Special Services of Integrated Islamic High Schools in Improving Education User Satisfaction in North Sumatra Province

Muhammad Munawir Pohan[1], Mukhtar Latif[2], Kemas Imron Rosyadi[3]
[1] *Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kerinci, Indonesia*
[2,3] *Universitas Islam Negeri Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Indonesia*
Corresponding Author : ✉ munawirpohan8@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the special services of Integrated Islamic High Schools in improving education user satisfaction in North Sumatra Province. This research uses qualitative research methods with a case study approach. The research subjects in this paper are principals, teachers, education personnel, parents, students, and alumni. Data collection consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data in this study contains four types of data, namely: interviews (semi-structured), observations, documents, and audio-visual materials. Meanwhile, secondary data is taken from library materials including books, online articles, online news, and school websites, all of which are related to the research objectives. Data analysis techniques start from validating the accuracy of information, transcribing data, preparing data, reading all data, coding data, connecting themes, and interpreting the meaning of themes. The data validity test consists of analyzing data sources, member checking, overcoming bias, using a long duration at the research site, and requesting the help of external auditors to conduct a comprehensive examination of the entire research. The results showed that Integrated Islamic High Schools in North Sumatra Province have a variety of specialized services with varying quality. In general, users are satisfied with the education services offered. However, some areas require improvement, such as teaching methods, school facilities, and technology integration.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an important aspect of human development, and its quality is a significant concern for individuals and society as a whole. Integrated Islamic high schools, in particular, play an important role in providing a holistic education that combines academic and religious teachings. However, ensuring user satisfaction in these educational institutions can be a complex challenge.

The quality of education is one of the key requirements in the era of globalization, and schools need to find effective and creative ways to improve their quality management systems (Diez et al., 2020).

To improve education user satisfaction at the Integrated Islamic High School, specialized services can be applied based on the concept of the 7P education service marketing mix, including offering comprehensive products that combine general and religious aspects, setting prices that target the middle-upper class economy, promoting through various channels such as online activities and word of mouth (Wahyuni et al., 2021). User satisfaction, particularly among students, is critical to the success and sustainability of educational institutions. Satisfied students are more likely to be actively involved in the learning process, show higher levels of motivation, and have a stronger sense of loyalty towards their school. User satisfaction is also an important indicator of the quality of educational services, as it reflects the effectiveness of the institution in meeting the needs and expectations of its students (Ulfah & Firdaus, 2019). High levels of user satisfaction can contribute to a variety of benefits, such as improved academic performance, increased enrollment and retention rates, and enhanced institutional reputation. Conversely, dissatisfied students may be less engaged, more likely to withdraw from the institution, and contribute to a negative perception of the school's quality (Allam, 2018).

Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System regulates the principles of national education, including the right of every citizen to obtain a proper education. Article 5 states that every citizen has the same right to obtain a quality education (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2023). The school's special services administration is actively involved in supporting the implementation of student learning and learning activities, both directly and indirectly. Specialized services in schools are designed to support students in achieving educational goals. Learning resource centers, school health centers, school guidance, and school canteens must be in place to facilitate the achievement of educational goals (Susanto, 2022).

Schools generally offer the same specialized services to students. However, the management and utilization processes differ. Guidance and counseling services, libraries, laboratories, extracurricular activities, school health efforts, canteens, cooperatives, student councils, transportation, dormitories, accelerated programs, and inclusive classes are some of the special services offered by schools (Zulkarnain, 2022).

To improve user satisfaction in integrated Islamic secondary schools, a multifaceted approach is needed including: 1) improving academic quality; 2)

improving teaching methods; 3) improving learning facilities; 4) strengthening support services to students; 5) integrating Islamic values and practices throughout the educational experience, including in the curriculum, teaching methods, and school culture, can foster a strong sense of identity and belonging among students; and 6) establishing open channels of communication between school administrators, teachers, and students, and regularly (Zhang & Ma, 2023).

