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EVALUATION OF THE MADRASAH EDUCATION QUALITY REFORM (MEQR) PROGRAMME IN THE MINISTRY OF RELIGION OF SOUTH SUMATRA PROVINCE

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Kata Kunci:	ABSTRAK
Evaluasi Program, MEQR, Kualitas Madrasah, Kementerian Agama, Sumatera Selatan, Reformasi Pendidikan, e-RKAM, Manajemen Pendidikan.	Latar Belakang: Program <i>Madrasah Education Quality Reform</i> (MEQR) merupakan inisiatif strategis Kementerian Agama dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan madrasah secara nasional, termasuk di Provinsi Sumatera Selatan. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengevaluasi efektivitas MEQR, khususnya pada aspek perencanaan, implementasi, pemantauan, serta dampaknya terhadap penguatan kualitas madrasah. Tujuan Penelitian: Penelitian ini bertujuan mengevaluasi efektivitas MEQR, khususnya pada aspek perencanaan, implementasi, pemantauan, serta dampaknya terhadap penguatan kualitas madrasah. Metode: Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan studi dokumentasi. Informan meliputi pejabat pelaksana program di tingkat provinsi dan kabupaten/kota, kepala madrasah, serta tenaga pendidik. Hasil: Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa MEQR memberikan kontribusi signifikan dalam peningkatan kapasitas manajemen berbasis data, penerapan sistem EMIS dan e-RKAM, serta pengembangan sarana dan prasarana madrasah. Program ini juga mendorong efisiensi tata kelola dan transparansi penggunaan anggaran. Meski demikian, sejumlah kendala masih dijumpai, terutama terkait koordinasi lintas tingkat, keterbatasan sumber daya manusia, serta keberlanjutan program pasca dukungan eksternal. Kesimpulan: Secara umum, implementasi MEQR di Provinsi Sumatera Selatan dapat dikategorikan cukup efektif, tetapi memerlukan penguatan dalam pendampingan teknis, monitoring berkelanjutan, dan melibatkan aktif seluruh pemangku kepentingan. Upaya ini penting agar reformasi pendidikan madrasah tidak hanya berdampak jangka pendek, tetapi juga berkelanjutan dalam meningkatkan mutu dan daya saing madrasah di era digital.

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Programme
Evaluation, MEQR,
Madrasah Quality,
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ABSTRACTS

Background: *The Madrasah Education Quality Reform* (MEQR) programme is a strategic initiative of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in improving the quality of madrasah education nationally, including in South Sumatra Province. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of MEQR, especially in the aspects of planning, implementation, monitoring, and its impact on strengthening the quality of madrasah. **Research Objectives:** This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of MEQR, especially in the aspects of planning, implementation, monitoring, and its impact on strengthening the quality of madrasah. **Methods:** The study used a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation studies. Informants included programme implementing officials at the provincial and district/city levels, madrasah heads, and educators. **Results:** The results showed that MEQR made a significant contribution in increasing the capacity of data-based management, implementing EMIS and e-RKAM systems, and developing madrasah facilities and infrastructure. The programme also promotes efficient governance and transparency in budget use. However, a number of obstacles are still encountered, especially related to cross-level coordination, limited human resources, and programme sustainability after external support. **Conclusion:** In general, the implementation of MEQR in South Sumatra Province can be categorised as quite effective, but requires strengthening in technical assistance, continuous monitoring, and active involvement of all stakeholders. These efforts are important so that madrasah education reform does not only have a short-term impact, but also sustainable in improving the quality and competitiveness of madrasah in the digital era.

A. INTRODUCTION

Madrasah Head is a functional teacher who is assigned to lead a Madrasah (Fatawi 2023) . Madrasah is a place where the teaching and learning process is held or where interaction occurs between teachers who give lessons and students receive lessons (Ilmi, Duryat, and Nurmantoro 2022) . The word lead from the formulation contains a broad meaning, namely the ability to mobilise all the resources available in a Madrasah so that it can be maximally utilised to achieve the goals that have been set (Arifin et al. 2023) . The Head of Madrasah must have a personality or character and the ability and skills to lead an educational institution (Rahayu 2023) . Madrasah principals also play an important role in creating a safe and pleasant working atmosphere, which supports teacher performance and improves the overall quality of education (Hamid 2022) . In this context, the leadership of the madrasah head is very influential on the performance of teaching staff and the success of the learning process in Madrasah (Purwanti 2016) .

