



Regional Autonomy Policy in Islamic Religious Education

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses regional autonomy policies and their implications for the management of Islamic education, particularly madrasahs, in Indonesia. Regional autonomy, which began to be implemented in 2001, brought significant changes to the education system, which was previously centralized but became more decentralized. This research uses the literature study method by reviewing various literature, laws and regulations, as well as previous research findings related to regional autonomy policies in education. The study results indicate that educational decentralization provides opportunities for madrasahs to develop management patterns, curricula, and learning strategies that are more appropriate for local needs. However, on the other hand, the position of madrasahs within the framework of regional autonomy still faces challenges, particularly regarding regulatory certainty, funding, and resource disparities between regions. Thus, regional autonomy policies can be both an opportunity and a challenge for Islamic education, requiring synergy between the central government, regional governments, and society to strengthen the position of madrasahs as an integral part of the national education system

INTRODUCTION

Education is essentially an effort to design the future of humanity, which in its concept and implementation must take into account various factors that influence it. The concept of education can be likened to clothing that cannot be imported or exported. Education should be created according to the wishes, size, and model of the person using it, so that it appears fitting and harmonious. Similarly, the concept of education implemented in Indonesia is heavily influenced by various government political policies, the development of science and technology, societal development and change, customs, culture, and other factors (Ali, 2015).

One of the educational issues our nation is currently facing is the issue of education quality. Various efforts have been made to improve the quality of national education, including thru various teacher training and competency development programs, the provision of books and teaching materials, the improvement of educational facilities and infrastructure, and the enhancement of school management quality. However, education quality indicators have not shown significant improvement. Some schools, especially in cities, show quite encouraging improvements in the quality of education, but most others are still concerning (Mugiarto et al., 2022).

Various problems and obstacles have occurred in education in Indonesia since the beginning of independence until the Old Order era (Aisy & Hudaidah, 2021). Often, the government implements national education policies to produce good human resources. As stated by (Desimarnis, 2021), the Indonesian government continues to make policies to improve the quality of Indonesian human resources in line with the national education policy aimed at educating the nation. Policy consistency is very important to mitigate negative influences on education (Lainah et al., 2022).

The government's efforts to build educational services are indeed evident thru the steps taken to prepare and adjust its regulatory and legislative framework. These steps align with changes in the government's political order, marked by the enactment of Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system (Sisdiknas), which was carried out by the government thru a lengthy process. Ideally, our education system operates in line with the government's decentralistic political policies. Specific policies, such as the decentralistic Sisdiknas Law No. 20 of 2003, are guided by the rules in general policies, namely Article 7 of Law No. 22 of 1999, which states that education is not a centralized authority (H. Mansyur, 2012).

Regional autonomy, implemented since 2001, has brought about significant changes in education management. Article 11 paragraph (2) states that "The Government and Regional Governments are obliged to guaranty the availability of funds for the implementation of education for every citizen aged seven to fifteen years." Specifically for Higher Education, Article 24 paragraph (2) states that "Higher Education institutions have autonomy to manage their own institutions as centers for higher education, scientific research, and community service." The occurrence of reforms in 1998 led to significant changes in the Republic of Indonesia, particularly in the fundamental aspects of the

national education system. The changes in the education system, which was initially centralized and is now decentralized, are now known as educational autonomy. As for the national autonomy policy, it is in accordance with the Indonesian education system. Autonomy policies in education (educational autonomy) can improve the education system in Indonesia in the future (Siregar & Mesiono, 2021).

From an etymological perspective, autonomy comes from the word "autos," meaning "self," and the word "nomos," meaning "law." Therefore, in this context, autonomy is understood as making one's own laws (self-legislation). However, in its development, autonomy also includes the formation of self-government (*zelfwet zelfbestuur*). The definition of autonomy from a terminological perspective is the arrangement related to the ways of dividing authority, tasks, responsibilities, rules, and affairs between the central government and local governments (Fahroni, 2020).

With the enactment and implementation of Law No. 22 of 1999 (revised by Law No. 32 of 2004), autonomy and decentralization in all fields were quickly realized, including the field of education, which later became known as educational autonomy. Educational autonomy is essentially the central government's effort to empower regions by granting them full authority to organize education for their communities according to the region's uniqueness, capabilities, and needs (Mashuri, 2009). With this autonomy (decentralization), it is hoped that each region, in terms of education, namely Madrasahs, can be more motivated to develop its human resources to be competitive in facing changes that always challenge the realization of the integrity of educational institutions. Various aspects of education are already the responsibility of local governments. Then it developed how the design of Islamic education can be transformed or systematically processed within society. In this regard, Madrasah (Islamic education) is the main hope for the Indonesian nation in achieving the educational goals of the country (Rifa'i, 2017).

