THE EXISTENCE AND CONTINUITY OF MADRASAH DINIYAH AWALIYAH (MDA) IN THE MIDST OF POPULARITY INTEGRATED ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

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Abstract.
The popularity of integrated Islamic schools has resulted in the dim existence of MDA and considering it as an educational development, of course, it has a positive impact and a negative impact, especially it can make the purpose and orientation of Islamic education may not be achieved. This study aims to determine the existence and continuity of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah (MDA) in the midst of the popularity of integrated Islamic schools today from a socio-economic perspective and an educational perspective. This research uses a qualitative method with a literature and field study approach. With collection techniques namely interviews, observation, and documentation. This research was conducted at SDIT Hikmatul Fadhillah, SDIT An-Nizam Medan, and MDA Al-Ikhlas. The results of this study indicate that from a socio-economic perspective, those who attend MDA are lower economic families while those who attend SDIT are upper economic families. Then MDA tends to classical religious learning, this must keep up with the times and technology and increase the creativity of MDA, while the existence of SDIT has adapted to technological advances. This research is expected to contribute to government managers as reference material in making educational policies and improvements to the implementation of education.

A. INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions in Indonesia generally consist of three, namely pesantren, schools, and madrasah. Pesantren is the first educational institution in Indonesia that has been known since the time of the Wali Songo (Abdurrahman, 2020). Pesantren is an Islamic-based educational institution that has the concept of dormitory or living in a boarding school environment. In general, pesantren have five elements: kyai, santri, hut, mosque, and the teaching of the yellowclassical books (kitab kuning) (Susilo & Wulansari, 2020). Then the second educational institution is school. Schools are educational institutions that emphasize learning general sciences, there are indeed religious lessons, but religious learning is not the main focus. Meanwhile, madrasah is an educational institution that bridges between pesantren and schools. Although madrasas are Islamic religious educational institutions,
learning in madrasas balances between Islamic religious studies and general studies (Hisyamuddin et al., 2022).

The existence of madrasah (the focus of study) has a long history, its existence began in the 20th century. The emergence of madrasahs was due to the spirit of educational reform influenced by Middle Eastern Islam and was a response to the education policy of the Dutch East Indies government which had developed education with a school system first (Hisyamuddin et al., 2022). The existence of madrasahs from time to time is increasingly recognized by the government and society. Madrasahs have their own characteristics in terms of various aspects. Madrasahs always follow the development of the times so that they give rise to madrasah models with all their peculiarities. Even the government began to pay attention to the development of madrasas by providing recognition and facilities for madrasas (Rusdiana & Kodir, 2022).

Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah (MDA) is an Islamic educational institution that historically cannot be doubted in its experience in educating the Indonesian people, especially Muslims. In terms of age, MDA is an Islamic religious education institution that is quite mature in teaching and educating Muslims about Islamic religious issues (Riza, 2019). MDA is a pioneer of educational institutions in Indonesia, because the forerunner of educational institutions in Indonesia began with MDA. In the next stage, there was unrest in some Muslims, because madrasahs only studied religious knowledge, so they had the impression that Muslims experienced lameness in science (Hakim & Muis, 2023). Madrasahs have an image that is far from modernity, because they do not study general sciences that are needed by the times.

Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah is one of the Islamic religious education institutions outside of formal education which is organized in a structured and tiered manner as a complement to the implementation of religious education. In this educational institution, students who study in general formal education institutions (SD/MI, SMP/MTs, and SMA/SMK or equivalent) can add and deepen their knowledge of Islamic religion. But this institution remains open to anyone of primary and secondary education age who is interested, even though they have not had the opportunity to attend education in formal institutions (RI, 2014).

This non-formal religious education is organized and managed programmatically. Its pioneering, growth and development are carried out by the community, so that the regulatory provisions made by the Government must still accommodate various forms of innovation from the organizing community by paying attention to the needs, advantages and peculiarities of each (Rahmadani et al., 2021).

From the above understanding, it can be concluded that Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah (MDA) is a religious education institution on the out-of-school path that is expected to be able to continuously provide Islamic religious
education to students with complete material, namely fiqh, tafsir, tawhid and other religious sciences in a classical manner totaling 10 or more people, including children aged 7 (seven) to 18 (eighteen) years.

