

THE POLICY OF USING ENGLISH FOR TEACHING IN INDONESIAN ISLAMIC SCHOOLS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Implementing English as a mandatory language for teaching remains a contentious policy, especially among educators who are not English subject teachers or do not come from the English department. This research investigates the policies, opportunities, and challenges associated with enforcing English language policies in Islamic schools in Indonesia. Using a mixed-method design, the study surveyed 77 participants from various Islamic schools across Indonesia, employing questionnaires, observations, and interviews for data collection. The findings reveal that specific policies in Indonesian Islamic schools can address three key aspects: justification (addressing particular needs and challenges while maximizing benefits and minimizing drawbacks), logic (strategic implementation to optimize outcomes), and feasibility (practicality and achievability of implementing English language policies). Furthermore, English language policies present significant opportunities, such as enhanced global competence, economic empowerment, educational advancement, cultural exchange and understanding, technological integration, and international collaboration and partnerships. However, several challenges hinder the implementation of these policies, including the preservation of cultural identity and values, resource constraints, language proficiency, resistance to change, and assessment and evaluation. Future research is expected to explore new strategies to overcome these challenges and maximize the opportunities of using English in Indonesian Islamic schools, thereby ensuring the success of English language policies.

Keywords: *educational policy; English language instruction; Indonesian Islamic schools; opportunities; challenges.*

1. Introduction

In the diverse landscape of Indonesian education, integrating English language instruction within Islamic schools is proof of the evolving nature of pedagogy and the pursuit of educational excellence. Indonesian Islamic schools have historically been bastions of Quranic studies and Islamic sciences, where Arabic has traditionally served as the primary medium of instruction (Daneshgar, 2023; Romziana & Lutfi, 2023). However, against the backdrop of globalization and the imperative to equip students with 21st-century skills,

policymakers have embarked on a significant policy endeavor: the incorporation of English into the curriculum of these institutions.

The decision to incorporate English into the curriculum of Islamic schools underscores a broader commitment to prepare students for a rapidly changing global landscape. English, as the lingua franca of international communication, offers students a gateway to access knowledge, collaborate across borders, and engage with diverse perspectives (Budianto, Hadi, et al., 2022). By embracing English language instruction, Islamic schools demonstrate adaptability and responsiveness to the demands of the modern world while retaining their core values and religious teachings. This strategic move not only empowers students with linguistic proficiency but also equips them with the cross-cultural competence necessary for success in an interconnected world. The integration of English language instruction fosters greater inclusivity and diversity within Islamic schools. It opens doors for students from diverse backgrounds and linguistic abilities to thrive and contribute to the vibrant educational community. Through English-medium instruction, students are exposed to a broader range of educational resources, including literature, scientific research, and technological innovations (Oishi et al., 2024; Sahan & Şahan, 2024; Zheng & Qiu, 2024). This exposure enriches their learning experiences and prepares them to navigate a globalized society with confidence and competence.

Moreover, the incorporation of English into the curriculum of Islamic schools represents a forward-looking approach to educational reform and innovation. It reflects a recognition of the dynamic nature of education and the need to continuously adapt pedagogical practices to meet evolving societal needs. By embracing English language education, Islamic schools position themselves as pioneers in educational excellence, poised to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and competitive world. In essence, the integration of English language instruction within Indonesian Islamic schools symbolizes a paradigm shift in educational philosophy—a recognition of the imperative to marry tradition with modernity, faith with global citizenship, and cultural heritage with the demands of the contemporary world. This strategic endeavor not only empowers students with linguistic proficiency but also instills in them the values of tolerance, curiosity, and lifelong learning, thereby shaping them into enlightened global citizens capable of navigating the complexities of the 21st century with wisdom and resilience.

2. Literature Review

2.1 English Language Instruction in Indonesian Islamic Schools

Introducing English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools represents a departure from the traditional emphasis on Arabic and Islamic studies. Historically, these schools have nurtured a strong foundation in religious education, utilizing Arabic as the language of instruction for Quranic recitation, memorization, and understanding. While Arabic proficiency remains highly valued within Islamic education, the emergence of English as a global lingua franca has prompted a re-evaluation of language policies within the educational sphere. Over the past decades, Indonesia has gradually recognized the importance of English language proficiency for national development and global competitiveness. While English has long been taught as a foreign language in Indonesian schools, its integration into the curriculum of Islamic schools signifies a broader shift towards bilingual education and the cultivation of multilingual competencies among students.