One type of education that is stated not to fall under central authority is Madrasah education. Madrasahs are defined in Law number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System as educational institutions characterized by Islamic principles. In addition, Madrasahs also adopted the school system, which includes general sciences in their curriculum. This is because Madrasahs and other educational institutions share the same goal: to provide quality educational services to build Indonesia's human resources. Furthermore, Islamic education has a real contribution to the national education system (Iptek & Lipi, 2020). Of course, that contribution is expected to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Indonesian education will be of high quality if madrasahs, as educational institutions, have empowerment management patterns, management patterns, and educational patterns (Lainah et al., 2022). Researchers assume that educational autonomy policies for each region or area have a significant impact on the condition of Islamic education in Indonesia. Where all policies can be adapted to the conditions or circumstances of each region, which is expected to solve and improve various problems of

Islamic education. This is evident from the development of Islamic education since the first regional autonomy until now. Based on this assumption, the researcher intends to study the impact of regional autonomy education policies on Islamic education.

LITERATURE RIVIEW

Regional Autonomy in Education

The word "autonomy" comes from the Greek language, where "autos" means "self" and "nomos" means "rule." Therefore, autonomy is understood as self-governing or self-ruling. Based on the Indonesian Big Dictionary, regional autonomy is the right, authority, and obligation of a region to regulate and manage its own affairs in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Based on Law No. 32 of 2004, Article 1 paragraph 5, regional autonomy is understood as the right, authority, and even obligation of a region to carry out autonomy in order to regulate and manage its own government and local community affairs in accordance with the law.

With the enactment of the Regional Autonomy Law, the authority for education management shifted from a centralized to a decentralized system. Decentralization of education means a broader delegation of power and authority to the regions so they can plan programs for their areas, leading to decisions aimed at addressing educational challenges. The purpose of granting this autonomy is to enable each region to become independent and empower all the people living in that area. The implementation of broad autonomy requires each region to be responsible and always uphold democratic principles. Regional autonomy also allows society to play an equal and just role, leading to the potential for regional diversity to emerge, with the central point of autonomy being at the level closest to the people, such as districts and cities (Siregar & Mesiono, 2021).

Decentralization policies can have an impact on education development. There are 4 positive effects that support education decentralization policies, namely (Siregar & Mesiono, 2021):

1. Quality improvement. As for the authority held by the school, it allows the school to easily manage and empower its resource potential without any obstacles.
2. Financial efficiency. Utilizing local tax sources and reducing operational costs can improve finances.
3. Administrative efficiency. The long chain of bureaucracy must be shortened to make complex procedures efficient.
4. Expansion and equalization. The opportunity to provide education in remote areas must be continuously improved to ensure the expansion and equitable distribution of education.

Islamic Education Policy

The word "policy" is etymologically derived from the Greek word "polis," which means "city." Next, policy refers to the ways in which all parts of the government direct their activities. Education is meaningful for moral, scientific, and technological development to build a civilized and dignified society that is skilled, democratic, peaceful, just, and highly competitive, thereby improving

human life. Therefore, every citizen has the right to receive a proper education, and the government strives to establish and organize a national education system regulated by law (Sidiq & Widyawati, 2019).

Islamic education is fundamentally based on the Quran, which, with its universality, is open to everyone for study and criticism. It will change according to the needs of the Muslim community itself; it will develop into something relevant if the Muslim community is willing to make changes oriented toward good in the present and in the future.

There are three terms in Islamic education: Tarbiyah (knowledge about ar-Rabb), Ta'lim (theoretical knowledge, creativity, high commitment in developing knowledge, and a lifestyle that upholds scientific values), and Ta'dib (integrating knowledge into action). Tarbiyah means to grow, increase, and develop (Rabbayyarbu), to grow and become large or mature (Rabbi-yarba), to improve, regulate, manage, and educate, to master and lead, to protect and maintain (Rabbayyarubbu). According to Abdul Fattah Jalal, education is the process of imparting knowledge, understanding, comprehension, responsibility, and instilling trust, so that human self-purification is in a condition that allows for the reception of wisdom and the learning of everything that is beneficial to them and that they do not know. Meanwhile, ta'dib etymologically is a masdar form derived from the word "addaba," which means to prepare food, train with good morals, be polite, and follow good procedures for doing something (Rifa'i, 2017).