Madrasah diniyah plays an important role in teaching deeper Islamic values, such as Fiqh which teaches about the laws of sharia in the practice of worship. Akhlak teaches about how to maintain speech and behavior in social life, as well as several other lessons such as Tawhid, Hadith and Tafsir which will also be very beneficial for each person who understands it. This is what every parent needs to understand that important education is not only about general knowledge that can be obtained in formal schools, but also needs to be balanced with religious values so that the knowledge obtained can be used for the benefit of the wider community (Azimah & Setiawan, 2023).

However, in the midst of the rigors of life in this globalized era, with fierce job competition and the increasing demands of the millennial age, many parents feel anxious about the future of their children. They want their children to not only be able to compete and adapt to the dynamics of the fast-developing modern world, but also maintain firmness in religious values. While madrasas have characteristics that can fulfill parents' expectations in the religious aspect, the challenge of facing competition in the modern world remains an issue that has not been fully resolved. (Lubis et al., 2022).

To overcome this problem, an integrated Islamic school was established that combines public school learning with Islamic religious learning. Therefore, the learning time in integrated Islamic schools is longer than in regular schools. Integrated Islamic School is an educational institution that integrates two forms of education that have been separated, namely between Islamic education and general education (Amalia & Mahariah, 2023). The two forms of education are united in a typical curriculum framework of the Integrated Islamic School Network, the curriculum that has been integrated aims to foster student character or akhlakul karimah and competence, as well as student skills (Kurniawan & Ariza, 2020).

Integrated Islamic schools also have an intertwined curriculum resulting from the unification of general education and religious education, where so far the dichotomy of the curriculum has become a major problem for Islamic education in Indonesia. Integrated Islamic schools always try to implement the concept of education based on the two main sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. As stated by the Prophet Muhammad in a narration (Malik, 2016) as follows.

وَحَدَّثَنِي عَنْ مَالِك أَنَّهُ بَلَغَهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ: تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةَ نَبِيِّهِ

Meaning: Malik reported to me that the Messenger of Allah said: I have left you two things from which you will not go astray as long as you hold fast to them: the Book of
Based on the Hadith, it can be understood that by upholding the Qur’an and Hadith as guidelines in all aspects of life, the things we do will be in accordance with Islamic law. These two sources are also the guidelines in instilling Islamic values, strengthening Islamic material, and fostering good character in integrated Islamic schools. (Ismae & Iswantir, 2022).

With the birth of an integrated concept as a science, and the development of student character based on Islamic teachings, in the end it also gave birth to a new hope, that students not only master Islamic sciences, but Islamic teachings become the basis for the behavior of each student in everyday life. Meanwhile, the curriculum that has been designed by the Integrated Islamic School network has been able to Islamize the learning process in the classroom which has the aim of forming Islamic awareness and thinking patterns.

The growing popularity of integrated Islamic schools has led to a decline in the existence of MDAs. Although many consider it a normal development, the situation actually has a negative impact that is not only limited to the decline in the quality of graduates, but also has serious consequences such as losing the direction and distinctive orientation of Islamic education. Although MDAs and integrated Islamic schools do not officially compete, the competition arises naturally because integrated Islamic schools have provided similar lessons to those taught in MDAs, sometimes even offering superior learning programs.

This research will elaborate more about the existence and continuity of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah (MDA) in the midst of the popularity of integrated Islamic schools today from various perspectives, such as socio-economic and educational perspectives. The socio-economic perspective will discuss the social and economic influence of the surrounding community in choosing their children's school between MDA or integrated Islamic schools. Then the educational perspective will discuss the influence of the curriculum, the lessons taught, and the learning system used on the choice of the surrounding community in sending their children to MDA or integrated Islamic schools.