In the last decade, there has been a different phenomenon that is both encouraging and exciting about the development of Islamic education in Indonesia. This can be seen in the growth of integrated Islamic education institutions in several major cities in Indonesia, ranging from kindergarten, elementary, junior high, and high school levels. This fact invites the sympathy of Muslims who see it as a form of modernization of Islamic education, although sometimes it raises the pros and cons of Islamic education (Lubis, 2018).

Based on the grand tour found in the field, although almost all services are very good at Integrated Islamic High School, there are some shortcomings according to education users, in this case, students and parents. First, Integrated Islamic High School students with a boarding system, sometimes students often feel bored, and some students miss their parents.

Previous studies related to special services in increasing education user satisfaction include research conducted by (Wong & Jackson, 2017; Arpilleda, 2017). The two preliminary studies above talk about service quality to increase education user satisfaction, which only focuses on student satisfaction. However, the two preliminary studies have not explored the satisfaction of other users such as parents and teaching staff. Therefore, the main focus of this research is to identify the needs and expectations of users (students, parents, and teaching staff) and evaluate the effectiveness of services.

The objectives of this study include: 1) to analyze the special services of Integrated Islamic High Schools in North Sumatra Province; and 2) to analyze the user satisfaction of Integrated Islamic High School education in North Sumatra Province.

RESEARCH METHODE

In this study, the authors used a qualitative research method with a case study approach. Case studies are research designs found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which researchers develop an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, activity event, process, or one or more individuals (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The author took the research location in one of the

Integrated Islamic High Schools in North Sumatra Province. The research subjects in this paper are principals, teachers, education personnel, parents, students, and alumni. The author uses a purposive sampling technique, which is one method of selecting informants in qualitative research where the researcher selects informants or research subjects intentionally based on certain criteria relevant to the research objectives (Bandur, 2016).

Data collection consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data in this research contains four types of data, namely: interviews (semi-structured), observations, documents, and audio-visual materials. Meanwhile, secondary data is taken from library materials including books, online articles, online news, and school websites, all of which are related to the research objectives. The data analysis technique starts with validating the accuracy of information, transcribing data, preparing data, reading all data, coding data, connecting themes, and interpreting the meaning of themes (Creswell, 2016). Data validity testing consisted of analyzing data sources, member checking, overcoming bias, using a long duration at the research site, and enlisting the help of external auditors to conduct a comprehensive examination of the entire study (Weller & Barnes, 2014).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research shows that Integrated Islamic Senior High Schools in North Sumatra Province generally have adequate facilities such as laboratories, libraries, and sports facilities. However, there are variations in quality between schools that affect the effectiveness of learning. Integrated Islamic Senior High Schools implement a curriculum that combines general education with Islamic religious education, with special programs such as Al-Qur'an and Arabic language learning as distinctive features (Informant 1).

The quality of teachers in integrated Islamic high schools varies, with some schools having experienced and highly qualified teachers, while other schools face challenges in meeting the expected teaching standards. The extracurricular programs offered are quite diverse and focus on developing students' character through Islamic values, including sports, arts, and social activities (Informant 2).

Some Islamic Integrated Senior High Schools have started to integrate technology in the learning process, such as the use of computers, projectors, and internet access, although not all schools have adequate access to this technology, resulting in imbalances in its application. Professional development programs for teachers in Integrated Islamic High Schools still vary, with some schools providing regular training and self-development opportunities for

teachers while others face constraints in terms of budget and resources. The level of parental involvement in the education process at integrated Islamic high schools is high, with programs and activities that actively involve parents, such as regular meetings, parenting seminars, and joint religious activities (Informant 3).

Users (students and parents) are generally satisfied with the quality of learning that integrates religious values with general knowledge, although there are some complaints related to teaching methods that need to be adjusted to the times. The level of satisfaction with school facilities is quite high, especially in schools that have made large investments in infrastructure, while schools that still lack facilities receive less satisfactory responses from users (Informant 4).

