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Synergy through construction: Co-designing of special education program with stakeholders in the school

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the synergy in constructing and redesigning special education programs in schools with stakeholders. This study used a descriptive qualitative research approach. This method directly presents the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the respondent. The primary data sources in this study were two principals, ten teachers, and 20 school committee members. Participants were taken from two State schools. Secondary data sources in this study include school documents. Data collection techniques used in this study consisted of observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was carried out in two stages: analysis of single or individual case data and analysis of cross-case data. The validity of the research data in this study was ensured using Lincoln and Guba's framework, which involves four key criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The findings revealed that effective collaboration between schools and stakeholders led to the development of special programs in two state Madrasah Aliyah in Mataram, aligned with the principle of Working Systemically in Action. These madrasahs demonstrated a strong understanding of the need for collaboration, enabling them to emerge as leading institutions. Their success is reflected in various academic and non-academic achievements, showcasing their ability to compete at a higher level.

Keywords: Education program; excellence; special education

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of science, technology, and changes in human life in this global era requires educational institutions to be able to produce graduates who are oriented to the quality of qualified resources under the needs of today's globalization (Zhao et al., 2022; Schaper et al., 2024). Therefore, schools must design various superior programs in the curriculum according to the needs of the school environment, the business world, and global challenges (Şahin et al., 2024). In this vein, schools must be able to relate the curriculum to the concept of meeting global needs (Mok, 2010; Dale, 2010). Madrasah Aliyah, as a high school educational institution, also demands the same quality of education. The main challenge madrasas face is internalizing Islamic values in the context of the nation-state and preparing Muslim youth to play an essential role in the global world by encouraging information technology (Supriatna & Ratnaningsih, 2017).

Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Mataram, as a regular madrasah, must have characteristics as its advantages. Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Mataram is a monthly madrasa that is a national project of 10 madrasas in Indonesia and 34 of the best madrasas in the Ministry of Religion. Graduates are expected from the two madrasas aliyah can continue their education at universities abroad. Moreover, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Mataram graduates have been widely accepted in national or international State Universities. Some have even been taken at universities in Morocco, the Middle East, Malaysia, and Poland. It is necessary to design a particular program to achieve a quality education that meets global needs to accomplish this goal.

However, the phenomenon in the field often shows obstacles from the cooperation of all parties involved, the readiness of human resources in schools such as teachers, education staff, school committees, school management systems, educational facilities, and infrastructure. This is part of a comprehensive and complete education system so that it becomes quality. The observations in the preliminary research at the two madrasah aliyah found several problems related to the synergy of stakeholder collaboration in building special programs, such as 1) the quality level of educators who did not meet the standards of global needs, 2) the pattern of student achievement development that had not been designed in a standardized manner, and 3) the level of development and improvement of the competence of educators is still not optimal and per the needs of 21st-century education.

Therefore, the synergy of the participation of all parties involved is needed to construct only programs to achieve educational goals. Because the success of education in schools is not only determined by teachers, principals, or students, but all parties involved have the same role (Ye et al., 2024). This means that the collaborative synergy of all stakeholders is essential and must be considered by the school to achieve educational goals (Pradhan et al., 2017; Kusumaningrum et al., 2017; Pradhan et al., 2014). In Nigeria, community participation manifests in Quality Assurance as a catalyst for improving quality and equity toward educational attainment for all (Sofoluwe & Akinsolu 2015). Community involvement in the education system is also oriented toward the role of adult education (Ewelum & Ugochukwu, 2016). Meanwhile, in Tanzania, community participation is also manifested in developing environmental-based school programs (Kambuga, 2013).

