Managing and Supervising Privatization of Islamic Education within a Decentralized Educational System in West Sumatra

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This article examines the management and supervision of Islamic education in West Sumatra within a highly decentralized educational system. It addresses the belief among Indonesians that centralized governance leads to regional unfairness and hinders community involvement. In a decentralized system, local governments have the autonomy to control their own functions, including education, aligning with the goals and needs of their communities. The growth of Islamic education in West Sumatra is a result of this decentralized system. This article using qualitative research methods such as document analysis and interviews and conducted in Padang and Padang Panjang as representative of Muslim regions in West Sumatra. Findings indicate that the planning process is initiated by the mayor, who appoints government institutions like Social Welfare Unit and Education Departments to oversee Islamic education in the region, following a top-down approach.

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INTRODUCTIONS

After being an independent country in 1945, the Indonesian system of governance, including education, was regulated by the central government. Therefore, any policy and decision-making occurred centrally, and the central government also conducted an evaluation of each policy, and this was the case from 1945 until 1999 (Muhammad Yaumi, 2017). Nevertheless, in 1999 Indonesia transitioned its system of government and governance due to economic and political reform. The most significant of these reforms was changing the style of governance from centralization to decentralization. Governance with a centralized system was considered by Indonesian people far less efficient and causing injustice between regions. Moreover, it was argued by them that a centralized system discourages creativity in regional government as well as discourages participation of the community (Cepi S.A J., 2006). Hence, most of the Indonesian wanted to have a decentralized system as a solution to these problems. From this on, a new amendment in the Indonesian constitution (UU "Undang-Undang" Indonesian acronym) was passed in 1999 (Sutapa, 2005). Decentralization is recognized as the transfer of power from the central government to local governments, which includes providing local governments more ability to oversee education (Winardi, 2017). It is hoped that the decentralization law will be able to fulfil the needs of the people who are currently losing faith in Indonesian government. The establishment of this decentralization law also enables local administrations to address internal concerns in accordance with the needs of their people (Galela, 2016), one of which is education.

Study showed that decentralized system allows local government to regulate their own roles including education. Also, decentralized system in education gives authority entirely to the local government to carry out an education system in accordance with the expectations and needs of their local society as it stated in 22nd amendment from 1999 (Sutapa, 2005). In other words, decentralized system spurs each local government in different districts to indirectly compete in developing their district and giving opportunities to local values involved in education. According to Maisyanah's research, she stressed that the decentralization of education in Indonesia has now been implemented, even though there are still issues that are related to the process of accomplishing the decentralization of education goals, which is the goal of national education. (Maisyanah, 2018). Also, the financial ability and position as a new municipality do not greatly affect the lengthening of schooling, the degree of municipalities' development and urbanization does have a major positive impact on enhancing educational attainment (Muttaqin et al., 2016).

A lot of studies on decentralized system in Indonesia are more focused on decentralized itself and also predominately concerned on Islamic education on how it looks like. However, it is very a little study seeing how the relation between decentralized and Islamic education which is interrelated to one another. Talking about Islamic education, this is kind of interesting discourse to see since Indonesia is the largest Islamic country in the world, the number of Muslims in Indonesia is around 204,847,000. Even after September 2001, Islamic institutions of learning in Indonesia got a lot of attentions from international's eyes (Pohl, 2006). Regarding to Zaidun´ study, he stated that Islamic education is expected to provide a root of value and knowledge of Islam that is to be delivered through guidance and learning to children (Naim, 2014). As well, Islamic education is expected to balance the needs of the world and life after death (Naim, 2014). Because, for most of Indonesia tend to think that education is not only about intellectual achievement or to focus on academic learning but is also seen

as a sort of way to develop individuals as good people. Also, as the society changing there is a growing number of moral panic, whih is mostly among muslim parents, about modern-contemporary life (Nurani et al., 2022). Many parents encourage their children to practice the Al-Qur'an, with the hope that the children will be more careful and fortify themselves from a free life.