English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools has undergone a significant evolution over the years, reflecting the changing educational landscape and societal demands. The history of English language teaching in these institutions dates back to the early days of Islamic education in the archipelago, but its formal integration into the curriculum gained momentum in the late 20th century (Nasakina & Maiev, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023). Since then, English has become a vital component of education in Indonesian madrasahs, shaping the linguistic and cultural landscape of these institutions. Historically, Islamic education in Indonesia has deep roots, with the establishment of pesantrens (traditional Islamic boarding schools) dating back centuries. These schools primarily focused on religious teachings and Quranic studies, with little emphasis on secular subjects such as English language instruction (Budianto, Yusrotul, et al., 2022). However, with the increasing globalization and recognition of the importance of English as a global lingua franca, there emerged a need to incorporate English into the curriculum of Islamic schools to equip students with essential language skills for the modern world. The formal introduction of English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools gained traction in the late 20th century, influenced by government initiatives and international trends in education. Recognizing the importance of English proficiency for national development and global competitiveness, the Indonesian government began promoting English language learning at all levels of education, including madrasahs. This led to the integration of English into the curriculum of Islamic schools, albeit with varying degrees of implementation and resources across different institutions.

In the early stages of its incorporation, English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools faced several challenges, including a shortage of qualified teachers and limited resources (Isaacs, 2012). Many madrasahs struggled to find teachers who were proficient in English and knowledgeable about Islamic values, which are essential for maintaining the religious integrity of the institution. Additionally, the lack of textbooks, audio-visual aids, and technology hindered effective language teaching and learning in these schools, impacting students' language acquisition and overall educational experience (Widayani & Budianto, 2021). However, despite these challenges, English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools has continued to evolve and expand in recent years. With advancements in technology and increasing collaboration with international partners, madrasahs now have access to a wider range of resources and teaching materials to support English language learning. Moreover, there is a growing recognition among educators and policymakers of the importance of integrating English with Islamic studies, creating a more holistic learning environment for students (Amarnath et al., 2023; Zayapragassarazan et al., 2023).

Looking ahead, the future of English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools holds promise and potential. As the country continues to embrace globalization and technological advancements, the demand for English proficiency among madrasah graduates will only increase. By addressing the challenges of teacher shortage and resource constraints while leveraging opportunities for international collaboration and interdisciplinary learning, Indonesian madrasahs can effectively equip their students with the language skills and knowledge they need to thrive in an interconnected world, while also preserving their religious identity and values.

2.2 Rationale for Adopting English as a Medium of Instruction

The rationale for adopting English as a medium of instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools is rooted in both pragmatic considerations and aspirational goals (Çelik & Baturay, 2024; Emir & Yangın-Ekşi, 2024; Pun et al., 2024; Shi & Cheung, 2024). Firstly, English proficiency offers students access to a vast array of global knowledge and resources, ranging from scientific research to literary works and cultural exchanges. By engaging with English-language materials, students can broaden their intellectual horizons, gain exposure to diverse perspectives, and stay abreast of developments in various fields of study. Secondly, the integration of English into the curriculum enhances students' communication skills, empowering them to effectively interact and collaborate with individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In an era characterized by globalization and multiculturalism, proficiency in English has become a prerequisite for meaningful engagement in international dialogue, commerce, and diplomacy.

English has established itself as a dominant global language, influencing various facets of society, including education. The rationale for adopting English as a medium of instruction in educational institutions worldwide is multifaceted, rooted in historical, socio-cultural, economic, and educational considerations. This essay delves into the evolution of English as a medium of instruction, tracing its historical development and exploring the reasons behind its widespread adoption. The roots of English as a medium of instruction can be traced back to the colonial era when European powers, particularly the British Empire, spread their language through colonization. As these empires expanded their territories, English became the language of administration, commerce, and education in many regions across the globe (Molate & McKinney, 2024; Rana & Shaikh, 2024; Smith & Samuell, 2024). Consequently, the English language became entrenched in the educational systems of colonized countries, laying the groundwork for its future role as a medium of instruction.