Thus, schools should be able to have guidelines for the development of collaboration. The partnership guide was developed to guide stakeholders in effective school-community partnerships. This can help build strong collaboration between internal and external stakeholders to promote school academic performance (Espaldon, 2019). Student collaboration with stakeholders is also a consideration to support the learning environment (Oonk et al., 2016). Collaboration and partnership with different stakeholders are essential for the development trajectory of higher education institutions, including financial mobilization/support, capacity building, infrastructure development (physical and cyber), recruitment of competent staff, elevating the community around the university, and providing financial support to

students in need (Penuel et al., 2020; Bidandi et al., 2022). Therefore, schools must perform optimal collaboration and communication with school personnel, parents, and external parties to consistently convey children's development. Often, less than optimal communication and collaboration between parents, school personnel, and health care providers requires more coordination and consistency, starting from the child's return to school. In addition, all stakeholders should be aware of the relevant factors that facilitate or hinder the child's reintegration process (Vanclooster et al., 2018).

The decentralization of education in Indonesia has not enabled all the country's residents to become much more active in Islamic schools (Parker & Raihani, 2011). This condition is also the orientation of the importance of synergy between schools and all parties to meet the needs and improve the quality of education following the environment in which the school is located. Synergy can be defined as the cooperation between two or more entities to achieve a common goal. Therefore, this research aims to investigate how many stakeholders in the education system might work together to provide outstanding programs for schools. This research includes various data about special programs produced by schools, and program plans will be developed in partnership with other parties. Therefore, the idea of collaborative patterns in program creation is introduced throughout this study.

1.1. Purpose of study

Thus, this research aims to find synergy in constructing and redesigning special education programs in schools with stakeholders. The results of this study are expected to be used by other schools to build collaborative synergies with all stakeholders for implementing education.

2. METHOD AND MATERIALS

2.1. Participants

The primary data sources in this study were two principals, ten teachers, and 20 school committee members. Participants were taken from two Madrasah Aliyah Mataram State schools. Secondary data sources in this study include school documents.

2.2. Data collection tool

Data collection techniques used in this study consisted of observation, interviews, and documentation. Statements were made to observe the process of designing special programs to improve the quality of education through synergistic collaboration between school residents and stakeholders. The results of the observations were recorded in the research notebook. Documents were retrieved from school achievement reports and schoolwork plans. Interviews were conducted with all participants to determine the synergy between stakeholders and school residents.

This study used a descriptive qualitative research approach. This method directly presents the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the respondent. In this context, researchers as observers and interviewers are related to the development of community participation, so the ability to interact, communicate, understand, and study the environment is essential to obtaining original, accurate, objective, and correct data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

2.3. Data analysis

Data analysis was carried out in two stages, namely (1) analysis of single or individual case data and (2) analysis of cross-case data. Checking the validity of the data in this study was carried out to ensure the reliability or validity of the data obtained. The following are the four processes that make up the process of employing Lincoln and Guba's theory to validate the research findings presented in this study: 1) dependability, transferability, confirmability, and credibility (Forero et al., 2018).

3. RESULTS

The data gathered from the two public madrasahs Aliyah schools were analyzed, and the results revealed many findings about partnership programs between the schools and other stakeholders. Based on data indicating that there are programs within the school framework that have been well implemented and continue to be carried out as targets and targets for achieving the vision and mission, as well as new flagship programs that are intended to expand academic and non-academic achievements for students, these programs have become the focus of excellent programs aimed at enhancing the quality of schools. These programs have become the target of unique programs for improving the quality of schools, and they have become the target of excellent programs for improving the quality of schools.

The result of interview with the participants and document found the program at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Mataram which have been collaborated with stakeholders include: (1) The vision and mission are updated in accordance with global developments on the demands for the quality of education; (2) Madrasas continue to prioritize religious values, achievements, have good morals, are healthy, skilled, and have a national perspective on the design of relaxation of the heart; (3) Religious coaches coordinate with homeroom teachers in instilling religious values, achievements, character, health, skills, and national insight; (4) Establishment of a moral clinic by means of previous diagnostics regarding several students who have different behaviors, which are caused by various factors, for example: parents who do not take care of them, environmental factors, and other factors; (5) Organizing and fostering activities for mastering foreign language skills (Arabic and English); (6) Organizing and fostering mastery of information and communication technology skills; (7) Development of the value of love for the homeland through routine flag ceremonies and singing the national anthem in class; (8) The participation of parents so far has only been shown through donations of financial assistance from the school committee so that facilities and infrastructure can continue to be developed (Musyarapah & Helmiannoor, 2019) and (9) Schools involve teachers to become coaches of student activities.