Based on the above problems, the role of a madrasah head is very important. In order to improve the quality of madrasah education, the government in this case the ministry of religion through the field of Education, which organises formal education services at the primary and secondary education levels, namely Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) provides assistance to Madrasah Education Groups ranging from Madrasah Supervisors, Madrasah Heads MI, MTs and MA, continued with Madrasah Teachers in general subject Teacher Consultation groups and counselling guidance.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs is one of the ministries that plays an important role in achieving national education development targets. As part of the national education system, one form of government support for improving the quality of supervisors, madrasah heads, teachers and education personnel is through the Ministry of Religion's Teacher Continuing Professional Development Programme (PKB). This programme is an implementation of the *Realising Education's Promise* project: *Support to Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs for Improved Quality of Education (Madrasah Education Quality Reform)* abbreviated as REP-MEQR, which is an HR investment programme developed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs whose funding source is through a World Bank Foreign Loan (IBRD Loan No.8992-ID) from 2020 to 2024 (Nasution and Rosyada 2022) .

The project consists of four project components that can improve student learning outcomes and the education management system in the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Huda 2022) . The four components are:

1. Implementation of the e-RKAM (electronic-based Madrasah Work and Budget Plan) System nationwide and Provision of Grants for Madrasahs.
2. Implementation of the Learning Outcomes Assessment System at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) level for All Grade 4 Learners Nationally.

3. *Policy and Continuing Professional Development for Teachers, Madrasah Heads, and Education Personnel as well as Madrasah supervisors. Increased access to quality training allows for improved competence of teachers and education personnel. Madrasah heads and supervisors*
4. System strengthening to support education quality improvement. Strengthening madrasah management systems and governance at all levels of MoRA offices to improve quality education delivery systems.

The programme is implemented in 34 provinces and 514 districts/cities across Indonesia and one of its components is Component 3 which focuses on policies and Continuing Professional Development for Madrasah Supervisors, Teachers, Madrasah Heads and Education Personnel. Increased access to quality training enables improvements in the competence of teachers and education personnel.

Component 3 focuses on strengthening and expanding access to activities for working groups (POKJA) through providing assistance and developing training modules. The provision of assistance to working groups is used to organise Continuing Professional Development (PKB) activities. In accordance with the Decree of the Director General of Education Number 606/2021, Number 2059/2022, Number 1324/2023 and Number 1175/2024).

In order to support the achievement of component 3 targets related to increasing the capacity of teachers and education personnel, the REP-MEQR project will carry out training for all provinces including in 3T areas (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost), in accordance with Presidential Decree Number 63 of 2020 concerning the determination of underdeveloped areas for 2020-2024. In this activity, the technical implementers (*Logistic service providers*), resource persons, participants, and activity committees to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the training of instructors and facilitators of PKB for MI, MTs, and MA Teachers and Madrasah Heads and Supervisors.

Therefore, the Madrasah Education Quality Reform (MEQR) programme is an important step in improving the quality of education in madrasahs. With a focus on curriculum development, improved teaching quality, good education management, and collaboration between madrasahs, parents and communities, the programme is expected to create a better learning environment. In the long run, the expected achievement is the birth of a young generation that not only excels academically, but also has a strong character and is ready to face future challenges. Therefore, support from all parties is needed to realise this noble goal.

One of the main challenges faced in the implementation of MEQR is the lack of understanding and support from stakeholders, including teachers, parents and the surrounding community. Furthermore, another significant challenge is the limited resources, be it in the form of facilities, teaching materials, or qualified educators. Many madrasahs, especially those in remote areas, still face the problem of adequate infrastructure (Luneto 2022) .