The post-colonial period witnessed the emergence of English as a global lingua franca, further solidifying its status as a medium of instruction. As nations gained independence, they often retained English as the language of instruction due to its perceived prestige, international relevance, and economic opportunities associated with English proficiency. In many cases, English served as a unifying force in linguistically diverse societies, facilitating communication and fostering national cohesion (Alam, 2023; Kemalglu-Er & Lowe, 2023; Macalister & Akoyt, 2023). The rise of globalization in the late 20th and early 21st centuries accelerated the adoption of English as a medium of instruction on a global scale. With the increasing interconnectedness of economies, cultures, and knowledge systems, proficiency in English became essential for accessing international opportunities, such as higher education, employment, and participation in global networks. Educational institutions recognized the importance of equipping students with English language skills to navigate an increasingly globalized world, leading to the widespread integration of English-medium instruction programs.

Beyond its practical utility, the adoption of English as a medium of instruction reflects broader socio-cultural dynamics and educational ideologies. English is often perceived as a language of modernity, innovation, and progress, embodying the ideals of globalization and cosmopolitanism. Educational policymakers may view English-medium instruction as a means of modernizing their education systems and aligning them with global standards. Additionally, the prestige associated with English-medium education can attract students and resources to educational institutions, enhancing their reputation and competitiveness.

on the international stage. However, the adoption of English as a medium of instruction is not without its challenges and controversies. Critics argue that privileging English marginalizes indigenous languages and contributes to linguistic imperialism, eroding cultural diversity and language rights. In some contexts, the imposition of English-medium instruction has sparked resistance from linguistic minorities seeking to preserve their heritage languages and identities. Furthermore, the inequitable distribution of English language proficiency exacerbates existing disparities in access to quality education, perpetuating social inequality.

In response to these concerns, proponents of bilingual education advocate for the incorporation of indigenous languages alongside English in educational curricula. They argue that bilingualism promotes cognitive development, preserves cultural heritage, and fosters inclusive educational environments. Additionally, initiatives aimed at improving English language teaching and learning can help mitigate linguistic inequalities and ensure equitable access to educational opportunities. In conclusion, the rationale for adopting English as a medium of instruction reflects a complex interplay of historical legacies, socio-cultural dynamics, economic imperatives, and educational ideologies. While English offers undeniable advantages in a globalized world, its widespread adoption raises questions about linguistic diversity, cultural identity, and educational equity. Moving forward, policymakers and educators must navigate these challenges thoughtfully, striving to balance the practical benefits of English-medium instruction with the imperative of promoting linguistic and cultural diversity in education.

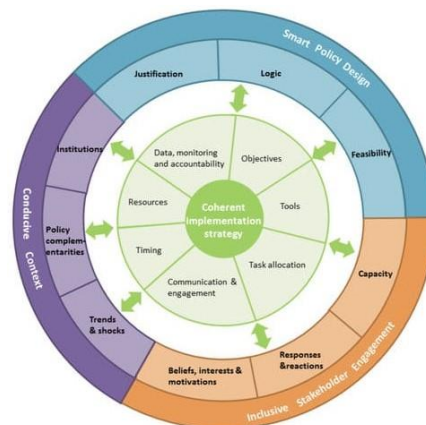
2.3 Policy of Using English within the Indonesian Islamic Educational Context

Indonesia, with its diverse cultural and linguistic landscape, has witnessed the integration of English language teaching into its educational systems, including Islamic schools. The policies governing the use of English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic schools have evolved, influenced by historical, socio-cultural, and educational factors. This essay explores the history and development of these policies, examining their impact on language education within the context of Islamic schooling in Indonesia. The history of English language teaching in Indonesian Islamic schools can be traced back to the colonial era when Indonesia was under Dutch rule. During this period, English was introduced primarily as a foreign language in elite educational institutions, including some Islamic schools that catered to the aristocracy and the urban elite (Elmas et al., 2023). However, English did not gain widespread prominence in Islamic education until the post-independence period, when Indonesia sought to modernize its educational system and align it with global standards.