It can be said that Islamic education plays important roles in Indonesian societies. It purposes to achieve excellence not only in the field of religious science but also in the field of general science. Therefore, the madrasa was ultimately established to address the challenges of students who have Islamic knowledge and other sciences as well as to practice their knowledge (Syaifudin et al., 2021).

This study will examine on how local autonomy provides opportunities for the existence of Islamic education in society from sociological perspective by qualitative approach. Instead of seeing Islamic education in Indonesia as whole, this research will rather focus on the West Sumatra province as a research location. This is because the Muslim population in West Sumatra is the second largest in Indonesia, with a Muslim population of 97.42% based on the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) data, after Aceh (BPS, 2010). The aim of this study is to analyze process of communication or the relation between several institution involving on a decentralized educational system in Islamic education, as well as how it's being planned before being implemented in schools.

METHOD

Focusing on two different cities in West Sumatra has the specific reason as it has been given in the background. Furthermore, I would focus more on junior high school as it was run by local government on each municipality while senior ones are regulated by provincial level (Kodrat Setiawan, 2017). Those two cities were chosen, Padang and Padang Panjang will be represented by different schools such as common schools, Islamic boarding, and Pesantren. What I meant by common schools are public schools where they are wholly adopted national curriculum as a sole system and fully regulated by the local education authority. Then, boarding schools are an educational institution that mostly own by the person which became a center for pure religious activities along with the boarding concept where students stay in dorm system (Kusnadi et al., 2017). This schools also integrate the national curriculum, but they also have their curriculum with mostly Islamic activities. While Pesantren is a type of school in Southeast Asia offering second-level training in Islamic subjects. The term is pesantren on Java, surau on Sumatra, pondok on the Malay Peninsula and Cambodia, and madrasah in the Philippines and Singapore which Pesantren are private ventures by scholars called kyai (Federspiel, 2019) Pesantren was a originally concept of Islamic education since sixteenth century. For some Pesantren, they are still learning *Kitab kuning* (old book) which was derived from Muslim Middle Period (ca. 1250–1850) (Federspiel, 2019). The concept of Pesantren is not the same from city to city nor province. Some are integrated with the concept of a boarding school, and some still maintain a traditional system, while students learn about religion when they graduate, become religious leaders in their social environment.

On looking at how decentralization being used in the process of implementation Islamic education in West Sumatera, this study will be conducted by using qualitative tools. Therefore, qualitative will make this study easy on giving a comparison and explaining the process of the research itself and provide a wide range of describing narrative instead of a number (Bryman, 2012). Tools that

I choose to examine this study are interviews and documents analysis because these will facilitate me as the author on making a comparison from the insider perspective which is involving through the process of the implementation Islamic education and official documents which come from different kind of institutions.

Theoretically, Interview is a method that allows the writer to explore thinking and understanding of some interviewees related to aspects of a phenomenon. The respondents through interview technique can bring many ideas about one particular phenomenon which is going to be useful for the research. Doing interviews also brings the opportunity to gain different types of information easily (Palme, 2018). Additionally, the intention of doing the interview on this research is also to understand the experience of people who involve in Islamic education; therefore, the experience makes interested as a key to some of the underlying assumption (Seidman, 2013). Regarding this research, I will interview several people, and they are principal actors in the decentralized system of education in the West Sumatra for instance education authorities, headmasters of schools, teachers and education practitioners. In this way, the writer will collect data from different perspectives from different principal actors at the same time.

Moreover, the process of the interview will be applying a semi-unstructured interview which has a list questions or fairly specific topic to be recovered, often referred to as an interview guide. However, the interview has a great deal of leeway in how to replay, and the question may not follow on precisely in the way outlined on the schedule and issue that are not included in the guide may be asked as the interviews (Bryman, 2012). Also, semi-structured is a way to perform interviews, which uses the rules of interview guide set by the writer about step by step on collecting data, and also there is the possibility to give open question on specific interesting topics (Bryman, 2012). On this research as an example, when the writer asks about the centralization of Islamic education, the writer could also ask questions to the actor behind the decentralization, how do they perceive Islamic education as a parent.

