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Madrasa (Islamic School): A Study of Regional Autonomy Laws in Era of Globalization

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Abstract

Differences in local government treatment of Madrasa that occur due to regional autonomy are due to different perspectives. The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the implementation of education policies on madrasa with the existence of regional autonomy in Serang and Pandeglang Regencies, Banten, Indonesia in terms of cultural aspects and educational management. This research uses the main source of the data is library and field research on the impacts arising from the implementation of the policy of the act on autonomy madrasa, through observation, observation, and interviews. Furthermore, the data is read, studied, and developed within the framework of the analysis of historical and ethnographic approach, because the author intends to explore the emergence of regional autonomy laws. While the ethnographic approach was used to identify the various activities and thoughts on the environment madrasa community both culturally and structurally. The results showed that there was no difference in curriculum between madrasa and schools under local government. The positive thing about regional autonomy is the emergence of superior madrasas, exemplary madrasas, regular and vocational madrasas. The negative aspect of the regional autonomy policy is the difficulty in improving the quality of madrasa institutions, funding, and education personnel. The explicit rules are needed regarding the understanding of

discriminatory decentralization policies, especially in madrasa and other educational institutions.

Keywords: autonomy laws, globalization era, madrasa

INTRODUCTION

The regional autonomy law is indeed not aimed at madrasa (Islamic school) institutions as, to date, *madrasa* has been preserved centralization form following law number 32 of 2004 on regional government in article 10 paragraph 3 letter f, it is stated that one of the concerns that cannot be decentralized to the regions is “religious” matters (Republic of Indonesia, 2004). Even so, the regional autonomy law, especially autonomy in education in its implementation, indirectly affects the *madrasa* institutions’ problem complexity since madrasa is viewed as an awry and disfavored institution in the Indonesian state, which in fact, the vast majority of the population is Muslim. Furthermore, with the context expressed in the aforementioned regional government autonomy law, *madrasa* appears to be divided into two parts: the first is the madrasa’s physical institution as the meaning of education whose authority lies in the regional government (Ishomuddin & Mokhtar, 2017). Meanwhile, based on science (religion), madrasa’s authority is drawn from the central government. The positive impact can be discerned by madrasa institutions if only the two governments (central and regional) have agreed to make serious efforts to develop and improve the madrasa institution. Nevertheless, the reality is the opposite of the expectation. The Islamic educational institutions should make a transformation from modest to modern in this digital era (Mansir et al., 2020). Both governments have different interpretations. The central government perceives that a *madrasa* is a form of an educational institution under the autonomous region and the right to manage is handed into the regional government, whereas based on its science (religion), the regional government believes that the management of the religious sector is the authority of the central government (Ma, 2009).

The practices in Serang and Pandeglang Districts showed discrimination in understanding among regional heads, such as different attentions given to *madrasa* institutions and public education institutions, resulting in slower improvement in *madrasa* quality from the institutional, funding, and personnel aspects. *Madrasa* appears to have developed merely in terms of quantity, not from its quality (Syar’i et al., 2020). Concurrently, as in other autonomous regions in Indonesia, regional autonomy laws in their implementation

are interpreted differently in each region and encounter regional desire to gain freedom (Vergamini et al., 2019). The desire is merged with the political interests of the region. This specific condition further initiates regional autonomy, which is the understanding in which the autonomous region belongs to the region's men and women only. Although at first the issue was raised to smooth the political goals of regional officials to get a particular position without having to involve competitively, this issue is now used as a motive to obtain head or manager of *madrasa* through lobbying among local officials (Singh, 2019).

As a concept, decentralization is the transfer of authority and responsibility of public functions from the central government to subordinate or quasi-independent government organizations (Litvack & Seddon, 1999). Meanwhile, Turner and Hulme (1997) argue that decentralization within a country includes a transfer of authority to perform some service to the public from an individual or an agency in central government to some other individual or agency, which is 'closer to the public to be served. Thus, decentralization is interrelated with the relationship between the central government and local governments, both in political and socio-economic aspects. In other words, decentralization emerging in most countries has been driven more by political and economic reasons. The political considerations of the decentralization need in several countries (Al-Saidi, 2020). The decentralization as part of the democratization process in which the autocratic regime was replaced by a government elected by the people based on a new constitution. In Africa, the proliferation of multi-party-political systems resulted in demands to accommodate people's voices in decision-making. Meanwhile, in some countries such as Ethiopia, decentralization was pursued in response to demands from regions or ethnic groups for greater control over participation in the political process. In a more extreme form, decentralization represented a serious effort so that a country can better manage various pressures and demands by granting greater autonomy (Lee & Edmondson, 2017).

