

ACCREDITATION AS A QUALITY ASSURANCE INSTRUMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

School/madrasah accreditation is one of the key instruments in Indonesia's education quality assurance system. This study aims to analyze school/madrasah accreditation policies within the national education quality assurance system, identify the principles underlying their implementation, and describe the role of educational institutions in the accreditation process. This research employs a literature review method by examining various regulations, scientific journals, and relevant policy documents. The findings indicate that accreditation policies in Indonesia have a strong legal foundation, ranging from Law No. 20 of 2003 to the latest IASP 2020 instrument. The implementation of accreditation is based on the principles of objectivity, comprehensiveness, fairness, transparency, accountability, professionalism, as well as meaningfulness, inclusivity, and contextuality. Educational institutions play an active and strategic role in the accreditation process, ranging from self-preparation and the conduct of site visits to follow-up on accreditation results as part of continuous quality improvement efforts. Accreditation is not merely an administrative process but serves as a means for reflection and comprehensive improvement of educational quality.

Keywords: Accreditation, Educational Quality Assurance, Educational Institution, School/Madrasah

INTRODUCTION

Education stands as the fundamental cornerstone upon which a nation builds and advances its human resource development. It is through high-quality, well-structured, and thoughtfully delivered education that a society is able to produce a generation that is not only intellectually competent and professionally skilled, but also

ethically grounded in strong moral values and fully prepared to confront, adapt to, and overcome the ever-evolving challenges of the times. In light of this critical importance, earnest and continuous efforts to improve the standard of education and to rigorously ensure its quality at every level must be regarded as a shared responsibility one that cannot rest on the shoulders of any single party alone, but must be embraced collectively by the government as the primary policymaker, educational institutions as the direct providers of learning, and the broader community as an active and engaged stakeholder in the educational ecosystem. This deeply held view finds strong resonance in the international perspective, which consistently emphasizes and affirms that quality education serves as a crucial and indispensable pillar upon which a nation's sustainable growth and comprehensive development are built spanning the social, economic, cultural, scientific, and political dimensions of national life.¹

In Indonesia, one of the official mechanisms used to ensure the quality of education is accreditation. School/madrasah accreditation is a comprehensive assessment process of an educational institution's eligibility, conducted by an independent body based on national education standards established by the government. Through accreditation, it is hoped that the performance of each educational institution can be measured and that they will be encouraged to continuously improve. In the international literature, accreditation is broadly defined as a formal external evaluation process that validates that an educational institution or program has met established quality standards, while also demonstrating its legitimacy and suitability to provide education.² This system serves the interests of various stakeholders simultaneously: it assures prospective students of the quality of the institutions they choose, gives employers confidence in the competence of graduates, and enables institutions to benchmark themselves against international standards.³

The legal framework for accreditation in Indonesia is quite robust, ranging from Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System and Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 on National Education Standards (SNP) to the latest technical policy through the 2020 Educational Institution Accreditation Instrument (IASP). These policies position accreditation not merely as an administrative formality, but as a quality-based performance evaluation tool that has a tangible impact on institutional development. From a theoretical perspective, the conceptual foundation of accreditation as a quality assurance instrument is rooted in the Total Quality Management (TQM) framework and Outcome-Based Education (OBE), which

¹ P. Kumar dkk., *Impact of accreditation on quality and excellence of higher education institutions*, 41, no. 2 (2020): 151–67.

² Michael H. Romanowski, "The Idolatry of Accreditation in Higher Education: Enhancing Our Understanding," *Quality in Higher Education* 28, no. 2 (2022): 153–67, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2021.1948460>.

