has answered the research question on how the local government regulates on the implantation process.

Moreover, it has shown that the implementation technically is a process of delegating the authority from local government to schools on carrying Islamic education. Where the government itself through Kesra and education department acts as observers and also as backings to support the schools to form of additional regulations on implementation of Islamic education. The purpose of that regulation is to make Islamic education being fully adopted and applied in schools' activities. Referring back to organizational learning theory, this process can be seen as bottom-up. Because local government as a top institution does not act dominantly, in which local government allows schools to implement Islamic education themselves.¹¹² By giving the authority to schools, schools as the institution at the bottom level have a crucial role that has a responsibility to manage Islamic education. As Indonesia adopted decentralization of education, thus schools somehow can make their policy on how to arrange their system, for example in Padang Panjang. This is how bottom-up works, which are previously

mentioned in organizational learning theory.

Additionally, to strengthen the implementation process, the ability of the local government on making an innovative policy is needed. Because innovation policy is matters on making efficiency on Islamic education. And also, by the innovative regulation produced by the local government, indirectly creates the competition for the schools to put Islamic education as the goals that students should achieve beside the academic's fields.

The implementation of Islamic Education in general schools: Padang and Padang Panjang

As mentioned before, the planning of Islamic education, in common schools, is highly influenced by government policy. Which means that local governments organize the program in the planning process. The programs for common schools can be like Pesantren Ramadhan, Shalat berjamaah, and Tahfidz. However, the main concern for this scheme is a strategy for schools to develop creativity, related to students' needs in the implementation. The way the schools carry the programs in Islamic

education will be distinctive between each other schools in West Sumatra. Hence each school has their style to implement Islamic activities which indirectly lead to the school competition. As headmaster of common schools pointed out:

“To be general, after getting the instruction from the local government schools set out the team who will be responsible to manage the implementation of Islamic education. The principle acts as part of the team and also an observer during the implantation. In this case, schools should consider the best and unique strategy to attract parent’s attention”.

Likewise, general headmaster in Padang Panjang has argued:

“Islamic education is commonly developed by local government, in the implementation process in schools, we have a particular team who is responsible for it. This team is fully expected to develop an innovative and attractive Islamic education for all students, becoming one of excellent program for schools as well”.

From the results of interviews, it showed that schools started to set their strategies after getting instruction from the local government, such as

the education department. On implementation, schools play an important role to make sure Islamic education can be fit for students and students would like to involve in. The challenge for the schools might be difficult to find an innovate strategy to implement Islamic education efficiently. So, schools have a team consist of some teachers and vice headmaster to design how Islamic education should be at the schools. The strategy, of course, has to follow the rules set by the local government in the planning process. So, the team which has been formed by the schools has the responsibility to handle throughout the process from implementation to the evaluation.

There are some Islamic education activities exist in common schools besides Islamic education as schools’ subject. First, the most predominant Islamic education program at schools is Tahfidz, where the students memorize Quran altogether. This act of recitation is routinely done by Muslim because as Muslim they believe that the God will reward them and honor them greatly for that so that He will rise in status in Paradise to a level commensurate with what he memorized of Quran.¹¹³ Therefore,

the program should be started as young as possible in which the memorizing process would be easier for them. The findings further show that since the Mayor made a regulation about the opportunity that the students will achieve when they can memorize the Quran (Tahfidz) which is written as a regional regulation No 33, the year of 2013. 114 The schools became more intense on Tahfidz as schools' target. This program is started every morning in schools before the class began, which is around 6.30 until 7.30 AM. More than that, schools also provide students activities where the students decide by themselves whether to join or not (supplementary) focusing reciting Quran. This is in order to meet the goals that the students will have a privilege to choose schools that they want after they graduate from high schools.

Next, Islamic education in every Ramadan month, this is called Pesantren Ramadhan, is a place to deeply learn Islamic values and norms not only for students but also teachers. This program is organized by Kesra in which this program consists of a few complimentary activities paced in a Mosque. The Pesantren Ramadhan is

an integrated program where students from different schools altogether stay in the Mosque during the Ramadhan (30 days). Pesantren Ramadhan has a different curriculum designed by a Kesra. Also, schools are responsible for the planning and execution of the program during the Ramadhan month. Aside from students, teachers must join the program, controlled by the Department of Education since Pesantren Ramadhan has its assessment.