Another aspect that needs to be considered is the frequent changes in education policies (Berkovich 2021) . This uncertainty in policy can create confusion among madrasah managers and teachers. Another important challenge is the involvement of parents and communities in the education process. Often, parents are not actively involved in their children's educational activities in madrasahs. In this context, it is also important to consider the cultural aspects that influence education in madrasahs. In some areas, traditional values and social norms are still very strong, which can hinder the implementation of innovations in education (Sali and Marasigan 2020) .

In order to overcome these challenges, collaboration between various parties is crucial. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, local governments, communities and private institutions should work together to create an education ecosystem that supports MEQR implementation. For example, local governments can provide additional budget to improve madrasah facilities, while private institutions can contribute through corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes that support madrasah education. Thus, the synergy between various parties can create a better environment for education in madrasahs.

From some of the phenomena and problems above, the researcher seeks to examine the problems of the implementation of the *Madrasah Education Quality Reform* Programme Project of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra in Component 3 only, namely Continuous Professional Development for the Working Group of Madrasah Heads in South Sumatra, so it is necessary to conduct research on the Implementation of Madrasah Education Quality Reform (MEQR) Programme Evaluation in the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra Province.

B. METHOD

This research uses the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model evaluation method developed by Daniel Stufflebeam (Riyadi, Putra, and Ikhlasiyah 2022) . This model was chosen because it is considered comprehensive in evaluating a programme, not only assessing the final results, but also covering the context, input, process, and product of the programme being evaluated. The focus of the evaluation in this study is on the Madrasah Education Quality Reform (MEQR) programme related to improving the professionalism of madrasah principals in 11 districts/cities in South Sumatra Province. This research was conducted qualitatively with a descriptive evaluative approach (Lesko, Fox, and Edwards 2022) .

The research steps were divided into four stages: (1) a context evaluation that assesses the needs of the programme based on environmental conditions and implementation objectives, (2) an input evaluation that examines the readiness of human resources, infrastructure, budget, and programme procedures, (3) a process evaluation that assesses the direct implementation of the programme and identifies barriers or supporting factors, and (4) a product evaluation that assesses the results of

the programme on improving the competence of madrasah heads and teachers, and provides further policy recommendations.

The population in this study included the Head and Section Head of Madrasah Education at the provincial and district/city levels, madrasah supervisors, KKM heads, madrasah principals, and PAI subject teachers. The selection of informants was done by purposive sampling by considering certain criteria, namely: (1) having direct experience in the implementation of the MEQR programme, (2) involved in decision-making or implementation of madrasah education policy, (3) representing various levels and roles (policy makers, implementers, and beneficiaries), and (4) willing to provide information openly and in depth.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth and structured interviews, and documentation (Hunter 2015) . The interview and documentation process focused on extracting data on programme implementation, informants' perceptions, and challenges faced in the field.

The data obtained was then analysed using descriptive and inferential qualitative analysis methods (Irzavika and Supangkat 2018) . More specifically, the analysis was carried out through the stages of: (1) transcription of interview results and document collection, (2) open coding process to identify initial themes, (3) axial coding to group codes into broader categories according to the CIPP dimensions, and (4) selective coding to compile the main findings pattern. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the qualitative data to produce a systematic evaluative narrative.

Data validity was strengthened by testing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability through data triangulation, process audit, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) (Maxwell 2021) . With this approach, it is expected that the research results will be able to provide a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the MEQR programme and recommendations for the development of madrasah education policies in the future.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The evaluation of the Madrasah Education Quality Reform (MEQR) Programme at the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra Province was reviewed from the aspects of context, input, process, and product (CIPP).

This research was conducted with a qualitative evaluative approach based on the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with officials of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra, madrasah heads, teachers, and supervisors, as well as through direct observation in several public and private madrasahs and programme documentation. The following are the results of the research based on each aspect:

1. Context Aspect

The context aspect in CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation aims to assess the background, needs, and environmental factors that drive the programme.

In the context of the implementation of the MEQR Programme in South Sumatra Province, there are a number of important indicators that form the basis of the urgency of this programme, especially in strengthening the quality of data and technology-based madrasah education.