³ Alejandra Acevedo-De-los-Ríos dan Daniel R. Rondinel-Oviedo, "Impact, Added Value and Relevance of An Accreditation Process on Quality Assurance in Architectural Higher Education," *Quality in Higher Education* 28, no. 2 (2022): 186–204, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2021.1977482>.

emphasize systematic evaluation, continuous improvement, and alignment between institutional processes and measurable outcomes.⁴ Accreditation puts these principles into practice by establishing external benchmarks that are periodically evaluated, creating a structured cycle of self-assessment, external evaluation, and institutional development that structurally strengthens the national education policy ecosystem.⁵

International studies have documented that consistent accreditation has a significant positive impact on educational institutions. Research by Kumar et al. demonstrates that successful accreditation contributes to an enhanced institutional reputation, an increase in student enrollment, and strengthened stakeholder confidence.⁶ Aburizaizah, in his study of higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia, found that the self-evaluation process for accreditation provides a structured and comprehensive framework for assessing institutional quality.⁷ Meanwhile, Acevedo-De-los-Rios and Rondinel-Oviedo emphasize that the accreditation process promotes institutional transparency, broadens stakeholder participation, and drives progressive institutional development, a finding that is relevant to the management of educational institutions in Indonesia, including madrasahs and pesantren.⁸

Nevertheless, the implementation of accreditation in the field still faces various challenges, ranging from a heavy administrative burden and disparities between urban and rural schools to a lack of post-accreditation follow-up. This underscores the need for a more in-depth study of the policies, principles, and roles of educational institutions in the accreditation process. Similar challenges have also been widely identified in the international literature. Romanowski (2021) criticizes the tendency of institutions to pursue accreditation solely for symbolic legitimacy, rather than to drive substantive quality improvement. Duarte and Vardasca⁹ found that the accreditation process tends to be more complex and time-consuming for institutions undergoing it for the first time.

Recent developments in the quality assurance literature also highlight the importance of internal quality assurance (IQA) systems as a foundation that complements external accreditation. Internal evaluation, as the initial stage of the accreditation process, enables institutions to systematically identify their strengths and weaknesses before undergoing external assessment. A systematic review based on the PRISMA protocol found that IQA systems are most effective when they foster an authentic and participatory culture of quality among all stakeholders including

⁴ Kumar dkk., *Impact of accreditation on quality and excellence of higher education institutions*.

⁵ Romanowski, "The Idolatry of Accreditation in Higher Education"; Kumar dkk., *Impact of accreditation on quality and excellence of higher education institutions*.

⁶ Kumar dkk., *Impact of accreditation on quality and excellence of higher education institutions*.

⁷ Saeed Jameel Aburizaizah, "The Role of Quality Assurance in Saudi Higher Education Institutions," *International Journal of Educational Research Open* 3 (2022): 100127, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2022.100127>.

⁸ Acevedo-De-los-Ríos dan Rondinel-Oviedo, "Impact, Added Value and Relevance of An Accreditation Process on Quality Assurance in Architectural Higher Education."

⁹ Nelson Duarte dan Ricardo Vardasca, "Literature Review of Accreditation Systems in Higher Education," *Education Sciences* 13, no. 6 (2023): 582, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13060582>.

educators, students, educational staff, and external partners rather than merely fulfilling a checklist of administrative compliance. This integrative understanding of internal and external quality assurance represents a significant evolution relevant to strengthening the accreditation ecosystem of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia.

Academic research on accreditation and quality assurance in education continues to show significant growth, reflecting the ongoing interest of the international scientific community.¹⁰ The field of accreditation is currently undergoing significant transformation, driven by growing demands for institutional accountability, rapid advancements in educational technology, and the complex dynamics of globalization that continue to reshape educational standards across borders. These shifting landscapes have prompted scholars and policymakers alike to reconsider how accreditation systems are designed, implemented, and evaluated. In this context, a recent systematic literature review further underscores the need for continued research aimed at mapping the dominant trends and emerging research agendas within accreditation studies, an urgency that directly reinforces the relevance and contribution of the present study within the specific context of Indonesian education.¹¹