In the decades following independence, the Indonesian government implemented various educational reforms aimed at promoting national unity and development. One significant development was the introduction of the national curriculum, which emphasized Bahasa Indonesia as the medium of instruction in all schools, including Islamic institutions. While Bahasa Indonesia remained the primary medium of instruction, English was gradually integrated into the curriculum as a compulsory subject, reflecting the growing importance of English proficiency in the global arena. The late 20th and early 21st centuries witnessed a renewed emphasis on English language teaching in Indonesian Islamic schools, driven by globalization and the increasing demand for English proficiency in various sectors, including business, technology, and academia. Recognizing the economic and social benefits of English

language skills, policymakers in Indonesia encouraged the expansion of English language programs in both public and private schools, including Islamic educational institutions. The policies governing the use of English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic schools have evolved in response to changing socio-cultural and educational dynamics. While English proficiency is increasingly valued as a means of enhancing students' competitiveness and global connectivity, there are also concerns about the potential erosion of Islamic identity and values in an English-medium environment. As a result, policymakers have sought to strike a balance between promoting English language proficiency and preserving the cultural and religious integrity of Islamic education.

In conclusion, the policies governing the use of English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic schools have undergone significant changes over time, reflecting shifts in educational priorities, societal needs, and global trends. While English language proficiency is increasingly emphasized as a key component of education in Indonesia, policymakers must continue to consider the unique cultural and religious context of Islamic schooling and ensure that policies support the holistic development of students within this framework. By navigating these complexities thoughtfully, Indonesia can harness the potential of English language education to empower its students while preserving the rich heritage of Islamic education.



Education Policy Implementation Framework (Viennet & Pont, 2017)

Justification in policy implementation in education involves tailoring strategies to address specific needs and challenges while maximizing benefits and minimizing drawbacks. This process entails a comprehensive understanding of the educational landscape, including factors like socio-economic disparities, infrastructure limitations, and pedagogical requirements. Effective implementation hinges on thorough planning, stakeholder engagement, and continuous evaluation to ensure alignment with overarching goals and adaptability to evolving circumstances. By embedding flexibility and responsiveness within the implementation framework, educational policies can better cater to the diverse needs of learners, educators, and communities, fostering equitable access to quality education and enhancing overall outcomes.

Strategic implementation of policies in education involves the meticulous execution of plans and initiatives to maximize their effectiveness and achieve desired outcomes. This entails translating policy objectives into actionable steps, allocating resources efficiently, fostering stakeholder engagement, and monitoring progress to ensure alignment with

overarching goals. Effective implementation in education requires robust planning, collaboration among various stakeholders including educators, administrators, policymakers, and community members, as well as adaptability to address unforeseen challenges. Additionally, it necessitates ongoing evaluation and feedback mechanisms to refine strategies and enhance their impact on student learning outcomes and overall educational quality.

Implementing an English language policy in education is both practical and achievable with careful planning and commitment. Key considerations include ensuring adequate infrastructure and resources, such as classrooms and trained educators proficient in English, and providing ongoing teacher training programs. Developing a curriculum that integrates English language instruction across subjects, establishing support systems for students, and engaging parents and the community are also crucial. Regular monitoring and evaluation, flexibility to accommodate diverse learning needs, and phased implementation are essential for success. Collaboration among stakeholders is paramount to navigate challenges and ensure effective adoption and implementation of the policy.

Furthermore, adopting English as a medium of instruction prepares students for future academic and professional pursuits, both within Indonesia and on the global stage. Proficiency in English opens doors to higher education opportunities abroad, as well as careers in multinational corporations, diplomatic service, and academia. By equipping students with English language skills, policymakers aim to foster their competitiveness in an increasingly interconnected world and position them for success in the global marketplace.

This research aims to fill this research gap. This research leads to two research questions, namely: (1) What are the policies for using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic Schools? (2) What are the opportunities in implementing the policies of using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic Schools? (3) What are the challenges in implementing the policies of using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic Schools? The results of this research will add insight into the field of English education, especially English language teaching policy.