Though based on de jure regional autonomy law does not regulate *madrasa* education, which, in this case, is under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion, yet in de facto, the local government also takes part in regulating *madrasa* education, especially in the recruitment of educational and non-educational personnel (Estriyanto et al., 2017). Although the regional autonomy law was responded to positively initially by *madrasa* education managers, the indicator is marked by the start of *madrasa's* growth to make meaningful changes. However, in reality, the changes arising are only perceived as a mere existence by following the modern space provided by public educational institutions. Based on the explanation above, the author's concerns are not overstated because this fact is found from the

development of madrasa institutions in Serang and Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province. Those institutions began to understand the Regional Autonomy Law in a more restricted line, which is the emergence of regional attitudes that can weaken their creativity and competitiveness. According to the author, this attitude can be the reason for the stagnation of progress and development of *madrasa* institutions, which also means that the perspective of the community in *madrasa* institutions is no longer objective a positive, independent, and open values as one of the characteristics of modern Islamic education.

Given the problem identification above and considering the complexity of the problems found in *madrasa* institutions, especially in the emergence of Regional Autonomy Law, the main problem is how the impact of education policy implementation in the emergence of regional autonomy on a *madrasa* in Serang and Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province viewed from the cultural aspects as well as the structure and mechanism of the educational preparation and management in institutions, curriculum, and educational personnel and teachers. Departing from the authors' opinion, those three aspects are sufficient to become a benchmark for the development, existence, and improvement of *madrasa* educational institutions' quality.

METHOD

General Background

This research study's object is the impact of the education policy implementation in the emergence of regional autonomy at *madrasa* institutions in the Serang and Pandeglang Regencies, especially in the institutional, funding, and personnel aspects. Meanwhile, this study is qualitative research. The data collection techniques used documentary and field analysis methods with an ethnographic approach that is historical analysis, who has stated that ethnography aims to understand the perspective of the native population and its connection with life to obtain their views about this world (Adair & Kurban, 2019).

Participant

This study's source was conducted to the two models of *madrasa* educational institutions: independent *madrasa* (*madrasa* disassociated to *pesantren*/public *madrasa*) and *madrasa* associated with *pesantren* (private *madrasa*). Authors attempted to collect data, which are from personal experience during the assignment at *madrasa* institutions from 1993 to 2009, direct and intensive in-depth interviews with the Section Head of the Madrasa Education at Regency/City level, *madrasa* supervisors, institution managers, educational

personnel, and teachers (confidential informants' identities), in the state *madrasa* institutions and private madrasa institutions in Serang Regency and Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province.

Instrumen dan Prosedur Penelitian

The data source is primary data obtained from field data in the form of field information, both direct and intensive interviews through participant observation of action research and documentation study of two models of madrasa institutions (Hakim, 2020). The author researched Islamic boarding schools and public madrasa, by becoming a teacher there, so that he knows the problems that occur as a result of the regional autonomy policy. Instrument questions about curriculum, curriculum similarities, and differences, then Madrasa management related to financing, opportunities for teachers to develop themselves, challenges and obstacles faced. This question is asked during in-depth interviews, or in small discussion discussions after teaching in class. In-depth interviews were conducted with the head of the pesantren board, the head of the madrasa, the deputy head of the madrasa, and 7 teachers, and 10 ustadzah in the pesantren. Meanwhile, secondary data is enriched by developing literature in the form of books, articles, journals, magazines, or other writings from previous research related to this research, meaning that the field data obtained is a form of empirical data to strengthen the theory of previous research.