Hypothesis

In this study, the hypothesis formed is that the regional autonomy education policy is very crucial for the sustainability of Islamic education.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a literature review focusing on the implications of regional autonomy policies on the management of Islamic educational institutions. The object of study is the implications of regional autonomy policies on the management of Islamic educational institutions, with data obtained through literature review.

A distinctive feature of this literature study method is that researchers are directly exposed to texts, reading materials, and data related to the scope of this study. Thus, rather than relying on eyewitness accounts or field data, researchers only deal with ready-to-use data and texts (Lainah et al., 2022).

The data sources in this study are divided into two categories: primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources here include various types of information, both in the form of people and books, literature, documents, and other data directly related to the discussion of this study. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are everything that directly or indirectly supports this study. These data sources also include archives, books, magazines, documents, or articles that can support this study.

The various data obtained in this study will undergo several analysis processes. Starting from the process of identification, research, analysis, and interpretation so that the substance of the implications of regional autonomy

policies in the management of Islamic educational institutions can be captured. After that, the researcher will try to provide a complete picture of the implications of regional autonomy policies in the management of Islamic educational institutions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regulations and Principles of Educational Autonomy

The word autonomy is understood as independence or self-governance. In the field of education, there are several limitations to the definition put forward by experts, including the following:

1. School management autonomy is defined as independence in managing school affairs based on capabilities, needs, and characteristics, while remaining within the national education system.
2. School autonomy is the authority of schools to regulate and manage school members in accordance with applicable education laws and regulations.
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In regional autonomy (decentralization), there is a principle implemented in Law No. 1 concerning the Principles of Regional Autonomy No. 05 of 1974, which is as follows: The principle of deconstruction, central government officials whose powers are delegated by the central government, and the transfer of power from the central government to the regions. The principle of assistance and housework, namely the central government transferring to villages and regions to carry out predetermined tasks accompanied by facilities, infrastructure, funds, human resources, and the obligation to be responsible to the people who have been assigned. This makes it the supervision of the regional government to emphasize the principle itself. In this way, the development of democracy in regional administration will be guaranteed. This will lead to the formation of equality and initiative in the implementation of regional autonomy (Mansir, 2022). Thus, madrasahs can manage their activities without interference from the central government. Through a teaching and learning process based on local needs, the curriculum is not burdened with unnecessary material. The teaching and learning process is expected to run effectively so that higher achievements can be obtained. Government involvement in education has led madrasah management to include additional programs to improve the quality of education (Marbun, 2013).

The Position of Madrasahs in Regional Autonomy Policy

The position of madrasahs within the current regional autonomy policy circle can be said to be very dilemmatic. This is due to the lack of clarity regarding the position of madrasahs within the Indonesian education system. Although there has been a letter from the Minister of Religious Affairs to the Minister of Home Affairs and the principle of regional autonomy already exists in relation to this, there is still no clarity or strong and definitive legal basis regarding the position of madrasahs (Arifuddin, 2014).

Based on several sources and reading materials found, this is due to differences in interpretation of the concept of madrasah itself. The first interpretation argues that madrasah is closely related to religion, and therefore must remain under the authority of the central government. The second interpretation states that madrasah is a form of educational institution, and therefore must be under the authority of the local government. These two schools of thought have led to the position or status of madrasahs remaining unclear, even though some second-level regions have explicitly stated that they will take over madrasahs under the authority of the local government. This is also what has led regional offices to decide that madrasahs should continue to operate as they did when they were first established until there is clarity and a strong legal basis, such as legislation on the position of madrasahs (Lainah et al., 2022).

When Indonesia implemented the Law on National Education, recognition of the existence of madrasahs increased, especially with the inclusion of the words "Iman and Taqwa" in the general statement of national education objectives and the obligation to provide religious education at every type and level of education. As an implementation of this law, several government regulations on education have been issued, including education in madrasahs, as stipulated in Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007 on Religious Education. Religious education is education that provides knowledge and shapes the attitudes, personalities, and skills of students in practicing their religious teachings, which is carried out at least through subjects/lectures in all education pathways, levels, and types. Furthermore, religious education is education that prepares students to be able to carry out roles that require mastery of knowledge about religious teachings and/or become experts in religious knowledge and practice their religious teachings (Sidiq & Widyawati, 2019).