3. Research Method

This research employs a mixed-method design. Mix method was chosen because it can scientifically elucidate events using straightforward language, thus uncovering facts about phenomena existing in society (Doyle et al., 2020; Kim, 2020; Rahman, 2019; Seixas et al., 2018). This method is utilized to unveil the implementation of English language teaching regarding the policies, opportunities, and challenges. The research involves participants from Islamic schools in Indonesia. Seventy-seven participants from the institutions were selected for the research. Random sampling was employed for participant selection, chosen for its potential to provide random and authentic participants without regulation, thus facilitating clear and detailed data collection (Kalton, 2011; Sharma, 2017; Taherdoost, 2016).

Instruments utilized in this research include questionnaires, observations, and interviews to explore research data. Interviews were selected as data mining instruments due to their capability to provide in-depth, clear, and detailed data. Interviews served as primary data collection tools, complemented by observational and questionnaire data. Observations were incorporated to describe the real events under study, intended as supporting data for interviews. Regarding research data analysis, four stages were

undertaken: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion (Miles et al., 2014). These stages were chosen for their ability to yield clear data as research findings. Initially, data were collected through interviews and observations, transcribed, and analyzed to reduce and extract data pertinent to research questions. Subsequently, the reduced data were compiled and presented in a comprehensible format, leading to the drawing of conclusions as the research findings.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings and discussions in this study shed light on the implementation and implications of using English as a medium of instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools. With a diverse sample of 77 respondents, including principals, vice principals, and teachers, this research delves into the nuances of language policy within the educational landscape. Notably, 76.6% of participants have extensive teaching experience, with a majority serving as homeroom teachers responsible for various non-English subjects such as mathematics, science, Islamic studies, art, and physical education. Drawing upon the framework of "Smart Policy Design" by Viennet and Pont (2017), the questionnaire utilized in this study comprises 42 questions, categorically addressing the justification, logic, and feasibility of English language integration. Through a comprehensive analysis of the gathered data, this paper navigates through the intricacies of language policy implementation, offering insights into the challenges, opportunities, and potential pathways for enhancing English proficiency within the Indonesian Islamic educational context.

4.1 Research Question 1: What are the policies for using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic Schools?

The findings and discussions of this study illuminate the policies governing the use of English in teaching within Indonesian Islamic schools, addressing the pivotal research question regarding the nature of these policies. Through a rigorous analysis of data obtained from 42 questions structured around "The Smart Policy Design Framework," the study categorizes responses into three aspects: justification (coded A1-A16), logic (coded B17-B24), and feasibility (coded C25-C42). These aspects are further synthesized into three overarching categories denoted as X, Y, and Z, as shown in this table.

X (A1-A16)	Y (B17-B24)	Z (C25-C42)
54.5%	52.2%	50.8%

Table 1. The result of the questionnaire

The findings and discussions regarding the policies of implementing English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools provide valuable insights into the nuanced approach taken by educational stakeholders. With questionnaires distributed through Google form, it becomes evident that a significant proportion of policies address three key areas: justification, logic, and feasibility. The endorsement rates for these areas—54.5% for justification, 52.2% for logic, and 50.8% for feasibility—highlight the widespread recognition of the importance of grounding language policies in rationale, strategic planning, and practical implementation considerations.