Data analysis technique

The study analysis began by considering the field data obtained through experience in the form of observations and interview results with the management of *madrasa* educational institutions, education personnel, and teachers (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). So, it was determined that this study's objects are two models of *madrasa* institutions mentioned above. The condition of the *madrasa* educational institutions in two different models in Serang Regency and Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province is appended to various reference sources as secondary data that are closely related to the above studies, such as relevant books, journals, articles, or writings and are approved so that data and accurate information about the final result of a study can be found.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Position of *Madrasa* in the emergence of Regional Autonomy

The fundamental problem is that, on one side, *madrasa* is given state recognition of its existence in the education system (primarily related to curriculum content), however physically, there are differences in institutions (especially on the management aspect). It implies that the *madrasa's* centralization, currently in effect, is an anomaly of decentralization and autonomy enthusiasm. Conscious or not, the context of centralization impacts *madrasa's* existence under the authority of the Ministry of Religion, which has affected the condition and development of *madrasa*. In other words, in textual, the regional autonomy law does not influence the condition and development of *madrasa* in the regions, but contextually the regional autonomy law indirectly affects the condition and development of *madrasa* in the regions. This influence will be visible when compared with public schools under the Ministry of Education and Culture. Given the policy on government allocation and funding subsidies per capita for *madrasa* and public-school students, this discrimination is astounding (Newell et al., 2019). In Serang Regency and Pandeglang Regency, the institutional conditions of *madrasa* are poor compared to public education institutions, for example, the marginalized location of the *madrasa*, while other general public education institutions are located in a strategic place with proper road access, such as SMA Ciruas Serang Regency. It is located right in front of the District Office and facing the main road, while MAN 1 Kragilan (now MAN 1 Serang) is farther from the main road, so students have to use public transportation or motorcycle to reach the school. The same thing applies to a *madrasa* in Pandeglang Regency.

In more detail, Suwito expresses that *madrasa*, as Islamic educational institutions, also continue developing, but the development is quite exclusive, in which accentuation of religious knowledge (Islam) is the priority. It causes the development of *madrasa* to only occurs in the Islamic community. The proliferations carried out are only seen in rural areas, whereas it is scarce to be found in urban areas. So, it simultaneously triggers the slow development of *madrasa*. *Madrasa* appears to be distant from the betterment of the education system, whether in institutional or in a system of the learning process (Hasibuan et al., 2020). However, the implementation of Islamic education in regions still encounters discrimination from the local government. It is mainly due to the local government's incomplete understanding of the terms "education" and "religion" written in the two laws. Thus, there are many partial interpretations that local governments' authority only includes education under the auspices of the Ministry of National Education. Meanwhile, education under the Ministry of Religion's auspices in the form of *madrasa* and other religion-based schools has not been widely accepted as part of education. With the enactment of the regional autonomy law,

explicitly the implementation of education is no longer only ⁴ the responsibility of the central government but also the responsibility of local governments, both in the context of guidance and in the context of education funding (Gray & Barford, 2018).

In the context of regional autonomy implementation, education requires a financing pattern that does not discriminate and must reflect a sense of justice. This condition can be achieved by employing cross-subsidization, cooperation, block grants, and the application of contextual subsidization. Cross subsidization must be administered by the central government to avoid gaps between schools (*madrasa*) in poor and affluent areas (Cristina, & Ticiu, 2012). Cooperation ⁴ can be carried out by central and local governments to encourage the development and improvement of central and local government excellence programs. Block grants can be provided by central and local governments to improve the quality of programs assumed to have further development prospects through competition. The implementation of autonomy of education is in line with the implementation of regional autonomy based on Law no. 32 of 2004 on regional administration, especially concerning education funding and financing. Per this law, the primary and secondary education management policies are the local government's responsibility, which was previously only primary education under the local government's auspices; in this case, is the National Education Office.