Another important Islamic education program is Jamaah (together) prayers and an hour a public lecture which is held by each school every Friday. By this program, the students get to practice their ability on Islamic activities such as how to pray in proper ways. Also, they got to practice how to be Islamic speakers, reciting Quran, Asmaul Husna.

Implementation of Islamic Education in Islamic boarding schools: Padang and Padang Panjang

Islamic boarding school can be defined as a private school in which students live and study together under the supervision of schools and

religious leaders. The most noticeable feature of Islamic boarding school is students will stay in school for 24 hours controlled by schoolteachers or tutors. By offering the boarding system to the students, it is believed to be more effective to learn religion. There is a significant distinction between modern education and Islamic boarding education. In general, the main purpose of modern education is transferring intellectual knowledge and skills where students will study for 8 hours in schools. Meanwhile, Islamic boarding is more focused on embedding a moral outlook in learners through particular programs like Tahfid and Pesantren, Fiqih, Akhlak, and Tajwid. Another point that highlight as a characteristic of Islamic boarding schools is the students are separated based on gender in the classroom and also in the boarding.

Moreover, in Islamic boarding school, the students learn and practice classical Islamic science as it has two different curriculums for in and outside of school timetable. In this view, students will have extra time to practice their Islamic teachings from they got in the classroom. The current curriculum is usually constructed to meet parents and society's demands.

Thus, the curriculum becomes an interesting factor to Islamic boarding school in comprising of recital Quran, praying together, other Islamic activities and also learning foreign languages such as Arabic, English, Japanese, and Chinese. In other words, students' activities will strictly be organized and scheduled from waking up to going to bed again. The exact purpose of this system is establishing a good discipline and clearly implementing Islam values. One of headmaster Islamic boarding school (1) in Padang Mr. Debby Yuliandra explained:

"Islamic boarding school system try to be balance between the need of modern education and Islamic education. Nowadays, a lot of young people cannot be monitored by the parents at home since the parents also work. So that, the potential solution from this problem is Islamic boarding school. With this school system, provide a variety of student activities to develop the students' life skills and leadership abilities. This goes towards helping students to internalise and put into practice the principles and values they have learnt. Students are encouraged to be involved in a cornucopia of

activities both during and outside the official school hours”.

“From a management perspective, the student’s religious activities will be maintained in boarding. If there are any indiscipline students, teachers will report to parents”.

Islamic boarding schools (2) in Padang, Mr. Hutabian:

“This school combines common schools’ concept with boarding, where students stay in schools for 24 hours. Also, students learn a general subjects of schools and at the same time they study about religion subjects. One of the goals of this school is that students can read and memorize the Quran properly. Moreover, all student activities are arranged by the school, starting from waking up at around 3 am and sleeping at 10pm. School activities start from 7:00 to 16:00. afterwards the students do activities according to the boarding program managed by the schools itself.”

Further it is also stated by the interview the Headmaster of Islamic boarding schools in Padang Panjang, Mr. Riko:

“In general, the concept of this schools is the same as other islamic boarding schools, where students

study and live at school integrated with boarding concept and students are provided with more religious learning activities, especially the Quran. In addition, in this schools, students are divided into two classes, ordinary and excellent classes. Where students in the excellent class are given additional classes for the Olympic preparation such as math, physic, biology, astronomy and so on. This is as an effort of the schools in order to make the students as equal to those other common schools”.

From the interviews above, it clarified that Islamic boarding schools in West Sumatra, Padang and Padang Panjang, are a school which combines a concept between religion and modern education. This is based on a general assumption that the people of West Sumatra have an interest in the concept of education that is related to religion. While at the same time, they also consider modern education crucial for the students. Another reason for parents who choose Islamic boarding schools is because they have less time to look over their children. Thus, Islamic boarding schools come as a solution.

Moreover, by the Islamic boarding concept, parents and students possibly gain two things at the same time, namely the values of Islam and modern education. Besides, the Islamic boarding school is a quite new phenomenon in West Sumatra. As the majority of Minang society is Muslim, so boarding school comes to meet the need of Minang society. Offering a highly exclusive education system, it appeals to both students and parents to receive an education there. Also, the boarding school has spread its network and cooperated with a few international organizations, resulting its students come from affluent society. Apart from social classes, another factor that causes students going to Islamic Boarding School, is cultural and family background. In which religious parents, at most, will send their children to this type of school.