Nationally, the MEQR programme was launched as an effort to transform madrasah education through various components, including strengthening governance capacity, improving data-based planning, and implementing madrasah digitalisation. At the local level, the implementation of this programme is very relevant because it faces real challenges in the field that require systematic intervention.

Based on preliminary data and *needs assessment* results, it is known that most madrasahs in South Sumatra Province still face various limitations, including:

1. Limited access to information technology infrastructure, such as internet networks and digital devices in madrasah, especially in 3T areas (frontier, outermost, underdeveloped).
2. Low managerial capacity of madrasah heads in terms of quality planning, monitoring and evaluation, and utilisation of digital systems such as e-RKAM and EMIS.
3. Lack of optimal utilisation of education data to support evidence-based *decision making* at the madrasah level.

This statement is reinforced by an interview with the Head of Madrasah Education Division of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra Province, who stated: *"The MEQR programme is needed in South Sumatra because many madrasahs are still not optimally using EMIS and e-RKAM as a basis for quality planning."*

This statement confirms that the weak culture of data-based work and the lack of digital literacy are the main reasons for the importance of MEQR as a strategic solution.

Furthermore, the results of the researchers' field observations also indicate that the use of several digital applications supporting the programme, such as e-RKAM (electronic Madrasah Work and Budget Plan), ARKAS (School Activity and Budget Plan Application), and RDM (Madrasah Digital Report Card) have not been evenly used in all districts/cities in South Sumatra. Some madrasahs are still running the planning and reporting system manually, or using the digital system on a limited basis due to technical and human resource constraints.

These conditions make it clear that the MEQR programme is present to answer real problems and is relevant to the needs of madrasah education in the regions. This context shows that support for strengthening digital capacity and system-based data management is an urgent need that must be met so that madrasahs are able to develop adaptively and competitively.

2. Input Aspect

The input aspect of the Madrasah Education Quality Reform (MEQR) Programme includes all forms of resource support that are prepared to support the successful implementation of the programme. Some of the main input components reviewed in this context include: (1) training and capacity building for teachers and madrasah heads, (2) provision of digital technology tools and support, and (3) budget allocation through the *Results-Based Financing* (RBF) scheme channelled by the World Bank through the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Based on the results of documentation and interviews in the field, it is known that most madrasahs in South Sumatra Province have attended initial training in the use of the e-RKAM system (electronic-based Madrasah Work Plan and Budget). This training aims to improve the understanding of madrasah educators and managers on digital-based governance. However, the effectiveness of the training is still felt to be less than optimal. A madrasah head stated: *"We have participated in MEQR training, but the training is still too short and not all teachers understand the digitisation system."*

This statement shows that the short duration of the training and the lack of deepening of the material made some participants unable to master the use of e-RKAM thoroughly. In addition, not all teachers have an adequate background or digital literacy, so further training and ongoing assistance are needed.

In addition to training issues, another significant obstacle is the limited availability of hardware such as laptops or computers and adequate internet network access. This problem is mainly experienced by private madrasahs and madrasahs located in rural or remote areas. In fact, the success of the digitisation system is highly dependent on the availability of supporting technological infrastructure.

This gap in facilities and human resource readiness poses its own challenges in realising effective and efficient digital-based madrasah governance. In line with this, Tanner and Andrews (2012) in their research emphasised that: *"The success of technology-based education reform is highly dependent on the readiness of human resources and adequate supporting infrastructure."*

The implication of this condition is the need for a more inclusive and sustainable approach in managing MEQR programme inputs. The government through the Ministry of Religious Affairs needs to consider a more proportional budget allocation, expand the scope of intensive and applicable training, and strengthen collaboration with local governments and external partners to support the fulfilment of infrastructure in 3T (Frontier, Remote and Disadvantaged) areas.

Thus, although structurally the MEQR programme has provided the basic inputs that are relevant and needed, in its implementation in the field there are still various obstacles that affect the absorption and effectiveness of the programme. This indicates the need for policy strengthening and adjustment at the regional level to ensure the programme can run optimally at all levels and types of madrasah.