Existence comes from English existence, and from Latin existere which means to appear, exist, arise, choose actual existence. Existence is a dynamic process, something that becomes or exists. This is the same as the word existere, which means out of, beyond or beyond (Kholidah, 2020). So it can be concluded that existence is a way of an institution in actualizing the potentials that exist in it, so that its existence can make it meaningful or meaningful. So here it can be seen that with this existence an institution can play an active role in everything to determine the nature of its existence in the world, so that the institution can be encouraged to always carry out activities according to its choice and
be brave in facing various challenges that exist related to the institution.

Continuity in the Indonesian Dictionary means continuity, continuation, sustainability, and continuous state. Meanwhile, continuity itself means continuous, sustainable (Nasional, 2020). The continuity dimension reflects an institution's permanence, historicity and its ability to overcome challenges. This aspect is related to the past, the continuity dimension resembles the concept of genealogy. This leads to the concept that institutional continuity is the personality of the institution that starts from the beginning of the creation of the institution itself, consistent behavior until the present and even in the future.

Based on the topic of this research, there are several previous studies related to this research, such as research conducted by (Lubis et al., 2022) on the existence of madrasas amidst the popularity of integrated Islamic schools. The focus of his research study discusses the historicity of madrasahs and integrated Islamic schools, the form of rivalry between the two, and the continuity of madrasahs amid the popularity of integrated Islamic schools in Medan city. Then the research conducted by (Hisyamuddin et al., 2022) on the existence of madrasah diniyah as a millennial education solution. The focus of his research study discusses what underlies Madrasah Diniyah education as a solution in the current millennial era.

The difference between that research and this research is in the research subject and the focus of the study. In the research conducted by (Lubis et al., 2022) The subject of the research is Madrasah Ibtidaiyah with Integrated Islamic Elementary School and the focus of the study discusses the historicity of madrasah and integrated Islamic Schools, the form of rivalry between the two, while in this study the subject of research is Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah with Integrated Islamic Elementary School and the focus of the study discusses the existence and continuity of MDA against the development of integrated Islamic schools. Then in the research conducted by (Hisyamuddin et al., 2022) discusses the study of the existence of Madrasah Diniyah as an educational solution in the millennial era and the focus of the study discusses the things that underlie Madrasah Diniyah education as a solution in the current millennial era, while in this research the focus of the study is the existence and continuity of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah in the midst of the popularity of Integrated Islamic Schools.

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the management of educational institutions, the government and also other researchers. In educational institutions, it is expected to continue to follow the demands of the times in running the learning system in order to advance their educational institutions. For the government, it is expected to further disseminate socialization to educational institutions, that the education system must be run in accordance with the times so as not to be consumed by the times.
B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted at Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah Al-Ikhlas, SDIT Hikmatul Fadhillah, and SDIT An-Nizam Medan. The location was chosen because the two integrated Islamic schools, SDIT Hikmatul Fadhillah and SDIT An-Nizam Medan, are close together. Then MDA Al-Ikhlas is in the middle between the two integrated Islamic schools. So that researchers are interested in choosing this location. This aims to find out whether there is an influence amid the popularity of the two integrated Islamic schools on the existence and continuity of MDA Al-Ikhlas. This research was conducted from August 2023 to December 2023.

In this study, researchers used phenomenological qualitative research that describes the phenomena that occur in the field in depth. Phenomenological qualitative research means that researchers go directly to the field by observing phenomena that occur in the field naturally. Phenomenology is carried out in a natural situation, so there are no restrictions in interpreting or understanding the phenomena studied (Mahariah, 2020). In this context, researchers sought to explain the phenomenon of the existence and continuity of MDA Al-Ikhlas amid the popularity of integrated Islamic schools around it. The respondents of this study were the Principal/Madrasa, Vice Principal/Madrasa for Curriculum, School/Madrasa Administration, teachers, and parents.

Then in collecting data, researchers used interviews, observation, and documentation. After the data was collected, the data analysis process was carried out interactively and continuously. Through several stages quoted from the theory (Miles & Huberman, 1992). Activities in data analysis are divided into 4 stages, namely: data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The term Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah is officially used in the National Education system since the issuance of the Indonesian Religious Decree No. 13 of 1964 concerning Religious Education and Religious Affairs (Hamdan, 2020). However, since the publication of (Peraturan Pemerintah RI Nomor 55 Tahun 2007 Tentang Pendidikan Agama dan Pendidikan Keagamaan, 2007), The name of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah was changed to Madrasah Diniyah Takmilih Awaliyah. In this study, researchers continued to use the term Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah because the identity of the research institution used the name Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah Al-Ikhlas.