Based on this background, this study focuses on three research questions, namely: (1) What is the role of school/madrasah accreditation policies in Indonesia's educational quality assurance system? (2) What are the principles underlying the implementation of school/madrasah accreditation? and (3) What is the role of educational institutions in the school/madrasah accreditation process? This study is expected to contribute to the development of educational quality in Indonesia, particularly for administrators of Islamic educational institutions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a literature review approach, which is a research method conducted through the systematic collection, examination, and analysis of various written sources relevant to the research topic. According to Zed, a literature review is a series of activities related to methods of collecting literature data, reading and taking notes, and processing research materials. In line with this, Sugiyono emphasizes that a literature review is conducted by examining various literature, theories, and previous research findings related to the research variables under study. Meanwhile, Creswell explains that a literature review in a study serves to provide a framework for the research problem or question, while also serving as a foundation for the discussion of findings.

¹⁰ Duarte dan Vardasca, "Literature Review of Accreditation Systems in Higher Education."

¹¹ F. Javier Miranda, "Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions: A Systematic Literature Review and a Research Agenda," *Quality in Higher Education* 31, no. 3 (2025): 304–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2025.2553983>.

This approach was chosen because the nature of the study focuses on conceptual, normative, and policy understanding, making documentary sources and scientific literature the primary tools in the research process. Library research is not merely an activity of reading and summarizing, but rather a systematic intellectual process to build a deep and critical understanding of an issue based on an existing body of knowledge.

The sources used in this study fall into three main categories. The First that government regulations and policies directly related to the research topic, including laws, government regulations, and ministerial regulations governing the administration of education and the accreditation system in Indonesia. The Second, official documents published by the National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasahs (BAN-S/M), including accreditation guidelines, and then assessment instruments, and the last is institutional reports that directly reflect accreditation policies and practices. The Third, scientific journals that specifically address the themes of educational accreditation, quality assurance, and Islamic education management, both at the national and international levels. This diversity of sources is intended to ensure that the study conducted has a comprehensive, authoritative, and academically accountable foundation.

The research steps taken in this study consist of four stages that conducted sequentially and systematically. The first stage involves collecting relevant literature from various reputable scientific journal databases as well as official policy documents. In this stage, the researcher conducted an initial identification of sources potentially related to the research topic, both through online searches and a review of references cited in the literature that had been found. The second stage involved the classification and selection of sources, where each collected source was evaluated based on its relevance to the established research question. Sources that are irrelevant or do not meet adequate academic quality criteria are excluded from further analysis. The third stage is content analysis of the sources that have passed the selection process. This analysis is conducted by reading carefully, and then identifying key themes, noting important points, and mapping the relationships between ideas found in these various sources. The fourth stage is drawing conclusions based on the findings obtained from all the sources that have been reviewed; this is done systematically and logically to produce a coherent answer to the research question formulated at the outset.

This study is descriptive-analytical in nature. This means that the research does not merely describe the facts found in the literature as they are, but also goes a step further by analyzing, interpreting, and connecting these findings in a critical and reflective manner. Through this approach, that the study is expected to provide contributions that are not only informative but also analytical and constructive in addressing the research questions formulated, as well as offering meaningful

implications for the development of policies and practices regarding the accreditation of Islamic education in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. School/Madrasah Accreditation Policy in Indonesia's Quality Assurance System Findings

The advancement of educational quality constitutes a fundamental concern requiring sustained commitment. Its purpose extends beyond compliance with academic benchmarks that encompasses the need to adapt to the challenges of the era and the expectations of the modern world, so that graduates emerge genuinely ready to engage with the realities of society.¹² Quality assurance through accreditation enhances institutional accountability and continuous improvement, ensuring educational programs align with global standards and stakeholder expectations.¹³

Within the national education quality assurance system, accreditation functions as an indispensable instrument. Its policy foundation is legally codified in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System and reinforced through Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 on National Education Standards (SNP), which delineates eight fundamental standards: graduate competencies, content, process, teaching staff, facilities and infrastructure, management, financing, and educational assessment. As an evaluative and reflective mechanism, accreditation determines the extent to which an educational institution, whether operating in a formal or non-formal capacity, satisfies the eligibility criteria mandated by the state. This process is of particular relevance to madrasahs, institutions that hold a significant role in cultivating cultural heritage and civilization, while simultaneously fostering the intellectual, spiritual, social, and practical growth of their students.