The local government assumed that those were not their duties, while the central government was constrained by the red tape process. Besides, discrimination also occurred in the local community culture (horizontal discrimination). As previously mentioned, the vast majority of the Banten Province community has a powerful kinship or "Baraya" culture, which directly affects the development of *madrasa* that is only at the level of quantity and has not covered quality yet. This context is understandable as *madrasa* institutions are indirectly contaminated by the political interest of several regional officials. To put it into words, for example, if a *madrasa* institution is piloted by a sibling or other family member of one of the authorized officials, the mindset will focus on the regional context, which is only to smooth personal political goals. As aforementioned in the problematic aspects of education, the condition of educational personnel is a product of unqualified educational personnel. Meanwhile, it is more miserable in private *madrasa* institutions, such as the intimate "familiarity" attitude of the founders and managers of the *madrasa*. It is also the factor why *madrasa* does not grow at the level of quality but quantity.

The Implementation of Regional Autonomy in *Madrasa* and Quality of Education

In nature, especially Islamic education institutions in Indonesia face countless problems and gaps in numerous aspects and are also very complex (Hasan, 2012). In general, these aspects can be classified into three parts: institutional aspects, curriculum aspects, and personnel competency aspects. It is worth noting that the model of *madrasa* education institutions in Indonesian legislation at the level of regency or city raises dualism in the Indonesian education system. The dualism of education in Indonesia has become a matter that has yet to be resolved. This dualism is not only related to the teaching system but also science. A narrow mindset tends to open the distance between the Islamic sciences and general sciences. It appears that there is Islamic science and non-Islamic science. Nevertheless, modern Islamic education experts have attempted to eliminate or abolish this dichotomy concept for a long time and tried to fuse both concepts. In the institutional aspect, Islamic education cannot rely on public education institutions alone because the religion subject portion in public schools is too small. The only attempt that can be done is the improvement in *madrasa* educational institutions, *pesantren* or Islamic schools, such as integrated Islamic schools, educational institutions managed by Muhammadiyah, *Ma'arif* (Nahdatul Ulama Organization), and so forth because the formal educational institution is the environment that allows individual to enrich knowledge and is the most effortless place to build the younger generation that will be carried out hand in hand by government and society (Rodríguez-Triana et al., 2020).

The infrastructure and facilities

The practice in the field proves that Islamic education institutions, especially *madrasa*, are educational institutions that accommodate social, cultural, and religious aspirations of the Indonesian Muslim community who have lived for a long time and are culturally rooted in the historical context of education in Indonesia which in the present still exhibits dichotomy system (Amali, 2019). The pattern of educational-institutional development conducted by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs shows dualism in its educational policies, so this pattern contains various problems. The problems arising are related to this matter – the government encounters difficulties providing optimum services and guidance for *madrasa*. It is shown by the number of abandoned *madrasa* and those who are prone to such mistreatment. “*This madrasa building has been severely damaged. If you ask for help from the Central Ministry of Religion, it will take time, to the local government, you will bump into the regional autonomy policy*” (participant 1)

It was discovered that as many as 1,245 *madrasa* buildings in Banten Province were in a damaged condition. Of these figures, 725 *madrasas* were severely damaged, and 520 *madrasa* buildings were slightly damaged. One of the main problems is that the budget allocated for repairing *madrasa* is too minimum. It was expressed by Machdum Bachtiar as a Division Head of the Madrasa Education, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of Banten Province. According to him, there were 3,364 units of *madrasa* institutions in Banten Province, consisting of various education levels, including public educational institutions (*madrasa*) and private educational institutions (*madrasa*). Meanwhile, the annual budget for *madrasa* is minimal compared to the number of *madrasas* in Banten Province. Funds allocated are approximately Rp 200,000,000 to Rp 300,000,000 for physical institutions. Furthermore, in his interview with Radar Banten journalist, Machdum Bachtiar, it was revealed in detail the number of *madrasas* that was severely damaged included 200 *madrasa* buildings for *Raudlatul Athfal* (RA) schools, 250 *Madrasa Ibtidaiyah* (MI) units managed by foundations (private), 200 units of private *Madrasa Tsanawiyah* (MTs) were severely damaged, and around 75 private *Madrasa Aliyah* buildings shared similar conditions to other *madrasa* institutions. Furthermore, the number of students attending the *madrasa* reached 355,076 students.