The reported results of the data analysis are related to the initiatives the school has executed with stakeholders. Photos of heroes must be shown in the classroom as a form of introduction and construction of patriotism and nationalistic principles, and development of practice questions and exams to balance the educational value of science and social studies students. It also aims to improve student competence in subject areas so that they are always prepared to compete; Guidance on teacher competence by the needs of the development of science and technology is provided regularly; The school organizes competitions between classes or particular subject areas; as Tschisgale et al., (2024) says that competitions promote cognitive developments; Teachers must meet with the guardians of students every month so that this activity can absorb their aspirations; and The school provides guidelines for home study.

Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Mataram in 2021 has 125 achievements. Then in 2022, for six months, students have received 200 achievements. The school principal has been instructed to record all details of his activities which consist of organizers, types of achievements, medals, and other information.

The school actively recognizes and documents student achievements through a diary comprising photos, organizers, and concise one-paragraph narrations. This initiative serves as a systematic record of student accomplishments. Notably, one student successfully passed a grant proposal at the Ministry of Religion's Madrasah Young Researchers Super Camp (MYRES). Since 2021, the school has implemented this practice as part of its commitment to celebrating and encouraging student achievements.

The results of interviews with participants and document analysis revealed that Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Mataram has implemented several programs in collaboration with stakeholders, including:

1. forming an academy team that guarantees the academic quality of each student

- 2. student team, which is a quality assurance team in student affairs
- 3. The PR team is tasked with publishing so that the results of student achievements will be published through the Madrasah Literacy Movement in the community
- 4. religious group, namely instilling religious values owned by students, which includes Arabic, Hadith, Quran, tahfidz, and others
- 5. facilities and infrastructure: there are two digital or multimedia madrasah laboratories. The multimedia laboratory has two devices obtained from government assistance of 500 million. With this laboratory, teachers can teach through an LCD screen directly connected to Android or students' smartphones.
 - 6. Cooperating and collaborating with tutoring institutions to help students improve academically.
- 7. Cooperation and collaboration with Bank Syariah Indonesia, which manages salaries, cooperatives, committees, students, and others. If the school gets assistance, all finances will go into an account at Bank Syariah Indonesia.
- 8. Bank Syariah Indonesia has developed a new technology for students through school e-cards so that parents can limit the amount of pocket money given to their children.
 - 9. The school provides special treatment for students who have low academic abilities.
- 10. The school establishes regular communication with parents regarding the low academic level of students. This means that the school invites parents to communicate about exceptional conditions that occur in activities at school.
- 11. A politician chairs an alum association forum, so this forum activity can accommodate the existence of alums who have been successful in various fields and can contribute to schools in building business or industrial networks for other graduates.
- 12. Coaching for students participating in the Olympics is carried out jointly between teachers, outside parties, and alumni.

Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Mataram in 2021 had 125 achievements. Then in 2022, for six months, students received 200 achievements. The school principal was instructed to record all details of his activities which consist of organizers, types of achievements, medals, and other information. Of course, the school also gives appreciation to students whose achievements. One student passed the grant proposal at the Ministry of Religion's Madrasah Yong Researchers Super Camp (MYRES). Starting in 2021, the school made an achievement diary consisting of photos, organizers, and only one-paragraph narration as a form of documenting student achievement data.