3. Process Aspects

In the implementation of the *Madrasah Education Quality Reform* (MEQR) Programme, the process aspect includes various important activities such as training of madrasah personnel, continuous supervision, e-RKAM (*Madrasah Work and Budget Plan*) filling, and data-based reporting. The success of this process is highly dependent on the readiness of human resources and adequate technical support. Based on field observations, there are significant variations in implementation at the madrasah level. Public madrasahs generally show better readiness in carrying out programme procedures independently than private madrasahs, especially in terms of utilising digital systems such as e-RKAM.

Official documentation from the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra Province shows that some madrasahs, especially private ones, are not yet fully capable of operating e-RKAM independently. They still need intensive assistance from regional facilitators (Fasda). This indicates a gap in mastery of technology and adaptation to the new system. This condition is reinforced through an interview with one of the madrasah supervisors who stated:

"There are madrasahs that have to be assisted continuously because the head and treasurer are not used to the digital-based system."

This statement confirms that the process aspect of MEQR implementation has not been optimised in all education units, mainly due to the low level of digital literacy and independence in managing system-based administration.

According to Stufflebeam (2007), in the CIPP evaluation model, process aspects should include an assessment of the extent to which planned activities are implemented effectively and efficiently. Process evaluation should also consider the effectiveness of training, the level of stakeholder participation, and the fluidity of technical support. When viewed from this perspective, the implementation of MEQR in South Sumatra shows varied achievements: on the one hand there are madrasahs that have run the programme well and independently, but on the other hand there are still many madrasahs that experience dependence on external assistance and have not been fully involved actively in the process of programme implementation.

Therefore, improving the technical and digital competencies of madrasah heads and treasurers is essential to strengthen the process aspect of the MEQR programme. This strengthening will increase the effectiveness of overall policy implementation and reduce inter-madrasah disparities in the implementation of data-driven and digitalised education reform.

4. Product Aspects

The *Madrasah Education Quality Reform* (MEQR) programme in South Sumatra Province shows a number of positive achievements in the outcome (*product*) aspect, particularly in strengthening data-based governance and improving the quality of education services. A number of madrasahs have made significant progress in

developing data-based planning through the use of the e-RKAM (Electronic Madrasah Work and Budget Plan) application and allocating School Operational Assistance (BOS) funds in a more targeted and prioritised manner. This reflects the growing awareness and managerial skills at the education unit level.

However, these achievements have not been evenly distributed. EMIS documentation data for 2024 shows that only around 65 per cent of madrasahs have managed to input e-RKAM independently without relying on external assistants. This indicates that about one-third of madrasahs still experience problems in mastering the technical application, data-based budget planning, or understanding the substance of the planning itself.

Interviews with the monitoring team from the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra Province also corroborated this finding. One statement stated that:

"We think this programme is starting to have an impact, but the progress is still slow. We need to strengthen digital literacy and further assistance."

The statement emphasises that although positive impacts are starting to be seen, accelerating results is still a major challenge, particularly in the aspects of digitisation and self-implementation at the madrasah level.

Furthermore, as stated by Sauri, Aryani, and Alhamidi (2020) , the success of education quality reform does not only depend on programme design, but is largely determined by the continuity between training, monitoring system, and follow-up that is contextual and adaptive to local needs. In the context of MEQR, this means that the assistance provided should not be uniform, but should consider the real conditions, human resource capacity, and digital infrastructure readiness in each madrasah.

Thus, in terms of products, the MEQR Programme has shown promising results, but it still requires a more inclusive engagement strategy, equal distribution of capacity, and strengthening of post-training support so that the transformation of madrasah quality can occur thoroughly and sustainably.

Discussion

The evaluation of the Madrasah Education Quality Reform (MEQR) Programme using the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) approach provides a comprehensive portrait of the strengths and weaknesses of the programme's implementation at the regional level, particularly in South Sumatra Province. Each CIPP component shows different dynamics in supporting the success of the programme, which aims to strengthen the governance of data- and technology-based madrasah education.