Then, I will also look at different documents that gather from different organizations that are associated with the implementation of Islamic education. There are several forms of the document that might be useful for this study such as an official document from the government such as policies, Peraturan Walikota (*Mayor´s regulation),* appealing latter and soon. All these sources are a great deal of information that is potentially significant for this study which produces a lot of textual material of potential interest (Bryman, 2012). Such documents can be interesting precisely because of the biases they reveal. Equally, this point suggests that caution is necessary for attempting to treat them as depictions of reality. Then, official documents deriving from private resources, this information can be everything which can be associated with decentralization of Islamic education in West Sumatra (Bryman, 2012). This document can be important for conducting a case study of the organization. The last document is the documents that an organization generates which can be job activities, minutes of a meeting, and soon viewed as a representation of the reality of that organization (Bryman, 2012). In other words, we might take the view that such as documents tell something about what goes on the organization and will help to uncover such thing as its cultures or ethos.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Planning Process in the Bureaucracy: Padang and Padang Panjang

According to a study by Baharun on the decentralization of education and the implication towards Islamic education, the development of Islamic education, in the provinces mainly, relies on the political will of local government. Although at the same time, the political will can also be an obstacle to development (Baharun, 2012). This is because the will of local government might not focus on Islamic education rather than into other aspects of development. Muslim parents have a strong desire to send their children to a private Islamic school, which is evidence that Islamic schools or *madrasah* remain the community's primary means of educating it's youth (Asadullah, 2015).

In West Sumatra, Islamic education is a being local government concern, both in Padang and Padang Panjang. This is based on the assumption that Islamic education is a part of a community culture that existed from a long time. There has been an increase in religious enthusiasm which influence the growing interest among Indonesian Muslim communities to build superior *madrasah* at various levels of education. In the case of Padang, Islamic education has been one of the aims of local government which was actively implemented five years ago. The idea of education based on the value of Islam was the agenda of the current Mayor. This is confirmed by the interview with the Mayor of Padang, Mr. Mahyeldi:

> "…Education agenda is a vision that I brought during my political campaign, the education that I meant is based on religious values. Living today in a modern era, spiritual values are essential to fulfill a moral need in student academic life. I have implemented this in the last five years since my first year selected as a mayor in Padang city…"

In planning for Islamic education, the mayor has the support from legislative delegates who view Islamic education as one of the needs of Minang society, especially in the budgeting. As the interview with a legislative delegate in Padang, Mr. Mahesa said that:

> "…Legislative members fully support the program designed by the mayor, particularly in Islamic education. This is because Islamic programs seem like a positive effort of the local government in order to conserve the Islamic values in Minang societies. At the same time, it seems like one of the needs of the people in West Sumatra nowadays. As support from the legislative delegates, we do not process that much if the mayor needs funding for the implementation…"

Based on those points above, Mayor of Padang has made Islamic education as the aim of his political campaigns as he was fully aware that Islamic values as the need of students in academic life. Then, he produced a mayor regulation to govern the education system, including Islamic education in Padang. The regulation further states that education in Padang aims to encourage students self-realization and quality as one effort of the government to inspire future generations who are devout in their beliefs, noble, tolerant, healthy, creative, independent, and democratic citizens as well as responsible for themselves, their society, nation, and state (Nomor 5 Tahun 2011: Tentang Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan, 2011). Likewise, the planning of Islamic education is also specified by Indonesian constitution about national educational system No. 20, 2003 which explains

that one of the aims of Indonesian education is to give an effective learning process to improve the potential for students to have spiritual capabilities and morals (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional 2003).

Conceptually, the planning of Islamic education is strongly driven by local policy. The policy was influenced by the political will of the local government. In Padang, the Mayor played an important role. The desire of the mayor to bring up the value of belief as one of the important aspects of education in Padang was triggered by his self-interest as the leader. This is in line with what was conveyed by Brinton who says that the culture and self-interest fundamentally affect a leader's behaviour as an individual in creating the right targeted policy (Brinton and Nee, 1998). Furthermore, he says that in order to see the aim of an institution, it is important to see the background of actors because they are motivated by self-interest, and their values and cultural beliefs, which derive in a context of existing institutions. The background also included the cultures that he embraced, he is Minangnesse as is one of Indonesia's oldest ethnic groups with a unique universal value (Moeis et al., 2022).