The accreditation policy is intended not merely as a form of administrative legitimacy, but also as a form of public accountability and a mechanism for institutional strengthening. In practice, accreditation has become one of the pillars of public service reform aimed at improving access to and the quality of educational services in a transparent, fair, and comprehensive manner. The accreditation instrument developed through IASP 2020 has even focused on quality-based performance evaluation across four key aspects: graduates, learning, educator competencies, and madrasah management.¹⁴

¹² Yumesri dkk., "Tantangan Akreditasi Sekolah di Era Digitalisasi Pendidikan," *INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research* 4, no. 4 (2024): 13411–25.

¹³ Ryan T., *Quality Assurance in Higher Education: A Review of Literature*. Higher Learning Research Communications, (Toronto) 5, no. 4 (2015).

¹⁴ Frisca Alamanda dkk., "Akreditasi sebagai Instrumen Pembangunan Mutu Madrasah (Telaah Kebijakan dan Rekomendasi Strategis)," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran* 20, no. 2 (2025).

a. Definition of Accreditation

In accordance with Article 1, paragraph (22) of Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, accreditation constitutes a menyeluruh evaluative process directed at assessing the quality of an educational institution or its programs. The outcomes of this process are formally represented through recognition and a quality rating conferred by an independent body possessing professional standing and credibility.

In a related provision, Article 1 of Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 13 of 2018 concerning the National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasahs and the National Accreditation Board for Early Childhood Education and Non-Formal Education defines accreditation as a systematic activity aimed at assessing the eligibility of institutions at the elementary and secondary school levels, as well as those engaged in early childhood and non-formal education, measured against established criteria, with the primary objective of ensuring and maintaining the overall quality of education.

The category of formal educational institutions referenced herein encompasses a comprehensive range of school types across various levels and orientations, including Elementary Schools (SD), Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Junior High Schools (SMP), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), Senior High Schools (SMA), Madrasah Aliyah (MA), Vocational High Schools (SMK), Vocational Madrasah Aliyah (MAK), Special Education Schools (SLB), Special Education Madrasah (MLB), Cooperative Educational Institutions (SPK), as well as other formally designated institutions deemed equivalent in status and recognition.

The assessment of an educational institution's eligibility is fundamentally anchored in national education standards, as these standards define the minimum threshold that must be upheld by the education system across the entire territory of the Republic of Indonesia. In accordance with Article 2, paragraph (1) of Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 on National Education Standards, the scope of these standards is delineated into eight distinct domains: (1) content standards; (2) process standards; (3) graduate competency standards; (4) standards governing educators and educational personnel; (5) standards pertaining to facilities and infrastructure; (6) management standards; (7) financing standards; and (8) standards related to educational assessment.¹⁵

According to the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Regulation Number 38 of 2023, accreditation is an assessment activity to determine the eligibility of equivalency education units and/or programs based on an assessment of the quality of educational services.¹⁶

¹⁵ Dedi Iskanto dkk., "Pelaksanaan Proses Akreditasi Sekolah untuk menjaga kualitas Pendidikan Sekolah/Madrasah," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Akademisi* 1, no. 2 (2022): 46–51.

¹⁶ Kemendikbudristek, "Permendikbudristek No.38 tahun 2023," www.peraturan.go.id, t.t.