At the *Context Evaluation* stage, the evaluation emphasised the analysis of the existing conditions of madrasahs in South Sumatra prior to the implementation of the MEQR programme. The findings show that most madrasahs, especially those in the 3T (frontier, outermost and disadvantaged) areas, have low managerial capacity, have not implemented an optimal data-based planning system, and are very limited in terms of

digitalisation. This fact shows that the background of the MEQR programme implementation is very relevant and answers the urgent need to improve the madrasah governance system, in line with the needs assessment approach as stated by Stufflebeam (2007) , that a programme should be designed by accurately understanding the context of the real needs of the programme targets.

In addition, the national push to improve transparency and accountability in education budget management provides strong legitimacy to the urgency of this programme. Thus, from the context aspect, the MEQR programme is considered to have a strong justification and is well-targeted, although it needs a sharper mapping of capacity differences between regions.

Input Evaluation focuses on the availability and adequacy of resources provided for programme implementation, such as training of human resources, provision of supporting equipment (laptops, internet network, training modules), and availability of guidelines for e-RKAM implementation. Although the programme has provided training for operators and madrasah heads, there is still an imbalance in its distribution and effectiveness. Training tends to be theoretical and does not fully address the need for technical practice. Supporting infrastructure, especially in small private madrasahs and madrasahs located in remote areas, is inadequate. Some madrasahs do not even have a stable internet connection and proper technology devices.

This shows that the readiness of human resources and infrastructure is not in line with the expectations of the programme. As stated by Snowden et al. (2023) sustainable educational change requires a comprehensive *capacity building* process, not just short-term training. Therefore, in the input aspect, MEQR needs to strengthen sustainability and equity in resource support.

Process Evaluation, in programme implementation, process is a key component in assessing the extent to which implementation is going according to plan. The evaluation results show that the implementation process of the MEQR programme does not run uniformly across regions. Madrasahs in urban areas are relatively capable of implementing e-RKAM independently, while madrasahs in rural areas still rely heavily on assistance from regional facilitators or external parties.

Supervision and monitoring from the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and from the Central Ministry have not been conducted regularly and intensively. Some madrasahs complained about the lack of follow-up training after the initial training, resulting in stagnation in the practice of data-based planning. These inequalities reinforce the findings of Bayer and Kryuchkova (2021) that education processes must be adaptive to local realities and contexts, not just follow administrative procedures. Without strong ongoing mentoring and monitoring mechanisms, programmes risk losing their way and not achieving their objectives.

Product Evaluation focuses on the extent to which the programme objectives have been achieved. In general, the MEQR programme has contributed to the

improvement of madrasah planning capacity, especially in preparing Madrasah Work and Budget Plans (RKAM) digitally through the e-RKAM application. However, the impact of the programme has not been fully equitable. Many small private madrasahs have not been able to deeply internalise the values of quality reform. The practice of planning is still a formality, not based on real needs data, and has not yet become a madrasah work culture. In fact, some madrasahs experience difficulties in operating the e-RKAM system, so that the implementation of the programme is only carried out administratively without substantial understanding.

This finding corroborates the opinion of (Azarov et al. (2022) , that educational transformation is not only a technical and administrative issue, but involves changing the culture and way of thinking of all educational actors. Without a change in work paradigm, programme outputs will be temporary and unsustainable.

The evaluation of the MEQR programme in South Sumatra Province through the CIPP approach shows that, from the context aspect, the programme is very relevant to the needs of madrasah in the region; from the input aspect, the provision of resources has not been evenly distributed and does not fully respond to local needs; from the process aspect, the implementation has not been consistent and lacks continuous supervision; from the product aspect, the achievements of the programme are partial and have not taken root as a madrasah work culture. Therefore, future MEQR programmes need to pay more attention to long-term capacity building, improving the quality of supervision, and strengthening the culture of data-based planning in all madrasahs, especially those in marginalised areas.

The results of the evaluation of the MEQR programme using the CIPP model (Context, Input, Process, Product) show that the successful implementation of this programme in the South Sumatra Province is still uneven and has disparities between regions. Of the four aspects analysed, the input and process aspects are still the main weak points, marked by the lack of resource readiness, limited technical training, and weak monitoring systems.