Even though aid was provided for repairing, the amount maximally reached Rp 20 million to Rp 30 million with *madrasa* receiving aid fund every year was only appointed to three to five *madrasa* institutions. On the contrary, there were 520 *madrasa* buildings in Banten Province with minor damage, with details of 75 RA *madrasa* buildings, 125 private *Madrasa Ibtidaiyah* (MI) buildings and five public MI buildings, 250 private *Madrasa Tsanawiyah* buildings and ten public MTs buildings, 50 private *Madrasa Aliyah* (MA) buildings and five public MA buildings. Machdum states that the responsibility for assisting *madrasa* institutions should not only be borne by the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of Banten Province alone. The local government should have helped through the grant mechanism (Mao, 2011). However, the local government's attention was still inadequate, and according to him, it might be because the local government assumed that the affairs encountered by *madrasa* institutions were ¹⁵ the authority of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The Curriculum

The general condition in Banten Province institutionally has been illustrated in the *madrasa* education institutions in Serang and Pandeglang Regencies. It means that *madrasa*

institutions, especially those private institutions with such an inadequate state, are difficult to pursue the quality of education optimally, and they will take time and effort to solve this problem. To create quality education, all education components must be of high quality. Among those essential components to achieve quality education is the curriculum of *the madrasa* (Sali & Marasigan, 2020). Ideally, the curriculum in *madrasa* educational institutions is designed independently by *madrasa* as a guide or reference in creating a quality education process according to *madrasa's* vision and mission (Afista & Bakar, 2021). This notion can be comprehended for the curriculum as a general description (miniature) of an educational process with quality good quality learning outcomes cannot be obtained without the presence of a curriculum (Yang et al., 2019).

The impact of the juxtaposition of *madrasa* institutions with public schools, which is the decreasing content of religious education from 60% religion and 40% general to 30% religion and 70% general, is experienced as a challenge that weakens the existence of Islamic education, which in turn raises new problems. The reduced content of religious material is understood as a form of silting understanding of religion because the previous content of the religious curriculum cannot produce noble Muslims, let alone the reduced content (Walker et al., 2021). Likewise, graduates of *madrasa* institutions are still considered unprepared and have an inadequate capacity of their religious knowledge, while their general knowledge does not show any excellence level. Moreover, the regional autonomy law policy cannot build an independent attitude towards the *madrasa* institution's curriculum. As in reality, *madrasa* educational institutions tend to follow the flow of general education institutions, such as the arrangement of excellent classes that only measure the cognitive context in the form of numbers or the use of curriculum with similar content or parallel to general education institutions.

Those conditions occur not only in state *madrasa* education institutions but also in private *madrasa* institutions, which have broader authority. They also use a similar curriculum. Even at the regency/city level, several *pesantren* institutions design general education institutions. The reason is that local governments' attention, especially in funding assistance, is quite considerable or on the basis that religious and general sciences are one unit. Even, in reality, the curriculum content is still differentiated. At the regency/city level, several leading or model *madrasa* institutions have begun to lose direction in building quality because they focus more on cognitive and sophisticated facilities and infrastructure. They build rivalry with public education institutions, so *madrasa* educational institutions are no

different from public education institutions, though still with a different quality (Ismail et al., 2021).

This condition represents that the curriculum of Islamic educational institutions, such as *madrasa*, is in an urgent state. It must follow the *pesantren* curriculum with the risk of being left behind or adjust to the public education curriculum to gradually lose its existence as a religious educational institution (Srimulyani, 2013). Because in nature, public educational institutions focus more on quantitative rather than qualitative criteria. Recently, some *madrasa* educational institutions no longer offered excellent classes, for example, MAN 1 Cieked Pandeglang and MAN 1 Kragilan, Serang Regency. The principal's reason was due to the large cost borne by schools, unprepared educational personnel, and inadequate class conditions. The term 'model' often used by *madrasa* institutions in these two regencies is now eliminated, even though the signboards still display the MAN model, MTS model, and MI model. When the principals were asked, they stated that they no longer used the term due to an equal position between public education institutions and religious institutions. The principal's personality, and teachers 'job satisfaction can shape the pattern of students' achievement (Purnomo et al., 2020). Given this reason, as public education institutions do not use the term, *madrasa* educational institutions also no longer use it. Thus, *madrasa* in curriculum and institutions must adapt to public education institutions.