Abdul Mu'ti stated that accreditation is an evaluation of the suitability of educational programs and/or units based on predetermined criteria. Willborn and Cheng's definition refers to official recognition of an organization's ability to perform specific tasks. Scarvia B. Anderson, in the Encyclopedia of Educational Evaluation, explains that accreditation is the process of recognizing a program or institution according to agreed standards. (Dewi Astenia et al., 2020) According to the Accreditation Handbook, accreditation is defined as independent verification of a program, involving a comprehensive assessment to ensure the program's compliance with agreed general standards and program standards. Accredited programs are considered effective in preparing educators and demonstrate overall quality in accordance with established general program standards.¹⁷

Another definition of school accreditation is a formal assessment process aimed at assessing and ensuring the quality of education provided by schools. In Indonesia, the school accreditation process is carried out by the National School/Madrasah Accreditation Board (BAN-PDM). Accreditation allows schools to determine the extent to which they have met national education standards, which is expected to encourage continuous quality improvement.¹⁸

b. Objectives and Functions of Accreditation

The purpose of accreditation is to assess and guarantee the quality of an educational institution or program. This ensures compliance with specific standards set by the accrediting authority, ultimately improving educational quality, fostering public trust, and laying the foundation for continuous improvement. The accreditation process serves to provide a comprehensive view of a school's educational performance, acting as a guide and development tool for improving the overall quality of education. According to Antonius, accreditation evaluates the suitability of formal and non-formal educational programs and units at various levels and types of education.¹⁹

In summation, the accreditation of schools and madrasahs is designed to fulfill four overarching objectives:

1. to provide comprehensive information concerning the eligibility of the school or madrasah under review;
2. to grant formal acknowledgment through the assignment of an eligibility ranking;
3. to systematically map the quality of education against the benchmarks set by national education standards; and

¹⁷ Abdul Malik dkk., "Peran Akreditasi dalam Meningkatkan Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan," *AKSI: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 2 (2025): 102–12.

¹⁸ Elfizar, "Peran Akreditasi Sekolah terhadap Pengembangan hasil Belajar Siswa di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 6 Samudera," *Intelegensia: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 1 (2025): 58–74.

¹⁹ Abdul Malik dkk., "Peran Akreditasi dalam Meningkatkan Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan."

4. to fulfill accountability obligations toward all stakeholders, thereby serving as a tangible form of public transparency and responsibility.

In this context, accreditation outcomes constitute a significant reference point for both central and regional governments in the formulation of policies directed at advancing the quality of education under their purview. For school and madrasah principals, accreditation results are anticipated to serve as a critical source of information for mapping institutional quality and eligibility indicators, as well as for evaluating the overall performance of school or madrasah community members, including an assessment of the principal's own leadership during their period of service. Beyond this, accreditation findings also hold considerable value for school and madrasah principals as substantive input in the development of institutional programs and the preparation of school or madrasah revenue and expenditure budgets.

The functions attributed to school and madrasah accreditation may be elaborated as follows:

1. Knowledge Function, encompassing the dissemination of comprehensive information to all concerned parties regarding the conformity of a school or madrasah across various relevant dimensions, measured against the benchmarks set by national education standards.
2. Accountability Function, representing the institutional obligation of schools and madrasahs to transparently demonstrate to the public whether the educational services rendered have been consistent with the expectations and aspirations of the community.
3. Guidance and Development Function, serving as a foundational framework upon which schools, madrasahs, governmental bodies, and the broader community may base their collective efforts to enhance and continuously develop institutional quality.²⁰

Overall, accreditation serves as a tool to ensure that educational institutions meet certain quality standards that can provide assurance to the public and other stakeholders. Furthermore, accreditation provides a comprehensive view of an educational institution's performance and suitability. The accreditation process serves not only as an evaluation but also as a guide and development tool for continuously improving the quality of education, as well as a means to build trust and enhance the competitiveness of educational institutions both nationally and internationally.²¹

c. Legal Basis for Accreditation

Madrasah accreditation policy in Indonesia does not stand alone, but rather is an integral part of the national education legal and regulatory framework. Accreditation serves as a tool to guarantee and control educational quality objectively, systematically, and sustainably. The government has issued various regulations as the

²⁰ Dedi Iskanto dkk., "Pelaksanaan Proses Akreditasi Sekolah untuk menjaga kualitas Pendidikan Sekolah/Madrasah."