Therefore, this study has several important practical and policy implications, namely:

- a. The need for further and thematic training for teachers and education personnel, tailored to the real needs in the field and based on the local context of each madrasah.
- b. Strengthening the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capacity of madrasahs should be a priority, including the procurement of hardware and software, as well as strengthening networks and data management systems.
- c. Data-based monitoring and evaluation needs to be conducted in a tiered and systematic manner, starting from the madrasah level, district/city Kankemenag, to the central level. The use of digital *dashboards* and evidence-based reporting systems can strengthen targeted decision-making.

More broadly, these findings are also relevant to international experiences. For example, Islamic education reform in Malaysia through the *Sekolah Agama Rakyat* programme emphasised the integration of digitalisation and public accountability-based governance (Meerangani et al. 2023) . In Pakistan, the *Madrasa Reform* project faced similar challenges in resource distribution and cultural resistance, which could only be overcome through a collaborative approach between the government, donor agencies and local communities (Sharif and Andersen 2021) . Meanwhile, studies in Egypt and Morocco show that the success of Islamic education reform is strongly influenced by long-term investment in *teacher professional development* and continuous supervision systems (Ghaffari and Yousefi, ; 2022 Riadi, 2022)

Learning from these international practices, reform strategies in Indonesia, particularly through the MEQR programme, need to be directed towards three main dimensions: (1) strengthening sustainable *capacity building* through inter-madrasah *professional learning communities*; (2) encouraging collaboration between government, communities, and international partners to support more equitable access to technology; and (3) integrating reforms into national policies with clear and measurable indicators of success.

Thus, the sustainability of the MEQR programme depends on cross-level commitment, strengthening human resources, implementing data-driven governance, and openness in adopting global best practices to address local challenges.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the evaluation of the Madrasah Education Quality Reform (MEQR) Programme at the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra Province using the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model, several findings were obtained. First: The Context aspect shows that the implementation of the MEQR Programme is relevant to the needs of improving the quality of madrasah education, in line with the demands of the times and the direction of national policy in realising independent and outstanding madrasah. Secondly: The Input aspect shows that policy support, funding, human resources and infrastructure are relatively adequate. However, there are still challenges in the distribution of resources and gaps in the competence of implementing personnel in some madrasahs. Third: The Process aspect shows that the programme implementation went according to plan through training, mentoring, and the use of information technology. However, the effectiveness of the implementation is still constrained by some teachers' limited understanding of digital systems and suboptimal coordination across sectors. Fourth: The product aspect shows that the MEQR Programme has contributed positively to improving the quality of madrasah governance, the preparation of Madrasah Work Plans (RKM), and data-based planning, although it has not been evenly distributed throughout the region.

The implication of this research is that the success of the MEQR Programme is highly dependent on the synergy between policy planning, the involvement of

competent human resources, and continuous supervision to ensure the quality of the programme can be felt thoroughly in all madrasahs. An important suggestion for related parties, especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs of South Sumatra Province and madrasah policy makers, is to continue to improve the capacity of human resources, expand the scope of digital training, and strengthen the data-based monitoring and evaluation system so that the implementation of the MEQR Programme is more effective and has a real impact on the quality of madrasah education in this area.

Furthermore, the results of this evaluation should encourage policymakers to immediately develop a clearer implementation roadmap, set measurable indicators of success, and ensure sustainable budget allocations for strengthening teachers' digital capacity. Practitioners in the field also need to be given room for innovation and full support to adapt educational technology according to the context of their respective madrasahs. Therefore, concrete steps that must be taken immediately are: (1) re-mapping teachers' competency gaps, (2) designing training programmes based on the real needs of madrasahs, (3) building a transparent and participatory digital monitoring system, and (4) strengthening cross-sector collaboration with local governments and private institutions. With a shared commitment, the MEQR Programme will not just be a one-off project, but can truly be the foundation of transforming madrasah education towards sustainable and equitable quality.

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