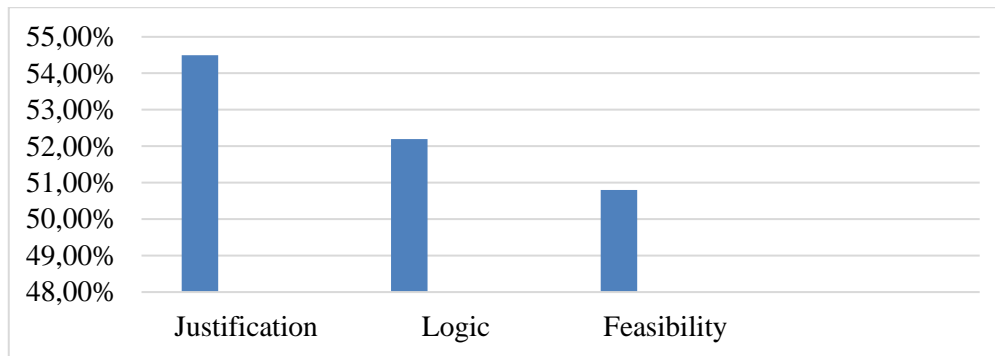


Figure 1. The aspects of English policy

This distribution underscores the multifaceted nature of language policy formulation within the Indonesian Islamic school context, where efforts to integrate English language instruction are influenced by a myriad of factors, including educational goals, resource availability, and community dynamics. By delving into these findings, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding language policy development and implementation, offering valuable insights for fostering effective language learning environments within Indonesian Islamic schools.

Category X encapsulates policies grounded in comprehensive justifications (A1-A16), emphasizing the rationale behind integrating English as a medium of instruction. These policies underscore the necessity of language proficiency in preparing students for global competitiveness and facilitating access to diverse educational resources. Moreover, the findings regarding Category X, which encompasses the justification for implementing English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools, shed light on a variety of strategic approaches aimed at addressing specific needs and challenges while maximizing benefits and minimizing drawbacks: Firstly, policies emphasize the importance of Teacher Qualifications and Support, recognizing the pivotal role of educators in facilitating effective language instruction and providing ongoing professional development opportunities. Secondly, the Integration of English Across Subjects emerges as a key policy, highlighting the significance of incorporating English language skills into various academic disciplines to enhance students' overall language proficiency. Thirdly, Support Services for Language Learners are emphasized to ensure that students receive tailored assistance and resources to aid in their language acquisition journey. Additionally, policies underscore the importance of Cultural Sensitivity in Language Instruction, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and identities of students within Indonesian Islamic schools. Furthermore, Assessment and Feedback Mechanisms are highlighted as crucial tools for monitoring students' language progress and providing targeted interventions as needed. Perceived Impact on Academic Achievement is also a focal point, with policies aiming to assess the correlation between English language proficiency and overall academic success. Lastly, Perceptions of Language Barrier Challenges are addressed, acknowledging and mitigating potential obstacles that may arise in the implementation of English language policies. Overall, these policies underscore a comprehensive approach to justifying the integration of English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools, prioritizing the enhancement of students' language skills while navigating the complexities of language acquisition within a diverse educational context.

Furthermore, Category Y delineates strategies rooted in logical frameworks (B17-B24), strategically designed to optimize outcomes through effective implementation. These

policies highlight the importance of structured approaches in leveraging English language instruction to enhance learning outcomes and educational experiences. Category Y, which represents the logical framework for the strategic implementation of English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools, unveils a series of policies aimed at optimizing outcomes through systematic planning and execution. Firstly, Resource Allocation emerges as a critical policy, emphasizing the importance of allocating sufficient resources such as funding, materials, and technological support to facilitate effective language instruction. Secondly, Curriculum Development policies underscore the necessity of aligning educational content with language learning objectives, ensuring coherence and relevance across subjects. Thirdly, Performance Evaluation and Feedback mechanisms are highlighted to track students' language proficiency and provide targeted interventions for improvement. Additionally, Language Immersion Programs are advocated for fostering immersive language experiences and enhancing students' linguistic competence. Collaborative Partnerships and Networking policies emphasize the importance of forging alliances with external stakeholders such as language institutes, community organizations, and other educational institutions to enrich language learning opportunities. Furthermore, Strategic Planning and Implementation policies underscore the need for systematic planning and coordinated efforts to ensure the successful integration of English language instruction. Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms are also prioritized to assess the effectiveness of language policies and make necessary adjustments as needed. Lastly, Teacher Professional Development policies are emphasized to equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality language instruction. Together, these policies delineate a strategic roadmap for optimizing outcomes in English language education within Indonesian Islamic schools, leveraging coordinated efforts and resources to achieve language learning objectives effectively.