Concerning the implementation process, Islamic boarding schools also work with local governments, especially for Islamic education as a subject in the classroom. However, for more detail on how Islamic boarding schools implements in Islamic education, the local government fully mandates to the school itself through

Yayasan. The Yayasan is responsible for making the implementation process of Islamic education can be useful, and following the target.

The Implementation of Islamic education in Pesantren: Padang and Padang Panjang

Conceptually, Pesantrens are the oldest and are regarded as the bastion of Islamic education that has been existed since ages. Pesantren is also an intuition as the main provider of Islamic scholars and teachers, which is focussing on the development of religious leaders. Nevertheless, as the time goes by, a new model of Pesantren is being discussed at present which integrates the most valuable aspect of Islamic education (moral and religious attitudes) with the most valuable of general education (intellectual and methodological approach). As a Head of Pesantren Mr. Rahman argued:

“A vision of Pesantren is apparently for muslims (mannhaj salafusshaleh alhhussunah) and has a vision to establish generation that is religious, versatile, successful and loyal to the country. It is also to create religion leaders who are able to memorize Quran and can master the Arabic language, with skill of socializing

alhussunah so that can continue their study to Middle East countries". "In Pesantren, a lot of students come here to learn Quran rather than other subjects. The learning process usually starts from 4 in which waking up, praying, halaqah quran, breakfast, going to the class at 8 am until 10 am. After that, they are doing halaqah again, then study general or religion studies, praying zuhur, lunch, and continue to study until 3 pm. Next, they take a rest and do ashar pray, halaqah Quran for an hour, and they should be ready to do Magrib pray, listening to religion lecture (pengajian) until Isya pray.¹¹⁶ Lastly, they also should study till 10 pm and finally going to the bed. That timetable should be conducted from Monday to Friday."

As stated previously, Pesantrens is a place for those students willing to study Quran and Islamic sciences. The system in Pesantren is also integrated with the boarding system, where students live in schools for 24 hours controlled by the school. The school also fully regulates the implementation of Islamic Education. This is mainly because Pesantren is somewhat not following the curriculum for the local government, where the

students are not into studying schools' subjects like common schools and Islamic boarding schools. The school aims to provide the students to learn Quran intensively. So, the school is fully responsible for making their curriculum together with Yayasan.

Moreover, to ensuring the process of teaching and practicing going as planned, the number of students are quite a few, with only 75 students in. They are selected based on their knowledge about Islam and memorized verse Quran. The prospective students will sign a contract to continuously study in Pesantren for six years, particularly the Quran. Also, according to Head of Pesantren's argument, it can be seen the amount of time learning Islam is higher than general subjects.

Afterwards, students, who enter the Pesantren, should be able to practice Islam values every day that they got from the class. After a 6-year learning process, the pupils are expected to memorize 30 Juz Quran and fluently master Arabic language so that they can take a higher education to Middle East Nations. As a Head master, Mr. Rahman stated that:

"completely memorizing Quran 30 Juz because they stay here for 6

years, can speak Arabic and can be Ummu Syar'i. They then can receive an education to the higher level in Middle East, prepared to be Islam Scholars".

As the quote said, it clears that Pesantren is an educational institution in which offering its students to learn Quran and religious knowledge particularly. The implementation of this school is fully managed by school stakeholders called Yayasan. The main goal of students in this Pesantren is to recite the Quran. So, the leading activities of students during school is to learn about the Quran, both reciting and memorizing. To enter the Pesantren, after passing the entering exam, students have contracts for six years. It means that students will automatically be in the Pesantren from the junior high school to senior high schools. Moreover, by the concept of Pesantren, students are targeted to be able to end up memorizing the Quran for 30 juz (604 pages) or better known as the Hafiz Quran. This target is in line with the aim of Pesantren to students with the ability to memorize the Quran and become Islamic scholars in societies.

From the table above, those activities answered the research

question on how different types of schools manage Islamic education activities in West Sumatra. For the implementation, each type of schools between Padang and Padang Panjang has differences and similarities in providing Islamic education. The differences in Islamic education, especially on private schools, can influence the parent's behavior on choosing a school which emerges the competition among the schools. Based on Forsberg's study looking at school choice and schools' responses to market incentives, it has showed that the crucial social polarities were reflected by schools' strategies which aimed to point out the value of their study programs on the market.

