



STRATEGIC EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION QUALITY AT MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH: A HOLISTIC CASE STUDY APPROACH

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Abstract

This study explores strategic efforts to improve the quality of education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Hijriyah 2 Palembang through a holistic approach. The research employs a qualitative case study method to analyze various dimensions of educational development, including curriculum enhancement, teacher professional development, infrastructure improvement, technology integration, and stakeholder involvement. Data were collected through interviews, observations, documentation, and questionnaires involving school leaders, teachers, students, and parents. The findings reveal that MI Hijriyah 2 has successfully implemented integrated strategies that contribute to students' academic achievement, character formation, and religious values. Despite facing several challenges such as limited resources and technological infrastructure, the school demonstrates resilience through collaborative planning and continuous evaluation. The study concludes with recommendations to strengthen teacher training, community engagement, and policy support to sustain educational quality in Islamic primary schools.

Keywords: Education Quality, Holistic Education, Islamic Elementary School, Stakeholder Involvement, Teacher Development,

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi upaya strategis untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Hijriyah 2 Palembang melalui pendekatan holistik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kasus kualitatif untuk menganalisis berbagai dimensi pengembangan pendidikan, termasuk peningkatan kurikulum, pengembangan profesionalisme guru, peningkatan infrastruktur, integrasi teknologi, dan keterlibatan pemangku kepentingan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dokumentasi, dan kuesioner yang melibatkan pimpinan sekolah, guru, siswa, dan orang tua. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa MI Hijriyah 2 telah berhasil menerapkan strategi terintegrasi yang berkontribusi pada prestasi akademik, pembentukan karakter, dan nilai-nilai agama siswa. Meskipun menghadapi beberapa tantangan seperti sumber daya dan infrastruktur teknologi yang terbatas, sekolah ini menunjukkan ketangguhannya melalui perencanaan kolaboratif dan evaluasi yang berkelanjutan. Studi ini diakhiri dengan rekomendasi untuk memperkuat pelatihan guru, pelibatan masyarakat, dan dukungan kebijakan untuk mempertahankan kualitas pendidikan di sekolah dasar Islam.

Kata Kunci: Keterlibatan Pemangku Kepentingan, Kualitas Pendidikan, Pendidikan Holistik, Pengembangan Guru, Sekolah Dasar Islam

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental pillar in building a progressive society and fostering national development (Qoraboyev et al., 2020). It is through education that nations cultivate knowledgeable, skilled, and morally grounded individuals who will serve as the backbone of future prosperity. The importance of quality education lies not only in academic achievements but also in shaping the character, values, and cultural identity of students. In an increasingly globalized world, the demand for an education system that is both competitive and holistic becomes more pressing. Therefore, the role of educational institutions in enhancing the quality of education is critical and requires comprehensive and sustainable strategies (Fomba et al., 2022).

In the context of Indonesia, Islamic educational institutions such as Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) occupy a unique position. These institutions are not only tasked with delivering academic instruction but also with instilling religious values and moral teachings. As part of the national education system, MIs play a vital role in the moral and intellectual development of young Indonesian Muslims. MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang is one such institution that exemplifies commitment to educational excellence by implementing diverse and integrated programs that enhance students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

The urgency of improving educational quality in Islamic schools is underscored by the shifting demands of the 21st-century education landscape. This includes the integration of information technology, the development of soft skills, critical thinking, creativity, and the nurturing of Islamic values. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia emphasizes that improving educational quality must be a collective effort involving all educational stakeholders: teachers, principals, school managers, parents, and the wider community (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). This collaborative approach is fundamental in ensuring that educational outcomes are not only academically sound but also socially and spiritually beneficial (Riedy et al., 2020).

One of the core strategies in quality improvement at MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang has been the continuous development of a relevant and responsive curriculum. The curriculum at MI Hijriyah 2 is designed to blend national education standards with Islamic teachings. This curriculum seeks to balance intellectual growth and spiritual development, ensuring

students are prepared for both worldly challenges and religious obligations. Curriculum reform and contextualization are ongoing efforts, influenced by both government policy and the needs of local communities (Nurhayati & Suryani, 2021).