Lastly, Category Z encompasses policies focused on feasibility (C25-C42), emphasizing the practicality and achievability of implementing English language policies within the Indonesian Islamic school context. Furthermore, this category, which focuses on the feasibility of implementing English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools, elucidates a set of policies aimed at ensuring practicality and achievability in the integration of English language instruction. Firstly, Resource Availability policies underscore the importance of ensuring access to necessary materials, tools, and technologies required for effective language teaching and learning. Infrastructure policies emphasize the need for adequate facilities and technological resources to support language instruction, including classrooms equipped with audiovisual aids and access to digital learning platforms. Thirdly, Teacher Competency policies highlight the necessity of providing professional development opportunities to enhance educators' language proficiency and pedagogical skills. Moreover, Student Readiness policies prioritize assessing students' linguistic abilities and readiness for English language instruction, ensuring that appropriate support mechanisms are in place to meet diverse learning needs. Community Support policies advocate for garnering support from parents, community members, and stakeholders to foster a conducive learning environment for language acquisition. Furthermore, Policy Alignment policies emphasize the importance of aligning language policies with broader educational goals and objectives, ensuring coherence and consistency across institutional frameworks. Financial Considerations policies address the budgetary implications of language policy implementation, emphasizing the need for sustainable funding mechanisms to support

ongoing language initiatives. Lastly, Long-term Sustainability policies underscore the importance of adopting measures to ensure the continuity and longevity of language programs, including strategic planning and capacity-building efforts. Together, these policies underscore a comprehensive approach to assessing and addressing the practical considerations inherent in implementing English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools, ensuring that language initiatives are feasible, sustainable, and conducive to effective language learning outcomes.

In essence, the delineation of policies into these three categories provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of English language integration in Indonesian Islamic schools, offering insights into the justification, strategic planning, and practical implementation of language policies within this educational context.

4.2 Research Question 2: What are the opportunities in implementing the policies of using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic Schools?

Firstly, the policy of using English offers an avenue for fostering Enhanced Global Competence among students. Proficiency in English equips learners with the skills necessary to engage meaningfully with diverse cultural and linguistic communities on a global scale. This not only promotes cross-cultural understanding and empathy but also prepares students to navigate an interconnected world with confidence and competence. Moreover, English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools opens doors to Economic Empowerment for students. Fluency in English enhances their employability in a global job market and provides access to a wide array of international educational and professional opportunities. By equipping students with English language skills, schools empower them to pursue higher education, secure competitive employment, and contribute meaningfully to their communities and society at large.

RP5: *"Saya percaya ada peluang besar untuk mengintegrasikan bahasa Inggris sebagai medium pengajaran di sekolah Islam. Hal ini dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa siswa sambil menjaga integritas ajaran Islam"*

E: *"I believe there's a significant opportunity to integrate English as a medium of instruction in Islamic schools. This can enhance students' language proficiency while maintaining the integrity of Islamic teachings"*

Furthermore, the policy of using English facilitates Educational Advancement by providing students with access to a wealth of educational resources and opportunities. Proficiency in English enables students to engage with cutting-edge knowledge, research, and educational materials available in the global academic sphere. This not only enhances their academic achievement but also prepares them for future academic pursuits and lifelong learning endeavors. Culturally, English language instruction fosters Cultural Exchange and Understanding among students. Through collaborative projects, cultural exchanges, and intercultural dialogue conducted in English, students gain a deeper appreciation for diverse perspectives, experiences, and traditions. This promotes inclusivity, tolerance, and mutual respect within the school community and beyond. Moreover, the policy of using English

facilitates Technological Integration in education. English proficiency enables students and educators to leverage digital tools, online resources, and educational platforms effectively. By embracing technology-enhanced learning experiences, schools can enhance teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and learning outcomes.

Finally, English language instruction in Indonesian Islamic schools opens avenues for International Collaboration and Partnerships. Through partnerships with foreign educational institutions, organizations, and NGOs, schools can exchange best practices, resources, and expertise. Collaborative initiatives and exchange programs provide students with invaluable opportunities for cultural immersion, language practice, and personal growth. In conclusion, the policy of using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic schools presents a wealth of opportunities for students, educators, and educational institutions alike. By capitalizing on these opportunities, schools can empower students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected, competitive, and culturally diverse world. However, it is imperative to address the associated challenges and ensure that English language policies are implemented effectively and inclusively to maximize the benefits for all stakeholders.