Since the colonial era until now, Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah has often experienced challenges with its existence as an Islamic religious institution in Indonesia. The transformation process that occurs in madrasas or even schools, in general, begins with making system changes. As at this time, Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah Al-Ikhlas is
experiencing another challenge to its existence as an Islamic religious institution amid the popularity of integrated Islamic schools. This can also have an impact on the continuity of the MDA. In the discussion in this study, researchers will discuss through two perspectives, namely socio-economic and educational perspectives.

**Socio-Economic Perspective**

In terms of its historicity, it explains that madrasahs function as a place where Islamic religious education is taught and a place to get education for people with middle to lower economic strata. Based on the results of interviews with the head of MDA, he said that MDA institutions tend to be of interest to the lower middle class. Some previous research results such as research (Wasilah & Muslimah, 2023) mentions that Integrated Islamic Schools are synonymous with Elite Schools, even a representation of the lifestyle of the elite or officials.

Based on observations made by researchers, the local community sends their children to MDA Al-Ikhlas in order to gain religious knowledge, because they are less able to pay tuition fees at SDIT. Therefore, most local people prefer to send their children to ordinary public schools to get general learning and send their children to MDA Al-Ikhlas to get religious learning. MDA Al-Ikhlas also never considers the economic level of the parents of its students.

In contrast to integrated Islamic schools, integrated Islamic schools do not want to differentiate the level of income, but the high cost of education indirectly causes a gap. If we look back historically, the Dutch used to discriminate and create social strata in educational institutions. For example, Sekolah Rakyat (People's School) was intended for commoners, while schools with higher levels such as Hogare Burgerlijke School (HBS), and Europesche Lager School (ELS), were intended for the nobility and elite. In this regard, MDA is present to provide opportunities to all levels without discriminating the economic level of the community (Tantowi, 2008).

In terms of socio-economics, based on the results of interviews with the Head of MDA Al-Ikhlas, he said that economically in the neighborhood the economy of the majority of the population is middle to lower class. So according to his explanation, the competition between MDA and integrated Islamic schools around is not big, but the competition is still there because the majority of children who study at MDA are neighborhood children who do not attend integrated Islamic schools around. This is explained due to the economic factors of families who cannot afford to send their children to integrated Islamic schools and prefer MDA as a place for children to study basic religious knowledge (Rahmi et al., 2023).

In overcoming the sustainability of MDA Al-Ikhlas, the management opens two classes, namely the morning class for children whose school is in the afternoon and the afternoon class for children whose school is in
the morning. With this policy, there was an increase in MDA Al-Ikhlas students even though students who entered the morning class at MDA Al-Ikhlas were not as many as students who entered the afternoon class. However, this policy has a good impact on the sustainability of MDA itself in the face of the current popularity of integrated Islamic schools.

Education Perspective

In the education system, the community recognizes MDA institutions with basic classical religious learning. The historical establishment of MDA Al-Ikhlas was motivated by the lack of ability of neighborhood children in religious learning such as prayer procedures and reading the Qur'an. Then over time, MDA Al-Ikhlas provided basic religious subject matter such as Akidah Akhlak, Al-Qur'an Hadith, and prayer practices. However, along with the development of the world of education, MDA Al-Ikhlas adjusts its learning according to religious subjects in madrasas such as Akidah, Akhlak, Al-Quran, Hadith, Nahwu, and Sorof, accompanied by prayer practices and Quran tahsin (Armaluddin, 2022).