In other words, the behaviour of the actors behind the policy of Islamic education in Padang gets influenced by the fact that the majority of Minang community is Muslim, and culture and belief influenced the behaviour of the mayor. Moreover, the self-interest of the local government is also crucial which is strongly formed by the influence of cultural values. Conceptually, the authority of the education from the central government to the local government was written in 1945 Indonesia's constitution. Since Indonesia transitioned its system from centralized to decentralized in 1999, this makes the local government better positioned to execute that policy because the authority given by the central government is much great than before.

To some extent, the process of Islamic policy planning and implementation in West Sumatra are begun by the elected Mayor who appoints the social welfare unit to carry out the task. This unit formulates overall concept on how Islamic education based on the political will of the mayor that has been brought during his campaign, as stated by the Mayor of Padang Mr. Mahyeldi:

> "…*Seeing the condition of West Sumatra's society particularly the city of Padang which has most of the Muslim community. So that, government as a policymaker as well as a servant should fill the the Islamic values in order to increase the policies that support the practice of Islamic values. To make this happen, the social welfare units is the right hand of the mayor to help to execute the Islamic education from the planning to the evaluation…*"

Meanwhile, in Padang Panjang, the planning process is similar with Padang in terms of how they managed Islamic education. The local government also helped by social welfare unit and the education department as government institutions. Historically, Padang Panjang has been an Islamic education center since the colonial era. This means Islamic education is not necessarily as a result of a local policy as in Padang. Rather, it is influenced by the political will of the local government. Islamic education has been one of people's needs because the values of Islam are embedded in the culture. As a result, Islamic education naturally became a local government responsibility, even though it was not written specifically in local policy, only of as a general instruction in the national policies. A representative of the education department of Padang Panjang, Mr. Desmon stated that:

"…There is no specific local policy on regulating Islamic education in Padang Panjang, and it's a characteristic that developed in the community, where Islamic education has been being part of local communities since ages. However, the idea on how to run the Islamic education in Padang Panjang was also strengthened by the general instruction by the national constitution, and local government made that constitution as general guidance. Moreover, the local government worked together with social welfare unit, education department and the schools…"

Since there is still no specific regulation on the process of Islamic education in Padang Panjang, where the demand of Islamic education comes from the society themselves. Hence, the Mayor as an actor behind the planning must have an interest on Islamic education which put as his political will. In other words, a political will of the local government played an important role in planning Islamic education. Where it puts the self-interest in a crucial place in determining that political will. Self-interest itself is influenced by the value of belief, which is considering that West Sumatra has the second largest Muslim population in Indonesia (BPS, 2010). Thus, the concern of the local government indeed is based on the need of the communities.

The research findings indicate a notable contrast in the planning of Islamic education between the cities of Padang and Padang Panjang. In Padang, the planning process commences with the local government, which subsequently transforms its intentions into policies to shape the framework of Islamic education. On the other hand, in Padang Panjang, the planning process originates from the values and cultural heritage of the community, which have been deeply ingrained in the fabric of Islamic education over an extended period. The study also reveals the involvement of various institutions in the planning process, including the Mayor, social welfare unit, education department, and schools. The sequence begins with the Mayor, who, through the social welfare unit, formulates a vision for Islamic education that aligns with their political aspirations during the campaign period. Subsequently, the proposed policy undergoes legislative approval and is subsequently implemented through the local education department, which serves as a vital link in facilitating this top-down approach.