Schools make policies related to using smartphones for students in schools through collaboration with students' parents. The direction of this policy is to be useful for students. So, schools utilize smartphones for students optimally in learning matters as an innovation in digitizing learning in schools. In addition, the school developed the concept of counseling and guidance for students related to using social media and games, because the community's participation in school-based administration may be utilized to meet the difficulties of the digital age (Ratnasari et al., 2018). In 2022, the school made a new history because of the 420 students who took the national exam. There have been around 280 students who were accepted into

universities through the invitation to the State Islamic Religious College Entrance Selection. So almost 70% of students can enter through the state university test.

Schools must consider the synergistic relationship between instructors and students, as it is the teacher who is ultimately responsible for fulfilling the goal. The teacher can also play a full role in fostering student communication with totality to achieve academic and non-academic achievements. This, of course, can also impact the trust of parents to be involved in various academic and non-academic activities. In developed parts of the world, teachers and students engage in expanded participation with community-based projects, which aim to increase their understanding of real-world environments, expand their capacity to integrate theory and practice, and broaden their global outlook (Harfitt & Chow, 2018; Farley-Ripple & MacGregor 2024). The form of collaboration between schools and communities is a bridge to achieving the success of educational goals and achievements for schools (Arifin, 2016). Besides, this collaboration is used to plan and develop educational purposes (Aref, 2010; Ahmad, 2013; Sunhaji & Purnomo, 2020). School community synergies can also prevent school fees that do not follow applicable regulations from being collected (Zulfikar et al., 2018).

Thus, the synergy of school collaboration with stakeholders can describe (1) Community participation in the form of financial and non-financial education; (2) The pattern of community participation in education is direct and representative; (3) The factors that influence community participation in the implementation of pesantren cultural education are different from pesantren in general, alums who are spread across various professions, the managerial ability of the president of the foundation to modernize the madrasa, one's status and position, strategic location, communication, economy, gender, age, place of residence, and opportunity to participate; and (4) the impact of community participation in education is positive and negative (Ali & Abdullah, 2019; Dinie, 2017; Sanders & Epstein, 1998).

Consequently, the data findings have presented a collaborative framework synergized by schools and focused on Working Systemically in Action, which provides a systematic approach. By working systemically, district and school staff move from fragmented improvement efforts to a more coherent and connected way of operating. SEDL has learned that school improvement, including engaging families and communities with districts and schools, occurs best when people and organizations come together to achieve a common goal, realizing that they can achieve more together than separately. SEDL approaches systemic improvement as a team-led effort that uses a five-phase process to work on three system dimensions (Ferguson et al., 2010);

- 1. Components underlying effective school improvement make for a robust educational support structure.
- 2. The core competencies needed for effective school improvement, how all involved build the capacity to create the support structure

The level of the system that needs to play a role should be involved in efforts to create a robust educational support structure.

4. CONCLUSION

The data analysis results concluded that synergistic collaboration between schools and stakeholders to construct the flagship program in the two-state madrasah Aliyah in Mataram was oriented toward Working Systemically in Action, which presented a systemic approach. This finding provides an understanding that collaboration and collaboration in a comprehensive manner is an excellent way to plan, develop, and implement various superior programs so that madrasas become outstanding and quality educational institutions that can face challenges and needs in the global and digital era. The two-state Aliyah madrasas in Mataram have demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of collaboration with

stakeholders. This strategic approach has positioned them as leading institutions, capable of competing by showcasing impressive academic and non-academic achievements.

In addition, the madrasa has also demonstrated the importance of community participation in achieving educational goals. However, the results of this study are still limited to the analysis of the two madrasas that have a quality improvement orientation. Thus, further researchers can consider expanding the research site so that the research results can create a new map in forming an approach or model of community participation in Mataram. This can have an impact on the planning of work programs for education delivery that are oriented toward 21st-century education. In addition, involving families or communities in schools has also become a method that is widely associated with increasing school success.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval: The study adheres to the ethical guidelines for conducting research.

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