4.3 Research Question 3: What are the challenges in implementing the policies of using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic Schools?

While the policy presents promising opportunities, it is crucial to address the challenges effectively to ensure its successful integration and impact within the Islamic educational context. Firstly, one significant challenge lies in the Preservation of Cultural Identity and Values. Indonesian Islamic schools are deeply rooted in Islamic culture and traditions, and there is a concern that an emphasis on English language instruction may inadvertently dilute or erode these cultural foundations. Balancing the promotion of English proficiency with the preservation of cultural identity requires thoughtful planning and strategies that honor and integrate Islamic values and principles into the curriculum.

RP7: *"Selain itu, adaptasi kurikulum dan dukungan dari orang tua siswa juga diperlukan"*

E: *"Additionally, curriculum adaptation and support from parents are also needed"*

Moreover, Resource Constraints pose a significant challenge to the effective implementation of English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools. Limited resources, including funding, qualified teachers, and instructional materials, may hinder schools' ability to provide high-quality English language instruction. Addressing resource constraints requires strategic allocation of resources, capacity-building initiatives for teachers, and partnerships with external stakeholders to enhance access to educational resources and support. Additionally, Language Proficiency among both students and teachers presents a considerable challenge. English language proficiency levels vary among students, with some facing significant barriers to learning due to limited exposure or resources. Similarly, teachers may lack the necessary proficiency or pedagogical skills to effectively teach English as a second language. Addressing language proficiency challenges requires targeted language development programs for both students and teachers, differentiated instruction strategies, and ongoing professional development opportunities. Furthermore, Resistance to Change within the school community can impede the successful implementation of English

language policies. Some stakeholders, including students, parents, and educators, may resist changes to the curriculum or instructional practices out of fear of disrupting established routines or traditions. Overcoming resistance to change requires effective communication, stakeholder engagement, and a shared understanding of the rationale and benefits of integrating English language instruction.

RP7: *“Pelatihan guru dan sumber belajar yang sesuai juga menjadi faktor kunci”*

E: *“Teacher training and suitable learning resources are also key factors”*

Lastly, Assessment and Evaluation pose challenges in measuring the effectiveness and impact of English language instruction. Traditional assessment methods may not adequately capture students' language proficiency or growth, particularly in non-linguistic subjects. Developing culturally and linguistically responsive assessment tools and practices, as well as aligning assessment practices with learning objectives, are essential to accurately gauge students' English language proficiency and academic achievement. In conclusion, while the policy of using English for teaching in Indonesian Islamic schools offers promising opportunities, it is essential to address the associated challenges effectively to ensure its successful implementation and impact. By proactively addressing challenges related to cultural preservation, resource constraints, language proficiency, resistance to change, and assessment practices, schools can create an inclusive and supportive learning environment that promotes English language proficiency while honoring Islamic cultural identity and values.

5. Conclusion

The research investigates the implementation of English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools, assessing their justifications, logical frameworks, and feasibility. Through a mixed-method approach involving 77 participants from various Islamic schools, including questionnaires, observations, and interviews, the research reveals that tailored policies can effectively address specific needs while maximizing benefits and minimizing drawbacks. The findings highlight numerous opportunities associated with English language policies, including global competence, economic empowerment, educational progress, cultural exchange, technological integration, and international collaboration. However, challenges persist, encompassing cultural preservation, resource limitations, language proficiency, resistance to change, and assessment issues. The research advocates for further investigation to devise innovative strategies for overcoming these challenges and optimizing the benefits of English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools. The implementation of English language policies in Indonesian Islamic schools reveals a nuanced landscape of opportunities and challenges. While the implementation of such policies presents significant opportunities, including enhanced global competence and economic empowerment, it also poses hurdles such as preserving cultural identity and addressing resource constraints. The findings underscore the importance of adopting policies that strategically address specific needs while maximizing benefits and minimizing drawbacks. Moving forward, future research should focus on innovative strategies to overcome these challenges and optimize

the opportunities presented by English language policies, ultimately contributing to their success in Indonesian Islamic schools.

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