For the common schools, Islamic education is not intensive since these schools more focusing on schools' subjects where Islamic education as complementary for those students. For the Islamic boarding schools, they have quite many Islamic education both as schools' subject and also as boarding programs. By the boarding concept, students have more time than common schools to go into detail on learning Islam. While for the Pesantren, the Islamic educations are

less similar to Islamic boarding schools. However, in some Pesantren they have less on studying schools' subjects hence students most of the time learning about Islamic education instead. The differences in the implementation of Islamic education can be seen as a way of how decentralization works in the context of the bottom-up process. Where schools have their freedom to determine their strategy on Islamic education. By the granting of authority, schools are more flexible, and the strategies used are also diverse, which can be adjusted to the needs of the school itself. In organizational learning theory, there are two bases of activities carried out in bottom-up reform, namely the search of information and the use of information.¹¹⁸ That is, the ability of schools to use information or policies that have been set by the local government will affect the basis of organizational change in the context of the implementation of Islamic education. Also, for the public schools, since the local government have an authority to create their system under a decentralized system. Some cities have an incentive policy, where students can get free access to

schools and free to choose a school without limited by economic backgrounds geographies. But of course, the students need to pass the schools test to get it. By the regulation in Islamic education, the program of Islamic education can be a point for parents and students on choosing schools. While privates' schools are the other options that offer parents and students intensive programs in Islamic education, but it is limited by economic background.

Evaluation process of Islamic education: Beurucracy

The evaluation process is an effort of the local government to see the progress of a policy made in an organization. As it stated in Indonesian national education policy that evaluation in education is a form of control, guarantee, and quality of education activities which is based on several educational components on each path, level, and type of education. Aslo, the evaluation is as a form of accountability for the implementation of education.¹¹⁹ The evaluation can be essential, as a form of the efficiency of government policies. In national education policy further explained that the local government conducts assessments

assisted by another institution, which are directly appointed by them. 120 In terms of Islamic education in West Sumatra (Padang and Padang Panjang), the Mayor as the highest leader conducts an education evaluation assisted by Kesra as a third party chosen directly by the local government, which is responsible for administering an assessment of education. Also, education department as an institution focused on education helps Kesra on the evaluation, however education department is an institution that evaluates not only the Islamic education but also education as a general in cities like Padang and Padang Panjang.

Regarding the evaluation of Islamic education in Padang, the local government makes specific policies that regulate how education should be carried out, including the evaluations. This policy is written in the local government regulations number 33 of 2013 focusing on the tahfidz Quran (memorizing Quran), it explains that evaluation is carried out to see the level of success of students in the Qur'anic on how long the students can memorize Quran in schools.¹²¹ While in Padang Panjang, the evaluation is

following the regulation from the education system as general, because Padang Panjang does not have their local policy yet. Moreover, the evaluation carried by government institutions in these two cities is more into macro evaluation rather than micro. In other words, the evaluation that is made by them plays a fundamental rule on evaluating the process structurally such as the quality of teachers, evaluating the administration process of Islamic education, evaluating the general challenges and evaluating the outcomes of Islamic education. As stated by the Mayor of Padang, that:

"We are more focusing on the quality of the teacher because the teachers are the important point on how Islamic education is done to the students as consumers. So, the evaluation is done by assessing the teacher and certified them, especially our teachers who participated in Islamic education. They will be given a certification, In Padang, the evaluation is carried by other institution like Kesra and education department. Kesra is a right hand of the Mayor which has responsible for islamic education".

The interview result with the head of Kesra in Padang, Mr. Jamilus said that:

“In the evaluation of Islamic education, Kesra is helped by education department to evaluate the implementation in term of administrative and structural. However, in general, Kesra also participated to evaluate by making an annual competition among schools in Islamic education”.

While in Padang Panjang, the head of education department, Mr. Desmon said that:

“For evaluations related to the implementation of Islamic education, it is fully done by the schools through the teachers involved. While the education department will receive the reports related to the implementation from schools and teachers. Such as the participation of students and teachers, organizational and so forth”.

