Analyzing Madrasah Teacher Performance Assessment in Underdeveloped Areas: A Phenomenological Study in Maluku Province

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Abstract
Teacher performance assessment is a system designed to determine teachers' capacity to perform their duties by assessing the competence of skills demonstrated in their performance. Analyzing the madrasah teacher's performance assessment in underdeveloped areas of Indonesia is challenging. This study aimed to decipher the experience of assessing the performance of madrasah teachers in underdeveloped regions of Indonesia. It was a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach conducted in Maluku Province. Purposive sampling was used to select samples, including the head of the Islamic Education Department of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Regency, the madrasah principals, and teachers assessed for their performance. The data was gathered through interviews and analyzed using an interactive model. The findings revealed five significant problems with the madrasah teacher performances in underdeveloped areas: compliance with teacher performance assessment (TPA) guidelines, implementation, natural conditions, costs, and transportation.

Keywords: Madrasah Teacher's Performance, Phenomenological Study, Teacher Performance Assessment, Underdeveloped Areas.

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Introduction
Teachers are the essential factor in determining whether or not national education goals are accomplished. They have the most critical elements in realizing national education
because they play an active role and are recognized as professionals.¹ As professional educators, teachers must be innovative in successfully implementing valuable learning strategies.² They should employ effective learning strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning programs and increase student achievement. They also should create learning strategies based on student needs and the required time rather than simply modeling pre-existing learning strategies.³ In this regard, efforts to determine teachers’ success in improving educational quality can be high-available on teacher performance achievements.⁴

One form of teacher performance achievement can be seen in student-learning outcomes, as the research results showed that teacher performance is influenced by increasing student achievement.⁵ It indicates that teacher performance is a barometer for successfully educating and shaping students' personalities.⁶ The teacher performance quality can be known by conducting a Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) assessment. TPA components include mastery of four teacher competencies; pedagogic, personality, social, and professional, which are associated with the implementation of the primary duties of teachers.⁷ TPA must be conducted consistently in developed and underdeveloped areas.⁸

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Numerous research on teacher performance has been conducted in several countries. In Australia, TPA is helpful to the profession and graduate teachers. It can improve professional ties between schools and institutions. As a result, there was the conclusion that all educational institutions were required to implement TPA as part of education policy in Australia. Based on an investigation conducted by Jeschke et al. in 20 German universities for pre-service teachers and in-service teachers for the upper secondary level at 38 public schools in Germany, they found that teacher education should balance domain-specific teacher knowledge and learning opportunities for action-related skills in each domain. In Indonesia, improving teacher performance is carried out by providing special education and training, evaluation of teachers' performance, methods for decision-making related to teachers' performance, implementing TPA, and supervising the madrasah principal. In addition, other researchers showed that the lack of an assessment team to assess teacher performance in madrasa is one of the obstacles.

Those research results show the dynamics of improving teachers' performance, where the primary gap is the distinction between action expectations and the results regarding teachers' performance. In this regard, the challenges of implementing TPA in underdeveloped areas differ from those in developed areas. Indonesia is undeniably a maritime country with an archipelago, and it still has 62 underdeveloped districts until 2020. These areas have less developed areas and communities than other areas on a national scale.\textsuperscript{17}

Maluku Province is one of the provinces in Eastern Indonesia, and there are currently six districts classified as underdeveloped, as well as 175 madrasas. It is from Raudaltul Athfal (kindergarten) to Madrasah Aliyah (senior high school) level. Tanibar Islands has 11 madrasahs with 32 teachers, Aru Islands has 13 madrasahs with 138 teachers, West Seram has 84 madrasahs with 860 teachers, East Seram has 49 madrasahs with 522 teachers, Southwest Maluku has one madrasah with two teachers, and South Buru has 17 madrasahs with 149 teachers. Overall, there are 1,703 teachers. Therefore, the ratio of teachers and madrasahs in 6 districts is 1:10. It shows that in 1 madrasah, ten teachers teach, except for Southwest Maluku Regency, because there is only one RA madrasah. The performance assessment of madrasah teachers in Maluku Province is not optimal, and there is no Islamic education supervisor at the Ministry of Religion office in the Aru Islands.\textsuperscript{18} For this reason, this paper focuses on a phenomenological analysis of madrasah teacher performance assessment in Maluku Province.