Users expressed high satisfaction with the various extracurricular activities available, which were considered capable of developing students' talents and interests holistically. The conducive and religious school environment was highly appreciated by users, with a safe and comfortable environment being an important factor in determining satisfaction levels. Users are generally satisfied with the communication and interaction that occurs between teachers and students, where teachers are considered responsive enough to the needs and problems faced by students, although there are some complaints regarding the limited time of teachers in dealing with individual student problems (Informant 5).

The social environment at the Integrated Islamic High School is positively assessed by users, with a culture of mutual respect and care between students that is in line with the Islamic values taught at the school. Users are satisfied with the academic achievements made by students, and achievements in non-academic fields such as sports, arts, and religious competitions are also appreciated by users (Informant 6).

This research shows that facilities at Integrated Islamic Senior High Schools in North Sumatra Province are adequate, including laboratories, libraries, and sports facilities. However, there are variations in quality between schools that affect learning effectiveness. Complete facilities are an important factor in supporting an optimal learning process. Good school facilities can improve students' academic achievement.

Integrated Islamic High Schools implement a curriculum that combines general education with Islamic religious education, with special programs such as Quran memorization and Arabic language learning as distinctive features. This approach is in line with the findings of Hossain & Tarmizi (2013) who emphasized the importance of integrating religious education into the

curriculum to shape students' noble character. The quality of teachers in Integrated Islamic High Schools varies, with some schools having experienced and highly qualified teaching staff, whereas other schools face challenges in meeting the expected teaching standards. According to Darling-Hammond (2000), the quality of teachers is one of the key factors in determining educational success.

Extracurricular programs at Integrated Islamic High Schools are quite diverse and focus on developing students' characters by Islamic values. Studies by Eccles & Barber (1999) show that participation in extracurricular activities can improve students' social and academic skills. Some Integrated Islamic High Schools have started to integrate technology into the learning process, although not all schools have adequate access. Therefore, effective technology integration can improve student learning outcomes. However, inequality in access to technology can be a barrier.

Professional development programs for teachers in integrated Islamic high schools still vary. According to Desimone (2009), continuous professional development is important to improve teachers' competence and teaching effectiveness. The level of parental involvement in the education process at SMA Islam Terpadu is quite high, with programs and activities that actively involve parents. Parental involvement contributes positively to academic achievement and child development.

Users (students and parents) are generally satisfied with the quality of learning that integrates religious values with general science, although there are some complaints regarding teaching methods. The level of satisfaction with school facilities is high in schools with good infrastructure. A conducive and religious school environment is highly appreciated by users, where a safe and comfortable environment is an important factor in determining satisfaction levels. According to Astor et al. (2001), a positive school environment plays a role in improving student well-being and achievement. Users are satisfied with the academic and non-academic achievements made by students. Studies by Marsh & Kleitman (2002) show that achievements in academic and non-academic fields contribute to the holistic development of students.

Modernizing school services through technology integration, such as the use of biometrics for attendance and online services, improves efficiency and quality. Such developments benefit students, parents, teachers, and school administrators. By addressing these key areas, a robust school service system can be built to support the needs of the whole educational environment.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that Integrated Islamic Senior High Schools in North Sumatra Province have a range of specialized services with varying quality. In general, users are satisfied with the educational services offered. However, some areas require improvement, such as teaching methods, school facilities, and technology integration.

Recommendations from this study include increased investment in school facilities to ensure equitable access to educational facilities and infrastructure, development of continuous training and professional development programs for teachers, and wider integration of technology in the learning process to improve the quality of education. In addition, it is recommended to strengthen communication between teachers, students, and parents to ensure full support for the education process. Regular evaluation of education services and user satisfaction is also needed to identify areas of improvement. This study provides important guidance for policymakers, schools, and other relevant parties in the effort to improve the quality of education in Integrated Islamic High Schools in Sumatra Province.

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