From the quote of the interviews above, it can be said in the evaluation process, there is a particular institution that has been appointed by the government, which is the Mayor himself. The evaluation aims to see how the progress of a policy that has been implemented. The government

institutions involved namely Kesra and education department. Kesra and education department work together in evaluating Islamic education. Besides, the education department is also an institution that is obliged to carry out evaluations for education as general, which is not only focused on Islamic education. Evaluation conducted by the local government is more into general aspects rather than specifically going into Islamic education itself. Evaluation by local government is more focused on the issue of structural as an organizational process.

To conclude, the evaluation process in the bureaucracy is a top-down process where the top institution assesses the institutions below them. The aim is to evaluate schools as an organization on the bottom level, in order to see how schools carry the Islamic education policy made by the local government. Moreover, by the evaluation local government will get to see how the policy in Islamic education works, what is the weakness and the strange of that policy or simply to see what institution my disadvantages or favored by this policy. In the end, the result of the evaluation process can be a

determination for the long step of Islamic education in West Sumatra. Besides, evaluation is done by the local government by appointing other institutions. Which is to say the evaluation is a process of how local government connected to other vital institutions that has a common goal on Islamic education. As it previously mentioned on the new institutional theory.

Evaluation of Islamic education in schools (common schools, Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren)

Islamic boarding schools, and Pesantren in Padang and Padang Panjang, is basically done by the schools through the teachers. The teachers are appointed by schools in which they are generally from religious subject teachers and or teachers who have skills in the field of Islamic education that should be following established standards. Technically, the evaluation in schools can be said as a micro evaluation where the focus is more into cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects to see how the students achieve and apply the Islamic education. From the interview with the headmaster of common school in Padang, Mr. Hakim said that:

“Several forms of evaluations are carried out by the school which first and for most is from the teacher. Where a teacher is a chart valuing the ability of students both in theory and practice in accordance with the curriculum that has been set. Besides, the evaluation is also conducted by the semesterly meeting which then becomes the material for the reports to for the supervisors such as Kesra and Education office”.

The same thing was further explained by the headmaster of common school in Padang Panjang, Mrs Yanti:

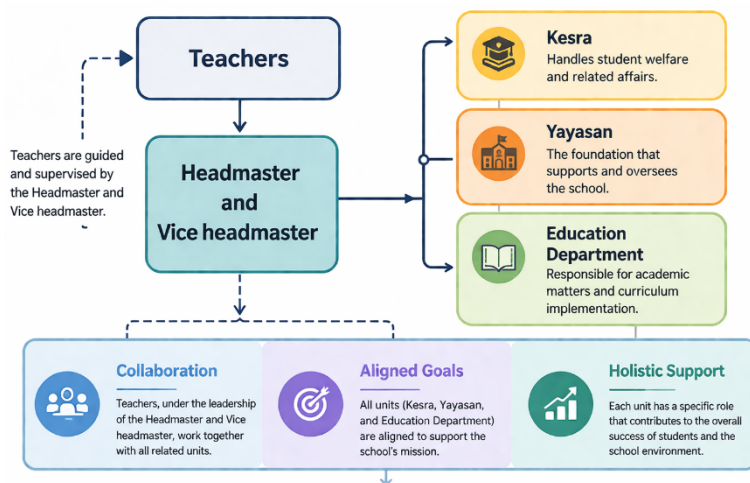
“Evaluation is carried out by the school, through the teacher. The teacher is charged directly to conduct this evaluation, because the teacher himself is directly carrying out Islamic education to students. Teachers and schools make a report that will be submitted to the department and Kesra”.

Moreover, in common schools, the evaluation is held periodically, which is twice in a semester. The evaluation is carried out to see the achievement of students, which refers to aspects of theoretical understanding and the ability of students to practice Islamic education. There are several steps on

how the schools conduct the evaluation. At first, to see the ability of the students in Islamic education, teachers conduct an oral exam and essay to evaluate theoretical understanding in the classroom and also the capability of students on memorizing Quran. Then, the evaluation can be carried by evaluating the ability of the students through practical aspect of how students can apply Islamic education on their life such as prayers. The evaluation, carried by the school, is in line with the curriculum's aims that have been made in the planning process by the local government institutions. Despite also being useful for evaluating teacher's and school's work, the evaluation also aims to provide school assessment reports for the parents.