Planning Process in the Different Type of Schools: Padang and Padang Panjang

Islamic education in schools is typically disseminated through the education department, following the policies that have been established at a broader level. These policies serve as a reference for curriculum development and the organization of Islamic education within schools. While the implementation may vary among individual schools, the overall directives from the local government are generally consistent. The approach taken by schools in providing Islamic education is reflected in their respective visions, which are aligned with the guidelines set by the local government. In the case of public schools, the planning process for Islamic education closely adheres to the regulations issued by the local government, resulting in a similar planning framework across public schools, as derived from the local education department.

In regard to the planning, the general schools work based on the instruction from the education department. Furthermore, the principal holds an important role to arrange the team who

will be responsible for the implementation. Also, on the planning, the principal helped by the vice principal of academic and also the teacher of religion subject. The most important at the planning stage is determining how effective activities are for students during school hours to activate in Islamic education. It is confirmed by the interview with the headmaster of general schools from both city Padang and Padang Panjang, the headmaster of public schools in Padang, Mr. Hakim said that:

> *"…The school prepares the Islamic education planning after getting socialization from the education department. Broadly speaking, the school follows the instructions given. However, in organizing, the schools can plan itself. For example, the duration for Islamic education in Schools, who is responsible, and other forms of supporting activities in Islamic education…"*

Mrs. Rita Yanti as the headmaster of common schools in Padang Panjang further said that:

> *"…In general, the implementation of Islamic Education in Padang Panjang was designed by the local government through the Kesra and education department and then socialized at schools. For the planning itself, the school has a particular team consisting of subject teachers and is assisted by the vice headmaster of the curriculum…"*

In addition, a distinction can be observed between private schools, specifically Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren. Islamic boarding schools continue to adhere to regulations established by the local government, particularly with regards to the curriculum for academic subjects taught in the classroom. However, when it comes to Islamic education, the responsibility is entrusted to the schools themselves, as these institutions operate on the principles of Islamic teachings. Furthermore, private Islamic schools have their own governing bodies known as "yayasan," which serve as the founders and supervisors of these schools. There are differences in how Islamic education is organized between Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren. Islamic boarding schools combine elements from both local regulations and the directives of the yayasan. This means that the learning process in these schools may resemble that of public schools to some extent, but with the distinction that there is a significant focus on Islamic subjects and activities, which are integrated into the boarding school concept.

Private schools, such as Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren, strategically formulate their own Islamic policies as a means of marketization to offer more comprehensive and intensive Islamic education programs compared to public schools. This approach aims to enhance the attractiveness and appeal of private schools, particularly within the predominantly Muslim community of West Sumatra, especially in Padang. Mr. Jalius from the social welfare unit of Padang expressed this sentiment, stating:

> *"…Since the Mayor declare that Padang as one of cities in West Sumatra that concerns about being Hafidz Quran 112, the Islamic boarding schools and Pesantren become as a solution for the parents to put their children in order to intensively learn about Quran. These schools are Islamic based where the values of Islam are really strong in the schools…"*

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Diagram 1. The Planning Process of Islamic education in General schools
Source: process by author based on the interview, 2021

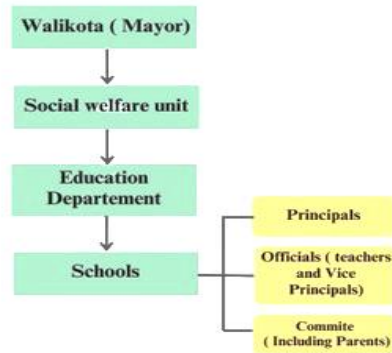Diagram 2. The Planning Process of Islamic Education in Islamic Boarding Schools