Another key factor is the quality of teachers. Teachers are the frontliners of educational transformation, and their capacity directly influences student outcomes. At MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang, efforts have been made to improve teacher competence through regular professional development programs. These include workshops, in-service training, digital literacy programs, and opportunities for pursuing postgraduate education (Mulyasa, 2023). As reported in Ismail's research, the effectiveness of teacher training in Islamic schools significantly boosts students' academic performance and motivation (Ismail, 2023). Thus, teacher capacity-building is not merely a support mechanism but a central pillar of quality enhancement.

In addition to academic instruction, MI Hijriyah 2 places strong emphasis on character education through extracurricular activities. Programs such as scouting, martial arts, sports, arts, and Quranic recitation are actively implemented. These programs are not just co-curricular additions but an essential component of the school's strategy to foster discipline, teamwork, leadership, and spiritual awareness among students. Widiastuti (2022) argues that extracurricular involvement plays a substantial role in reinforcing classroom learning and improving student engagement (Widiastuti, 2022).

Technology integration also marks a significant step in MI Hijriyah 2's journey toward quality education. The adoption of digital platforms during and after the COVID-19 pandemic enabled the school to maintain instructional continuity and introduced new pedagogical models. Tools such as online classrooms, educational applications, and multimedia content have enhanced the learning experience, particularly in urban madrasahs with access to digital infrastructure. According to Prastowo (2023), digital learning innovation is a key driver in transforming traditional teaching models and making learning more interactive and accessible (Prastowo, 2023).

Moreover, the role of school infrastructure cannot be overlooked. MI Hijriyah 2 has invested in upgrading its facilities, including classrooms, libraries, sanitation, and computer labs. A conducive learning environment boosts students' motivation and improves their

overall academic performance. Studies show that physical learning conditions directly affect student concentration, comfort, and attendance (Nuridin, 2023). Therefore, investment in infrastructure is seen as an integral part of the school's quality improvement plan.

Parental and community involvement forms another strategic element in the school's success. MI Hijriyah 2 regularly holds parenting workshops, open discussions, and community events that foster strong collaboration between stakeholders. Zainuddin (2024) points out that parental engagement correlates positively with student academic success, behavioral development, and school satisfaction (Zainuddin, 2023). Strengthening this engagement ensures that educational values taught at school are reinforced at home, creating a consistent support system for learners.

In light of these efforts, the need for proper school management and regular evaluation becomes imperative. MI Hijriyah 2 applies structured monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of its programs and policies. Tools such as e-reporting systems, student performance tracking, and internal audits are employed to guide decision-making. Continuous improvement is supported by data-driven planning and adaptive management strategies (Dewi & Salim, 2023).

In conclusion, the enhancement of educational quality at MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang reflects a multidimensional and integrated approach involving curriculum reform, teacher development, character education, technological adaptation, infrastructure improvement, and stakeholder engagement. The school's commitment to delivering holistic Islamic education makes it a model for other madrasahs aiming to balance religious instruction with academic excellence in a rapidly evolving educational environment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design to explore and analyze the strategies and implementation of educational quality improvement at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Hijriyah 2 Palembang. The qualitative method was chosen due to its strength in exploring social phenomena in depth and understanding participants' experiences and perceptions within their natural context.

Research Design

The research design used is a case study, which allows an in-depth examination of various aspects related to the improvement of educational quality in a particular educational institution. A case study is especially effective for identifying specific strategies, challenges, and success factors in the field.

Research Subjects

The participants of the study consisted of the school principal, teachers, students, parents, and relevant administrative staff at MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang. These stakeholders were selected based on their involvement and influence in the educational processes and quality improvement efforts at the school.

Research Location

The study was conducted at MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang, an Islamic elementary school known for its initiatives to improve education quality through holistic programs. The school is situated in Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the research on quality improvement efforts at MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang. The findings are organized into key themes based on the research focus: curriculum development, teacher professional improvement, student achievement and extracurricular activities, infrastructure and technology, stakeholder involvement, and challenges faced by the school.