In the course of this research, it was revealed that MDA Al-Ikhlas is not only dealing with external changes, such as technological developments and labor market demands, but also with internal dynamics that play a key role in determining the sustainability of the institution. Effective management, human resource management, and an adaptive curriculum are essential foundations to answer these pressures. In responding to these dynamics, MDA Al-Ikhlas must implement a careful educational strategy. With good cooperation between educators and madrasah leaders in advancing MDA Al-Ikhlas. As Allah SWT says in surah Ash-Shaff verse 4, as follows.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقََٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ صَفًّا
كَأَنَّهُم بُنْيََٰٓبٔ مَّرْصُوصٌ

Meaning: Verily, Allah loves those who fight in His way in orderly rows as if they were a firmly built structure. (Q.S. Ash-Shaff: 4)

The verse above explains the importance of good cooperation. There is a strong willingness to work together in the face of all obstacles that come and challenges that exist. In addition, there is high discipline in the group, it must also obey the commands of Allah SWT, meaning that it must have high discipline in cooperation. With good cooperation, it will be easy to achieve the desired goals (Shihab, 2022). More specifically, the MDA Al-Ikhlas focuses on maintaining traditional Islamic values, while trying to integrate elements of modern education to keep it relevant. Thus, the MDA Al-Ikhlas curriculum is customized to meet the demands of the national curriculum while maintaining the essence of a distinctive Islamic curriculum.

However, based on the results of the researcher's observations, it shows that MDA Al-Ikhlas is not free from challenges. Competition with integrated Islamic schools,
limited resources, and changing community dynamics are the main challenges faced by the institution. Even so, opportunities are also open in the distinctiveness of the traditional Islamic education approach which is still attractive to some people. In facing the dynamics of these influence factors, MDA Al-Ikhlas is expected to continue to adapt to technological developments and strengthen its internal management. The integration of technology in the learning process is proposed as a potential strategy to overcome the impact of external changes.

In this case, the local government needs to take part in developing Madrasah Diniyah in general, and MDA Al-Ikhlas in particular. Where all this time the existence of MDA has only been the responsibility of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. This is because MDA has contributed to educating the nation’s children, especially in the fields of religion, morals and character building. For this reason, it is hoped that there will be better affirmation of local government policies and programs so that the community is increasingly convinced that the Regional Government is present to facilitate the implementation of MDA.

Based on the explanation above, in the face of problems regarding the existence and continuity of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah (MDA) leads to three basic solutions, namely (1) maintaining MDA amid the popularity of SDIT (2) changing SDIT into madrasah as a whole (3) or leaving it alone. Based on that question, perhaps solution number 1 is very appropriate to represent the solution to the existence and continuity of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah at this time, namely maintaining Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah to remain on its characteristics to be the best solution to face the rampant popularity of SDIT.

Managers of educational institutions (both MDA and SDIT) must have awareness, namely consistency in their own characteristics. Imitation of characteristics is not wrong, but it would be unfortunate if the existing potential is not utilized (Munir & Toha, 2022). By sticking to its characteristics, Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah will not experience a decline or stagnation, because Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah has its own target market, as well as the Integrated Islamic Elementary School which also has its own market share.

In facing challenges and its existence, MDA Al-Ikhlas needs to design a strategy to improve the quality of education quality so as to gain the trust of the community and stakeholders. Research results by (Dioba, 2021) who said that the progress of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah lies in the creativity of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah itself to make improvements that need to be made. Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah should not simply rely on the Ministry of Religious Affairs as its coaching institution because of its limitations in making policies for Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah that have not been autonomized in contrast to national education that has been autonomized so that every policy on Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah
made by the center, may have shortcomings not in accordance with the circumstances of Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah in a region.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, it is found that the existence of MDA Al-Ikhlas is fading from the beginning of its establishment and threatens the continuity of MDA Al-Ikhlas. In improving its existence, it is necessary to improve infrastructure facilities and improve the quality of educators in order to attract parents to send their children to MDA Al-Ikhlas. In order to maintain the continuity of MDA Al-Ikhlas, MDA Al-Ikhlas must upgrade, innovate and keep up with the times and technology in order to compete with the popularity of SDIT which has complete facilities and modern technology-based learning. In this case, the surrounding community and also the local government must take part in preserving MDA Al-Ikhlas, not only the responsibility of the institution and the Ministry of Religion. This aims to preserve the distinctive orientation of Islamic education.

E. REFERENCES