Workforce Management

Furthermore, workforce management in *madrasa* educational institutions, to date, has experienced problematic issues. Reform in education management indeed refers to creating decentralized conditions, whether in the bureaucracy or the management of *madrasa* institutions. This reform is manifested in *madrasa* institutions' broad authority at the regency/city level in managing various sources (Putri et al., 2020). It includes teachers and education personnel. The managers or principals must manage this workforce in the analysis of needs, planning, recruitment and development, rewards and punishments, work relations, and even evaluate the performance of *madrasa* employees, such as teachers, administrative staff, and so on. The teacher tasks are not only formal but also their spiritual tasks can shape students' critical thinking abilities (Karim & Hartati, 2020). All of these tasks can be done by managers or principals, except the matter of payments/fees for services and teacher recruitment, primarily public *madrasa* institutions are still handled by the bureaucracy above

them (Fındıklı, 2020). At the regency/city level, in particular, the Serang Regency and Pandeglang Regency, conditions of recruitment and payments/fees are also handled by the bureaucracy above, in this case, is the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of at Regency/City level. Even though religion is not decentralized but politically, the local government's intervention is very dominant since the location of the madrasa institutions within its authority.

As explained before, in general, the understanding of the decentralization law is the transfer of power from the center to the regions completely, which in turn, the law indicates that regional authority is owned by local's men and women, though sometimes it appeared compelling. Based on observation, this context became a problem in the development of *madrasa* educational institutions because teachers and educational personnel coming outside the Banten region were not entirely devoted to building *madrasa* in Banten Province, or worse, their goal was only to earn money because they felt less appreciated for their differences. In consequence, men and women of Banten had no power to be involved (Yuliarini et al., 2012). They assumed that they could still occupy certain positions without having to work hard or being a devoted person. Thus, to achieve the criteria, they obtained a specific diploma from the institution that issues certificates without breaking a sweat to attend lectures to occupy the position. Whether we realize it or not, the narrow understanding of the Regional Autonomy Law will, in the long term, create a fragile generation and build unhealthy competition at the regency/city level and even at the provincial level. The interview results with several teachers and educational personnel in Serang and Pandeglang regencies indicate this phenomenon. The most frequent answer by participants is, "you do not have to break a sweat to build this *madrasa* because, in reality, we are less appreciated by the local government. It is better to earn more money to build our city. We can go back home after retiring."

Meanwhile, teachers and educational personnel also expressed shocking answers when asked if the requirements to become school principals must obtain a master's degree (Ahammad, 2017). The school principal must also be able to have the managerial leadership roles (Karim, Faiz, et al., 2020; Karim, Mansir, et al., 2020). They answered, it will not be the case; many universities provide a long-distance master program; what is more important that as native people of Banten, we must become leaders in many institutions, including educational institutions, and the employee can be filled with other people coming outside Banten. According to the authors, this situation must be the concern of all Indonesian people, even the Banten Provincial government. Many Banten people think nationally and even

internationally. The concept of Banten's men and women arises due to political influence, which in turn becomes diseases of a society that will divide the development in this province. It would be more dangerous if this concept of local and outsider's men and women is perceived as a defense by the community because they are reluctant to compete, or it is difficult to occupy a particular position. This context, according to the authors, should be the concern, especially in *madrasa* educational institutions. It means that this concept must be abolished at the level of *madrasa* management, and the central government must begin to review the Regional Autonomy Law. Thus, it is not narrowly comprehended in its implementation, especially at educational institutions, for example, public and religious education institutions. The workforce percentage can be arranged in such a way that 60% of staff are locals and 40% non-locals.