Curriculum Development

The study found that MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang continuously enhances its curriculum to remain relevant with modern educational demands. The curriculum integrates national standards with Islamic teachings, fostering both intellectual and spiritual growth (Huda, 2018). Teachers are actively involved in curriculum review workshops, ensuring its contextual alignment with student needs and community values. According to Nurhayati and Suryani (2021), such contextual curriculum development helps Islamic schools remain culturally grounded while staying academically competitive (Nurhayati & Suryani, 2021).

Teacher Professional Development

Teacher competency emerged as a core factor in quality education (Yang, 2022). MI Hijriyah 2 implements regular teacher training programs, including workshops on digital pedagogy, classroom management, and Islamic education methodologies. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to pursue higher education (Master's or Doctoral degrees). These initiatives align with national programs aiming to enhance teacher qualifications across madrasahs (Mulyasa, 2023). Teachers reported improved confidence and effectiveness in the classroom, which translated into better student engagement and outcomes.

Student Performance and Extracurricular Achievements

The academic performance of students has improved significantly over recent years. Analysis of report cards and examination results shows a notable rise in average scores, especially in Islamic studies, mathematics, and Bahasa Indonesia. Beyond academics, students from MI Hijriyah 2 have excelled in regional competitions, including science olympiads, martial arts, and Quranic recitation contests. Extracurricular activities such as scouting and Islamic arts play an important role in shaping students' confidence, teamwork, and moral discipline (Widiastuti, 2022).

Infrastructure and Use of Technology

Infrastructure development has significantly contributed to improving the learning environment. Renovations of classrooms, installation of computer labs, and the expansion of the library were observed. The school has also implemented a digital learning management system and introduced blended learning approaches post-COVID-19. This aligns with government initiatives to digitalize madrasah education and prepare students for the demands of a knowledge-based economy (Prastowo, 2023).

Stakeholder Engagement

The involvement of parents and the surrounding community in school activities was found to be strong. The school regularly conducts parent-teacher meetings, community dialogues, and religious events involving local leaders. This engagement builds mutual trust and support for school programs. As noted by Zainuddin, active parental participation enhances student performance and fosters a positive school climate (Zainuddin, 2024).

Challenges Identified

Despite these successes, MI Hijriyah 2 still faces several challenges: 1) limited budget to support all quality improvement initiatives, 2) insufficient number of qualified teachers for specialized subjects, 3) constraints in updating technological infrastructure for all students, 4) varying levels of parental involvement. These challenges mirror those faced by many Indonesian madrasahs, as highlighted in national reports on Islamic school development (Depdiknas, 2021). Addressing them requires collaborative efforts from the government, school management, and community stakeholders.

The findings of this study reflect the success of a holistic model of education that combines academic excellence with character education and religious grounding. The commitment of the school leadership, the dedication of teachers, and the involvement of parents collectively contribute to the continuous improvement of education quality. These results reinforce the argument by Hasan that strategic and inclusive school management plays a vital role in madrasah transformation (Hasan, 2020).

Furthermore, integrating digital tools and fostering teacher professionalism are aligned with Indonesia's national education roadmap toward quality and equitable education for all. With ongoing challenges, sustainable planning and targeted support are necessary to ensure that institutions like MI Hijriyah 2 can serve as models for educational innovation in the Islamic schooling system.

CONCLUSION

The study on quality improvement efforts at MI Hijriyah 2 Palembang demonstrates the school's commitment to holistic education through curriculum development, teacher professional growth, student achievement, infrastructure enhancement, and stakeholder engagement. The integration of national and Islamic curricula, the investment in teacher training, and the leveraging of technology have been identified as key factors contributing to the enhancement of academic and extracurricular outcomes. The active involvement of parents and the wider community serves to further strengthen the school's programme.

Nevertheless, challenges such as budgetary constraints, shortages of teaching staff, technological limitations, and unequal levels of parental participation persist, reflecting broader issues in Indonesian madrasahs. Addressing these issues necessitates collaborative efforts among government entities, school leaders, and the community. MI Hijriyah 2 is a case in point, demonstrating how strategic management, when combined with academic and character education, can drive madrasah transformation. The school's progress is in alignment with national education goals, underlining the significance of sustainable planning and targeted support to ensure sustained growth and inclusivity in Islamic education.

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