Methods

It was a qualitative study using a phenomenological approach.\textsuperscript{19} Researchers used a phenomenological approach to decrypt the experiences of supervisors, madrasah principals, and teachers in assessing the performance of madrasah teachers in underdeveloped areas. The research was carried out in six state madrasahs in underdeveloped regions of Maluku Province. This location was chosen because it was one of the areas in Indonesia with many small island clusters, and there were still six areas that lag behind the 11 regions/cities in Maluku Province.

Participants in this study included supervisors from the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Regency, madrasah principals, and teachers (N = 21). Researchers determined participants based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria in this study are Work location (N = 4 from Aru Islands, seven from West Seram, and ten from East Seram); Gender (N = 15 males and six females); Age (N = 5 aged 18-30 years, eight aged 31-43 years, seven aged 44-56 years, and one aged >57 years); Positions (N = 3 supervisors, six madrasa principals, and 12 teachers); and Service period (N = 6 participants < 10 years, 7 participants 11-20 years, and 8 participants 21-30 years). The exclusion criteria for this study were teachers who do not state employer teachers or have a service period of > 30 years but are still teaching.

Interviews were used to collect data on the experience of assessing the performance of madrasah teachers in underdeveloped areas of Maluku Province, Eastern Indonesia. Throughout the interview, researchers provided as an interviewer. Interviews were conducted and recorded in Indonesian, and the results were re-examined in subsequent interview sessions to produce reliable and robust data. The interviewees' identities were not revealed. At the start of data collection, researchers informed the participants that their participation was voluntary, that their identities were withheld, and that only the researchers had access to their true identities. The information provided by participants had no bearing on the outcome of the participant's future performance assessment. Any data and information submitted by participants will be kept confidential by the researcher. Researchers' efforts in ensuring the validity of data and the quality of research were carried out through credibility (reflection of the researcher), reliability (quality of recordings and compliance in data transcripts), confirmability (diary of the researcher), and transferability (describing the phenomenon in as much detail as possible). Data analysis was carried out through four stages: collection, condensation, display, and conclusion. Data analysis of interview results used qualitative content analysis of 21 interview participants. The research was carried out using the help of ATLAS.ti.22 software.

Discussion

Teacher performance assessment is expected to realize dignified teachers following regulatory mandates. At the same time help teacher career development as professional
Educators. That assessment must be carried out consistently and regularly every fiscal year by considering the principles of implementing the performance assessment of madrasah teachers. However, implementing that assessment in underdeveloped areas in the archipelago has different challenges from other regions.

Maluku Province is one of the provinces in Eastern Indonesia and currently has six districts in underdeveloped areas. There are 175 madrasahs with 1,703 teachers. The six districts are separated from each other, which are separated by the ocean. Thus, they are archipelagic areas. The condition of such an island region makes it a challenge to assess teacher performance. The research findings obtained from interviews with participants related to the difficulties of determining the performance of madrasah teachers in underdeveloped areas are presented in Figure 1 using ATLAS.ti 22.

Figure 1. Thematic Description of the Teacher Performance Assessment Challenges in Underdeveloped Areas

Figure 1. shows that at least five main factors become challenges in assessing the performance of madrasah teachers in underdeveloped regions in Eastern Indonesia. They are compliance with teachers' performance assessment guidelines, the implementation, natural conditions, costs, and transportation, where each factor has different phenomena.