²¹ Abdul Malik dkk., "Peran Akreditasi dalam Meningkatkan Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan."

legal basis for accreditation implementation by authorized institutions such as the National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasahs (BAN-S/M) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.²²

These policies establish a clear and comprehensive normative framework for the implementation of madrasah accreditation. Through a legal and managerial approach, accreditation is intended as a quality evaluation system based on national education standards, with the principles of objectivity, accountability, and transparency. Understanding this regulatory basis is crucial for assessing the effectiveness and holistic implementation of madrasah accreditation policies in the field. The following are the main regulations that form the basis for madrasah accreditation in Indonesia:

- 1) Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System serves as the primary legal foundation governing education in Indonesia. Article 60 stipulates that accreditation must be conducted to assess the eligibility of both formal and non-formal educational programs and units, as a form of public accountability. This process is required to be carried out periodically, transparently, and by an independent institution designated by the government.
- 2) Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 on National Education Standards (SNP) establishes eight fundamental standards that serve as the reference framework for accreditation, encompassing content, process, graduate competencies, educators and educational personnel, facilities and infrastructure, management, financing, and educational assessment. Accreditation functions as the primary mechanism for evaluating the extent to which educational units comply with these standards.
- 3) Government Regulation Number 32 of 2013 on Amendments to Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 reinforces the commitment to continuous educational quality assurance and underscores the role of accreditation as a component of external quality control, positioning it as an integral part of the mechanism for evaluating the attainment of educational standards.
- 4) Government Regulation Number 17 of 2010 on the Management and Implementation of Education delineates the authority and responsibilities of central and regional governments as well as educational units in overseeing educational quality. Within the accreditation framework, this regulation affirms that quality management is carried out through both an internal quality assurance

²² Frisca Alamanda dkk., "Akreditasi sebagai Instrumen Pembangunan Mutu Madrasah (Telaah Kebijakan dan Rekomendasi Strategis)."

system (SPMI) and externally through accreditation conducted by BAN-S/M.

- 5) Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 59 of 2012 on the National Accreditation Agency provides the legal basis for the operation of BAN-S/M, establishing it as an independent and autonomous institution accountable to the Minister. This regulation governs the organizational structure, duties, and functions of BAN in implementing accreditation in alignment with national education standards.
- 6) Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 90 of 2013 on the Implementation of Madrasah Education addresses institutional, curricular, and evaluative aspects of madrasah education. Article 51 affirms that madrasah accreditation by BAN-S/M is compulsory and constitutes part of the educational quality evaluation process conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.
- 7) Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 193/P/2012 on Amendments to Decree No. 174/P/2012 establishes the membership composition of BAN-S/M, ensuring that the institution is comprised of educational experts and professional practitioners who carry out school and madrasah accreditation in Indonesia with full independence.
- 8) Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 13 of 2018 on BAN-S/M and BAN-PNF revises and updates the status, organizational structure, and responsibilities of both BAN-S/M and the National Accreditation Board for Early Childhood and Non-Formal Education (BAN-PNF). It reaffirms that BAN is mandated to conduct accreditation based on the National Education Standards and to develop accreditation instruments in accordance with advancements in national educational quality.
- 9) Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 1005/P/2020 outlines the development of criteria and assessment tools for primary and secondary education accreditation, serving as the technical foundation for the formulation of IASP2020, with a concentrated focus on graduate quality, learning processes, teacher quality, and institutional management.
- 10) Decree of the Head of BAN-S/M Number 215/BAN-SM/SK/2021 on Guidelines for School/Madrasah Accreditation in 2021 formally introduces the 2020 Educational Unit Accreditation Instrument (IASP) as a newly developed assessment framework. IASP centers on four primary components, graduate quality, learning processes, teacher quality, and school or madrasah management, and prioritizes a performance-based