Moreover, the result of the evaluation, which is made by schools and teachers, will be reported to the local government through the Kesra and education department (diagram 4). This is intended to provide an overview of the process of implementing Islamic education policies. So, with the evaluation by schools, the local government can see in detail the policies that have been

implemented. The purpose of the evaluation is also to look for a solution if there is an issue in the implementation process of Islamic education to students at school.



Additionally, concerning how the evaluation process is conducted in Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren. As general, the evaluation process is kind of similar to the common schools where the teachers are a fundamental actor behind the evaluation. Also, evolution is more focus on seeing the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of the students on Islamic education. However, there are differences in evaluation in terms of relation these two schools with the local government. By the concept of Islamic-based school, Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren have been trusted by local governments as capable educational

institutions in managing Islamic education, more than public schools. Which means the local government is not involved in evaluating the process of Islamic education. However, Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren, the schools are also evaluated by the Yayasan as the internal institution. The schools report the progress of Islamic education to Yayasan periodically.

However, since the Islamic boarding schools combine a concept of common schools with boarding, there is a part where these schools following the regulation of the local government especially for schools' subjects, so local government involved in the evaluation process in Islamic boarding schools only for the school's subjects not for Islamic education (diagram 5). as it is clarified by the interview with the headmaster of Padang Panjang Islamic boarding schools, Mr. Riko stated that:

"As private schools we have Yayasan as the supervisor of the school, they will see and assess the process of Islamic education in many aspects. But so far, we get a good response from them. While at some point, the schools also evaluate"

The same experience was also conveyed by the headmaster of Islamic boarding schools in Padang, Mr. stated Lukman that:

"From the schools itself, we evaluate all types of evaluations so that the evaluation is measurable. Every week there is a small group meeting that will be evaluated by Murabi Tahfid. And it will be reported to the Yayasan and also education department".

While for the Pesantren, the evaluation is conducted by the schools and teachers to see how students involve in Islamic education. Since the Pesantren has less learning process into schools' subjects, thus, the local government is not involved either in the evaluation. The evaluation is fully carried out by the schools and teachers and evaluated by the Yayasan (diagram 6). Yayasan has a crucial role in the whole process of Islamic education in Pesantren, not only for the evaluation but also for the planning. As stated by the headmaster of Pesantren.

It can be concluded that the process of evaluation, in general, is almost the same in every type of schools such as public schools, Islamic boarding, and Pesantren. The

local government, through the directly appointed another institution such as Kesra and the education department, plays a vital role in seeing the development and progress of Islamic education directly. However, for public schools, the local government has a significant role in it. Because, by the concept of public education institutions, which is not based on religious education institutions, public schools need a clear benchmark for how Islamic education should be carried out. Meanwhile, Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren as educational institutions that carry the vision of Islamic education as a brand, local governments provide greater autonomy than public schools. And, with the status of a private school, Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren also carry out evaluations which are supervised by the Foundation as the owner and responsible respondent of this educational institution. Then the results of the evaluation become a benchmark in the implementation of Islamic education in the long run. Moreover, on evaluation, schools and teachers have an essential role in seeing how the policy has done and what's next.

D. Conclusion

This study examines the implementation and governance of Islamic education within Indonesia's decentralized education system, with a specific focus on Padang and Padang Panjang, West Sumatra. The findings demonstrate that the decentralization reform has significantly reshaped the management of education by transferring authority from the central government to local governments, allowing for more context-sensitive educational policies. In practice, the implementation of Islamic education reflects a combination of top-down and bottom-up governance mechanisms. Local governments, through institutions such as Kesra and the Education Office, play a supervisory and policy-direction role, while schools are given considerable autonomy to design and implement Islamic education programs. This results in diverse practices across public schools, Islamic boarding schools, and pesantren, depending on institutional capacity, vision, and local needs. The study also finds that evaluation systems differ across school types. Public schools are more directly monitored by local

government institutions, while Islamic boarding schools and pesantren rely more heavily on internal evaluation systems managed by their respective foundations (yayasan). Despite these differences, all institutions contribute to the broader goal of integrating Islamic values into education. Overall, decentralization has created both opportunities and challenges. It provides flexibility and encourages innovation in Islamic education practices, but it also leads to variation in implementation and evaluation across institutions. Therefore, stronger coordination between local governments, schools, and educational foundations is needed to ensure that Islamic education remains consistent, effective, and aligned with both national standards and local values.

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