Ika Sandra, Tiok Wijanarko, Nguyen Thi Hong Hanh, Evelynd. *Managing and Supervising Privatization of Islamic Education within a Decentralized Educational System in West Sumatra.*
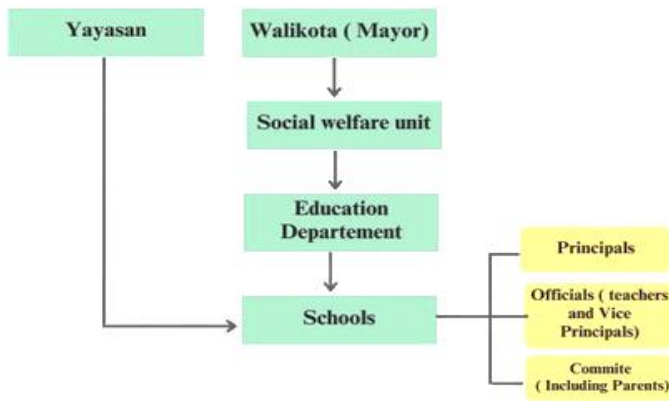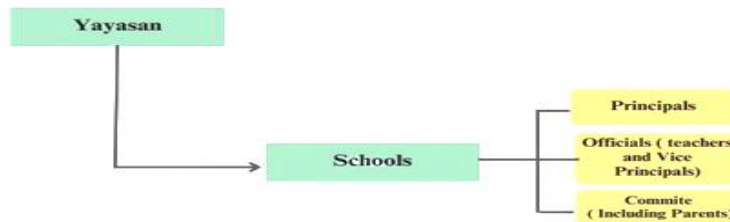
Diagram 3. The Planning Process of Islamic education in Pesantren

While Pesantren, they are fully preparing the students to learn Islamic studies which are also integrated with the boarding concept. At some Pesantren, they are not following the national curriculum because they are not really into studying school subjects rather than Islamic education. Pesantren, as a private school integrates the Islamic education and boarding concept where Yayasan as the center of the regulation for running the system. In the planning of Islamic education, the headmaster is helped by other assistants like vice headmaster and the teachers to arrange the curriculum based on the rules from the Yayasan. To some extent, a private school like boarding schools and Pesantren become popular lately in West Sumatra. By the boarding concept followed by the Islamic system, gives such a privileged for these schools as a market aspect where the students and parents as consumers. Madrasah are no longer seen as institutions for studying scientific religion but also acquire skills, mastery and expertise in the fields of science and technology that are useful for dealing with industrial and post-industrial times (Mundiri & Zahra, 2005)

CONCLUSION

To summarize, it is likely that the public schools did not really participate in the planning process in Islamic education rather than following the local regulations. These interview quotes testify that there is a top-down process involved in the planning where the top institutions being central of running the planning process while the institution under them most likely follow the rules. According to the top-down approach that mentioned previously, the roles that local government have on implementing Islamic education in schools, public schools particularly because policy making in public bureaucracies as a field of professional practice rests almost exclusively on assumptions that politicians should direct application from the top down and not support schools' decisions about educational improvement goals and strategies from the bottom up. Where the local government as the main actors are regarded to be the decision-makers who are responsible for formulating an efficient statute which suits the kind of existing problem. This is an effort to level of efficiency and a minimization of the number of involved actors. However, in private schools, the Yayasan is involved

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in the planning process as the private institutions that owned and supervised the schools. So, the local government, Kesra, education department, and Yayasan has their own intake in a top-down process of implementing Islamic education to schools.

Regarding the private schools, namely Islamic boarding and Pesantren being such a phenomenon fulfilling the need of parents on providing their children in Islamic education. The idea of Islamic education in a decentralized system in West Sumatra make these schools involved in education market offering intensive subjects of Islam to attract both parents and students. Referred to Forsberg′ study about school choice and schools' responses states that the market can be constructed through the offer of different programs in schools and profiles themselves of schools. So, by selling the Islamic values, it attracts the parents to go to private schools instead. We have discussed the complexity of attributing changes in madrasa management outcomes to changes by the law application. Evaluating the impact of the ongoing law are conducted ex-post-facto study design. This work explains the need for indicators to measure relevant outcomes of concern and instruments to support inferences about the extent to which law under evaluation has caused any change in the measured outcomes. Indicators depend on the specific problems of concern to the Indonesian government. However, the best indicators will generally be those that measure the ultimate problem the law was intended to solve. Measuring indicators for evaluating the law and reporting several indicators that can be utilized to measure outcomes, which able to inform the Legislative Assembly of a revised framework.

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