Compliance with TPA Guidelines

The findings related to the timing of the assessment revealed that the TPA could not be completed in late October or the first week of November. One of the supervisors told it in data 3, "The madrasah we went to was quite far from the center of the district capital. We
had to take the journey by sea route took about 5-6 hours to get to a location that could only be reached by riding a speedboat. We can't go to the location if it's wave season that month”.

The inconsistency of the assessment time with the TPA guidelines is due to natural conditions, including such access to madrasahs in the islands area being only by sea, and if there is a sea wave, the assessment process from the supervisor of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office of the Regency/City must be postponed.

The provisions in conducting the assessment should be based on the actual conditions of the teacher through data collection through observation according to the procedures and evaluation criteria provided. However, the findings showed that not every assessment could be observed by teachers in carrying out daily tasks. One of the interview results is demonstrated in data 3 ”Another teacher replaces the learning process. It is not uncommon for teachers here who are not present to only give an assignment to one of the students to copy the assignment or writing in the written textbook and followed by other students.” It showed that observations could not be made due to the absence of teachers in carrying out their duties and being replaced by other teachers.

It was justified by one of the substitute teachers in data 2 ”I am an English teacher who has served on the island for 15 years, but also teaches other subjects because the teacher of that subject does not come,” and what was revealed by the other teacher participants at a different location in data 2 ”I often fill in the vacancies of other teachers so that students are not displaced.” Another finding was revealed in data 5 ”I can't make any observations at all times on teacher performance because the existing application for those observations must be used online. While in this area, sometimes the signal is absent”. One of the supervisors on the TPA team revealed that the application for monitoring teacher performance depends on the availability of the internet network.

In addition to time constraints and objectivity, commitment was another obstacle to compliance with TPA guidelines. It was one of the things that must be obeyed by the assessees and teachers who are assessed to harmonize attitudes and actions in implementing the madrasah TPA by the procedure until it is completed.


in the training as TPA team”. The findings show that the ability of human resources in the madrasah had not been qualified as a TPA. Therefore, to assess teachers' performance, the madrasah should wait for the supervisory team of the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Regency. National data shows that as many as 60% of madrasah teachers, both Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) do not have adequate academic qualifications as teachers; as many as 20% of teachers teach outside their field of expertise, and of all teachers, only 20% are eligible in terms of their educational qualifications.  

TPA might still refer to the provisions and rules of the applicable laws and regulations. These provisions and limitations were contained in the TPA guidelines. It was a mecca for assessors and teachers who are assessed for their performance so that the assessment process can be carried out objectively, fairly, accountably, transparently, participatory, measurably, committed, and sustainable. Objective, where all the scores obtained should be based on the actual conditions of the teacher in carrying out daily tasks through data collection through observation and monitoring by the procedures and assessment criteria provided. Fair, teachers were assessed on the same terms, conditions, and policies. Accountable, the assessment team can account for the assessment results based on evidence in the control process. 

Transparent, where the assessment process allows the assessee and other interested parties to obtain information about what will be assessed, how the assessment process was carried out, and the assessment results. Participatory, the assessor should participate in an interview activity before observation and approval after observation by involving the active participation of the teacher. Measurable, the assessment was carried out qualitatively (observation and monitoring) and quantitatively (through performance indicators and criteria). Commitment, where the assessee, the asseessee, and the teacher who are assessed have the willingness and ability to align attitudes and actions for evaluating following the 


25 Syaifuluddin, “Implementation of Authentic Assessment.”

procedure until it is completed. Continuous, where the performance assessment process must be followed by teachers while holding the profession as an educator.

Cost, Transportation, and Natural Conditions

The findings showed that cost, transportation, and natural conditions were interrelated factors in TPA madrasahs in underdeveloped areas. The relationship between these factors was presented in Figure 2 analysis using ATLAS.ti.