Management of facilities should also be carried out by *madrasa* educational institutions from procurement, maintenance, and repair, and even development because managers are individuals who know and understand the needs of the institutions, either in terms of adequacy, suitability, or sophistication, particularly facilities that are closely related to the learning process (Irmayani et al., 2018). In general, public *madrasa* institutions, whether funding, personnel, or facilities, are fulfilled by the government, but not with private *madrasa* institutions, which do not receive the same facilities as public *madrasa* or other public education institutions.¹⁵⁶ The lack of facilities provided by *madrasa* educational institutions compared with public education institutions should stimulate *madrasa* principals to conduct a strategy as a form of management breakthrough that can fulfill their needs, such as the financial management, which means that the use of funds should be carried out by managers/principals transparently and responsibly. It is based on the assumption that the *madrasa* institutions best understand their needs so that the decentralization of the allocation/use of funds should be delegated to *madrasa* institutions. Besides, they must also be given the freedom to carry out activities that create income/sources of funds, so that *madrasa* institutions do not always depend on government assistance. Furthermore, the student service strategy, starting from the admission of new students, training, mentoring, placement to development to continue to higher education or entering the work field and as service to alumni, has been decentralized since years ago. Therefore, the focus now is to increase the intensity and extensibility of the *madrasa* institutional partnership with the community, and the more fundamental is the abolishment of discrimination in educational institutions, especially educational institutions with a religious environment, such as *madrasa*.

The partnership relationship between educational institutions and the community is perceived as a form of increasing involvement, care, ownership, and support from the community, especially in the form of moral and financial support. The relationship between *madrasa* educational institutions and the community is already noticeable. As written in history that most *madrasa* educational institutions were built by non-governmental organizations, even now it continues. The tradition and culture as one of the factors that are can support the moral education (Parinduri et al., 2020). However, this support is not accompanied by a high-quality *madrasa* institution. *Madrasa* educational institutions are considered underdeveloped, although it is morally recognized or does not have its advantages. In terms of absorption in the work field, in particular, it also is considered under average (Bakar, 2017). This issue is a concern for all *madrasa* members. From the various problems faced by *madrasa* educational institutions, several alternative solutions can be implemented; for example, all components of *madrasa* institutions with related parties focus more on considering the educational support facilities required by students. Second, designing a recruitment pattern for teachers and educational personnel to provide staff who meet standards, qualifications, and competencies in the field of education. Third, overcoming the funding problem, it appears that cross-subsidization can be implemented. It is better if developed *madrasa* institutions assist underdeveloped *madrasa* institutions (Priatna, 2020). Fourth, narrowing the dichotomy gaps between public education institutions and *madrasa* educational institutions, in the form of understanding and partnerships between institutions and community leaders within the *madrasa* institution. Fifth, to provide broad opportunities for the community to place themselves, their roles, and participation in the implementation of education as a whole, not based on race, ethnicity, or specific groups, but within the framework of national and state unity.

Therefore, concerning the management of *madrasa* institutions with the Ministry of Religious Affairs' involvement, ⁴ the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and local governments in the framework of regional autonomy, regardless of the form of administration, must maintain the assurance of *madrasa* identity. The identity of the *madrasa* institution with its unique characteristics can only be guaranteed by recognizing institutional autonomy. The autonomy of *madrasa* educational institutions can only be maintained if *madrasa* maintains their principle as community-based education, leading to *madrasa* autonomy as institutions (Roy et al., 2020). It means that any changes and forms that will be carried out, all forms of policies in developing and improving *madrasa* institutions must accommodate at least three interests; firstly, how a policy should provide opportunities

to grow naturally as the aspirations of Muslims, in another sense, making *madrasa* institutions as a forum for fostering and developing the Islamic values, theoretically and practically. *Secondly*, how the policy clarifies and strengthens *madrasa* institutions' existence to foster intelligent, knowledgeable, productive citizens who are equal to the school education system. *Thirdly*, how a policy enables *madrasa* institutions to respond to future demands. Therefore, *madrasa* institutions must be directed to become institutions capable of producing human resources that are ready to be involved in the era of globalization, industrialization, and information (Neilson et al., 2020).