There are challenges that madrasah education must face in this era of regional autonomy. In Law No. 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Government, Article 7 states that there are five matters whose authority is not delegated by the central government to regional governments. Religion is included as one of the five mentioned. This is a challenge because the reality the author observed on the ground is that the implementation of the central government's responsibility for financing the organization of education has not yet been carried out optimally. This is because the territory of the Republic of Indonesia is very vast, complete with all its diversity. Adding to this is the ever-increasing population; according to the latest data, Indonesia ranks 4th in the world for the largest population. One alternative being pursued is that the government must delegate its authority to local governments so that existing problems can be addressed. However, in the policy of regional autonomy, it turns out that religion was not delegated by the state to the regions.

Facing the various challenges that exist, there are several things that need to be done, as follows: (Lainah et al., 2022)

1. Managed with sophisticated management. The term is Total Quality Education (TQE) management. TQE emphasizes that every element involved, including the central government, local governments,

communities, and schools, is obligated to continuously improve quality according to their respective responsibilities. Quality improvement means there must be problem-solving for the challenges mentioned above, and it must continuously strive for perfection.

2. Preparing reliable educational personnel. This is because madrasah management is developed thru a professionalism approach that allows the full potential of the madrasah to grow and develop. Otherwise, madrasah educational institutions in the era of regional autonomy and beyond will be viewed poorly by the community.
3. Improving madrasah education management. It is only right that the school principal, as the leader, is obliged to empower all units they have in order to increase management autonomy in their school, and must involve parents and the community in formulating the vision and mission for quality improvement in the school.
4. The willingness of local governments to make changes in the era of autonomy. If the government shows good attention to madrasah education, there will be an opportunity to advance the region in that area. Because the progress of a region also depends on the good quality of education.
5. Building community-based education. One of the challenges faced by madrasah education in this era of regional autonomy policy is the uneven distribution of resources across different regions in Indonesia. Therefore, schools and local governments need to involve the figures, scientists, and education experts available in each region.

Regional Autonomy and Its Implications for Education Policy

The existence of legal products regarding regional autonomy is intended to create regional independence within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Therefore, this autonomy cannot be interpreted as absolute freedom without considering the overall national interest. Thus, decentralization is not a standalone system, but rather a unified part of a larger system, namely the Unitary Republic of Indonesia. Every local government has the authority to regulate and manage all aspects of governance, including education in their respective regions throughout Indonesia.

1. One of the powers decentralized to the regions is the administration of education. In this regard, the local government structure responsible for organizing education is at the district/city level. Meanwhile, the provincial government, as an extension of the central government, coordinates the implementation of various authorities granted to each district/city. Every policy at the national level, especially in areas related to public interest, always has implications both in the short and long term. In Article 56 of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, it is stated:
2. Society plays a role in improving the quality of education services, including planning, supervision, and evaluation of education programs thru education councils and school/madrasah committees.
3. The Education Council, as an independent institution, is formed and plays a role in improving the quality of education services by providing consideration, direction, and support for personnel, facilities, and

infrastructure, as well as education supervision at the national, provincial, and district/city levels, which are not hierarchically related.

4. The school/madrasah committee, as an independent institution, is formed and plays a role in improving service quality by providing consideration, direction, and support for personnel, facilities, and infrastructure, as well as educational supervision at the educational unit level (Sidiq & Widyawati, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Regional autonomy policies can be both an opportunity and a challenge for Madrasahs. However, regardless of the risks, the development of Madrasahs must continue in line with the spirit of autonomy and globalization. This is because autonomy and globalization are a necessity that must be present in our national and state life. Therefore, it must be faced with an optimistic and strategic attitude, and with anticipation of all of this. If Madrasahs are able to do this, it is not impossible that they will be able to compete with other institutions, ultimately finding their momentum and remaining the choice of the community. The indication is that every year the trend of people choosing education for their children is Madrasah, marked by a significant increase in the number of applicants, and the proliferation of Madrasahs.

Suggestion

After the researcher conducted research on regional autonomy policies regarding Islamic education, and as formulated by the researcher, the researcher considered it necessary to have input as material for consideration in policy making by the government, namely:

1. There needs to be outreach from the relevant ministries to explain the existence of madrasahs in the national education system to local governments, both provincial and city governments.
2. There needs to be more detailed legislation in establishing the responsibility of regional governments towards madrasah institutions.
3. Regional governments need to create regional regulations related to madrasah education as an operational basis for implementing existing legislation, so that regional government participation in madrasahs will emerge.

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