Figure 2. The Relationship between Cost, Transportation, and Natural Conditions in TPA

Cost is a challenge in this TPA due to the limited budget from the government to finance TPA activities. It was revealed in data 5 "Our budget for doing this TPA is minimal. The costs we use are mostly for speedboat rentals, especially when the weather constrains it. We have to spend twice as much". One of the assessment teams from the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Regency/City revealed it. That is because the assessment must be carried out before the end of the fiscal year, around the end of October or the beginning of the first week of November of each year. The government's limited budget occurred because the Ministry of Religious Affairs was a reasonably large government agency, and the funding was distributed according to the proportion of each unit/institution under it. However, it was undeniable that cost was an important factor in implementing TPA.

27 Retnawati, Hadi, and Nugraha, “Vocational High School Teachers’ Difficulties.”

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madrasahs in underdeveloped areas, especially in island areas such as Maluku Province. Efforts to get to the location must be reached by sea transportation.

In addition, the factor affecting the increased costs was the form of natural conditions. When assessing teachers' performance in isolated areas, the team had to ask for the help of residents to accompany them on the way to the madrasa location, considering that the distance was quite far and they traveled within hours on foot. It was revealed in data 7 "Once we spent money when we went to the madrasah location because we had to ask locals for help accompanying our trip due to difficult travel terrain conditions." Such field conditions can reduce costs when the existing budget is limited. Costs can be an obstacle to a work activity when it does not match the needs of its availability. The fees for the expenditure TPA of madrasah activities in underdeveloped areas, especially in island areas such as Maluku Province, would differ from other regions. The budgeted costs must follow expenses and sacrifices to benefit from the TPA of the madrasah.

The findings in data 3 previously also related to transportation which showed that efforts to get to the madrasah location in the islands area could only be reached by riding a speedboat. The use of this mode of transportation, of course, required much money. The rental fee could reach four to five million to get to the lagging madrasah. As for isolated areas in underdeveloped areas, no mode of transportation can be used unless it might be reached by foot. The Ministry of Religious Affairs Office of the Regency/City supervisory team should walk up to 4-6 hours to get to the location. The natural demographic conditions in the form of hills and having to pass through forests made it challenging for natural conditions to carry out madrasah TPA in underdeveloped areas in Maluku Province. It showed that natural conditions significantly affect the implementation of teacher performance in underdeveloped regions, especially in island areas.

TPA Implementation

The challenge of TPA madrasahs in other underdeveloped areas lies in implementation. The findings show that the madrasahs' TPA in underdeveloped regions has not followed preparation and socialization. The assessor who will conduct the TPA must have an appropriate or cognate educational background or master the field of study of the madrasah teacher to be assessed. It is in line with the interview results in the previous 6 data.


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which showed that the qualifications of the teacher performance appraiser were not appropriate. In addition to the capabilities that require conformity between the assessee and the teacher, the assessee is assessed as a hindrance found in the underdeveloped area in the form of no supervisor or assessor. The results of the interview in data 7, "There is no supervision to assess the performance of teachers in the madrasah because there is indeed no Islamic education supervisor at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in our district", and in data 3, "There is no supervision to assess teacher performance in madrasahs because there are no teachers who qualify as supervisors."

It is undoubtedly a gap in evaluating teachers' performance in developed areas with underdeveloped areas because human resources in developed regions have participated in supervisory training and must assess teacher performance optimally. Provisions for assessor who carry out madrasah TPA must attend training and be declared to have passed as TPA assessors organized by the Ministry of Religion or the Religious Training Center. It is expected that the assessee can make observations and assessments objectively, reasonably, and transparently on peers' performance.

In addition to preparation, socialization in implementing TPA was considered not optimal. The findings showed that the socialization considered not optimal was the socialization of TPA instruments and the mechanism for implementing TPA. The interview results showed that many teachers still do not know the details of the madrasah TPA indicators. So sometimes, what the teacher prepared to be assessed does not match the assessment results. In addition, the socialization of the TPA mechanism had not been maximized. The results of interviews with several teachers who have worked less than ten years (< 10 years) show that during work, only 2–4 times received socialization of the TPA mechanism from the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Regency/City. Thus, when an assessment is carried out, it is not uncommon for teachers not to know the assessment procedures carried out.