Regional autonomy opens a new paradigm of education towards changes, top-down policies towards bottom-up policies, partial development orientation of education towards holistic development orientation of education for the sake of development to unite in plural cultures. The role of government is very dominant in increasing the role of society qualitatively and quantitatively. The context of ¹⁴the integration of *madrasa* institutions into the national education system opens a new paradigm for the administration of *madrasa*, which means that there is no more discrimination against *madrasa* institutions in terms of financing, improving human resources, and the quality of education. Although on the other hand, *madrasa* institutions must also carry their culture and characteristics as an institution created from an autonomous education community (Nursikin & Nugroho, 2020). It provides *madrasa* educational institutions towards independence and empowerment within the framework of Islam and society. However, all demand responsibility from themselves along with society. Given this reason, it is inappropriate for us to always blame the bureaucracy or the government as one of the obstacles to *madrasa* institutions' progress (Fukuyama, 2018).

Based on the ideas of education experts aforementioned, in the emergence of educational autonomy, several aspects must be completed to develop and improve *madrasa* institutions' quality. First, accommodating input and criticism from stakeholders and entrusting them to have actively participated in the implementation of *madrasa* education. Second, *madrasa* institutions should be inclusive and universal institutions that can eliminate dichotomy issues overshadowing *madrasa*. It implies that *madrasa* institutions should accept scientific integration more openly according to their students' choices and interests. Third, *madrasa* institutions must be responsive to the community's various changes and needs, especially those related to the fieldwork. Based on this reason, *madrasa* institutions must be able to become a link and match to provide well-prepared graduates to work with a strong foundation of religious values. This condition requires adequate facilities and infrastructure as well as a long process. For this reason, effective and efficient standards must be used in the

educational process. Several alternatives are offered, at the minimum, thoughtfulness is needed, and no less critical is a cooperation of solid teamwork, and it upholds strong and is rooted back to Islamic values. Thus, all forms of ethnic, cultural, and class differences must be merged by prioritizing an open mind, prudence, politeness, and so on, as those are the noble values of Islamic teachings, as shown by the Prophet Muhammad.

According to the authors' opinion, any form of change and development of *madrasa* educational institutions, if harmed by a mindset that intends to divide human beings, will be the factor that divides human beings. As time goes by, the rivalry among *madrasa* educational institutions becomes unhealthy. Besides, it does not rule out the discrimination of society or social division; it will become a disease that weakens some individuals' performance. Even though we understand in the context of Islamic teachings, the noble values of Islamic teachings lie in the Ummah's (community) unity and integrity (Aji et al., 2020). Various things can be done by Muslims when they are united. In historical records, many wars were won, the consensus was carried out, and substantial changes were the points of pride. All these historical facts were achieved by building Muslim unity. Therefore, the main goal is regional autonomy law, especially in the education context. At the implementation level, it creates thoughts that divide society only from the place when one was born. It is unfair and contradicted from the meaning of the autonomy law itself, where the core of the policy of the regional autonomy law is the independence of the autonomous region, not in the sense of autonomous regional freedom. A discriminatory perception hinders people from the nation's noble value, which is the desire to unite the country. Particularly when viewed from a global Islamic perspective, the context of Islamic teachings is not only for the nation's integrity but also beyond the integrity of humankind. It means that *madrasa* educational institutions are educational institutions whose point of view is in line with Islamic teachings worldwide, and all *madrasa* components must prohibit all forms of differences and open themselves to any kind of change with the ultimate goal of unity and peace for humankind. Given this context, *madrasa* institutions should be free from discriminatory and closed-minded perceptions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the field of *madrasa* education management, the curriculum is not much different because the curriculum has been determined by the central government, but *madrasa* has additional religious subjects. The positive impact of regional autonomy is the emergence of the superior *madrasa*, exemplary *madrasa*, regular and vocational *madrasa*. The negative

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impact of the regional autonomy policy is the difficulty in improving the quality of madrasa institutions, funding, and personnel for education and education. There need to be explicit rules regarding the understanding of discriminatory decentralization policies, especially in madrasa and social institutions. Madrasa educational institutions must universally accommodate the differences of opinion of each individual or group.

Research limitations

This ethnographic research was carried out in a limited manner, by examining what happened in public madrasa and pesantren regarding the impact of regional autonomy, although it had not looked in-depth about the impact that occurred in public schools. For future research, also conduct in-depth studies of being a teacher in public schools, so that it will be clearer to see differences in the treatment of local governments due to regional autonomy policies between Madrasas and public schools.

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