The Solution to TPA Challenges in Underdeveloped Areas

Based on the findings in the study related to the assessment of the performance of madrasah teachers in underdeveloped areas in Indonesia through phenomenological analyses in Maluku Province, solutions were offered to the challenges of TPA in

underdeveloped regions. Related to the challenges at the time of the assessment, the requirements for implementing the TPA of madrasa were carried out for one year throughout the year so that the assessment team could evaluate at any time. However, in the TPA guidelines, the assessment was mainly carried out from 8 (eight) weeks before the end of the fiscal year until around the end of October or the beginning of the first week of November each year. For certain areas, such as island areas and isolated areas, the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 1843 of 2021 concerning Technical Guidelines for TPA of Madrasah in Chapter 1 point E.3 needs to be reviewed regarding the timing of the assessment.

Regarding objectivity in TPA, the ministry should provide portfolio sheets manually for underdeveloped areas, considering that internet access was also an obstacle when using online-based applications. The portfolio sheet was expected to display the actual conditions of teachers in carrying out daily tasks and, at any time, can be used by the assessment team as accurate data collection material to anticipate the inability to observe and monitor directly.

The budgeted costs, of course, are the following expenses and sacrifices to benefit from the TPA of the madrasah. It was necessary to adjust the budget for the TPA of madrasahs in underdeveloped areas, especially in the islands. The cost was relatively higher because transportation was also different from transportation. In addition, unforeseen costs often had to be incurred due to natural conditions in the area. Furthermore, related to the absence of supervisors who can carry out TPA of the madrasah, the assessment can be carried out by colleagues with an appropriate or cognate educational background or master the field of study of madrasah teachers who will be assessed, provided that the assessee might have: 1) an educator certificate, 2) academic qualifications of at least S1/D-4, 3) rank, class, and position at least the same as the teacher being assessed, and 4) preferably had TPA results with a minimum score of Good. In addition, to facilitate the assessment, the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 1843 of 2021 concerning Technical Guidelines for Madrasah TPA in Chapter 3 point A.1.a.1.f states that if the assessee has never received training, then the head of the madrasah is assisted by a teacher who understands the guidelines for assessing teacher performance.30

Another provision in the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 1843 of 2021 concerning Technical Guidelines for TPA of Madrasah, if the madrasah does

not have an appraiser following the requirements, what is done is 1) the head of the madrasah was required to report the matter to the Head of the Ministry of Religion Office of the Regency/City/Province to assign a replacement appraiser following the requirements. The assignment of the assessor was determined by the head of the Ministry of Religion Office of the Regency/City/Province on the proposal of the head of the madrasah; and 2) For madrasahs in remote, outermost, and other particular areas, the assessment was carried out by the head of the madrasah assisted by an assessor available in the madrasah. Furthermore, the socialization of madrasah TPA instruments and mechanisms was considered necessary. It needed to be done so the teacher prepared all the needs for the assessment. Through socialization activities of TPA instruments and agencies, teachers will learn instrument tools and follow the stages of implementing TPA. Socialization efforts in underdeveloped areas can be carried out periodically every year. Socialization can be done jointly with all teachers in the same place.

Conclusion

This study set out to analyze madrasah teacher performance assessment in Maluku Province. This study has found that assessing the madrasah teachers' performance in underdeveloped areas faces five significant challenges; compliance with TPA guidelines, implementation, natural conditions, costs, and transportation. Those challenges create a gap between the results of TPA in underdeveloped areas and developed areas. In other words, it is necessary to have a teacher performance assessment instrument that can accommodate the teachers' condition following the characteristics of their sites, especially in underdeveloped areas. The tool is expected to provide fairness in teacher performance assessment to minimize inequality in Indonesia's underdeveloped and developed regions.

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