approach to assessment over one that is purely administrative in nature..²³

2. Principles of School/Madrasah Accreditation

The principles underlying the accreditation of schools and madrasahs are as follows:

a. Objectivity

The accreditation of schools and madrasahs is essentially an assessment of the quality of education provided by a school or madrasah. During this assessment, various aspects related to that quality are examined clearly and accurately to obtain information regarding its status.²⁴

b. Comprehensive

In the accreditation process for schools and madrasahs, the assessment focuses not only on specific aspects but also encompasses various comprehensive educational components.

c. Fair

In conducting accreditation, all schools/madrasahs must be treated equally without discriminating against schools/madrasahs based on culture, beliefs, or socio-cultural background, and regardless of whether the school/madrasah is public or private.

d. Transparent

Data and information related to the implementation of school/madrasah accreditation such as criteria, operational mechanisms, schedules, and the accreditation assessment system must be communicated openly and made accessible to anyone who needs it.

e. Accountable

The implementation of school/madrasah accreditation must be accountable, both in terms of the assessment process and the resulting decisions, in accordance with established rules and procedures.²⁵

f. Professional

School/madrasah accreditation is conducted by individuals who possess a high level of competence and integrity in the field of accreditation.²⁶

g. The Principles of Meaningfulness, Inclusivity, and Contextuality

In recent developments, accreditation has also emphasized the principles of meaningfulness, inclusivity, and contextuality.

The first, Principle of Meaningfulness underpins the development of the four components within the accreditation assessment instrument, namely: (1) Learning

²³ Frisca Alamanda dkk., "Akreditasi sebagai Instrumen Pembangunan Mutu Madrasah (Telaah Kebijakan dan Rekomendasi Strategis)."

²⁴ Hj.Intan Zakiyyah, S.Pd.I MA, *Manajemen Peningkatan Mutu Madrasah*, 1 ed. (Pt.Nasya Expanding Management, 2023).

²⁵ Hj.Intan Zakiyyah, S.Pd.I MA, *Manajemen Peningkatan Mutu Madrasah*.

²⁶ Yumesri dkk., "Tantangan Akreditasi Sekolah di Era Digitalisasi Pendidikan."

Environment, (2) Principal Leadership in Management, (3) Educator Performance in the Learning Process, (4) Learning Outcomes,

The determination of these four components begins with a benchmarking process against international accreditation instruments to identify the universal concept of “what makes a good school.” This process is considered essential to ensure that the accreditation instrument is not merely focused on compliance with existing quality assurance policy frameworks, but rather grounded in a framework of learning environment quality that is believed to provide the educational services needed by students.²⁷

The second, the principle of inclusivity in this accreditation instrument means that the components of the assessment instrument can be applied to all levels, all types, and all kinds of educational services and diverse educational environments.

The third, The principle of contextuality in this accreditation instrument (and its system) implies flexibility in interpreting the performance of schools and madrasahs. Performance refers to the efforts made by schools and madrasahs to provide a service, as well as whether that service has actually been delivered and experienced by the community. This accreditation instrument is designed to value the diverse methods and strategies used by schools and madrasahs to deliver services. Essentially, this developed accreditation instrument is expected to reflect our understanding and appreciation that every school and madrasah can use and have different methods and strategies in providing educational services that are most appropriate and suited to the situations and conditions they face.²⁸

Analysis/Discussion

The Role of Educational Institutions in the Accreditation Process

Educational institutions serve a central and indispensable function within the accreditation process, positioned as active participants who bear responsibility for preparing themselves comprehensively, undertaking internal evaluative measures, and engaging in continuous quality improvement efforts to satisfy the benchmarks established by the National Education Standards (SNP). The process entails the completion of accreditation instruments, on-site visits conducted by qualified assessors, and the diligent follow-up of resulting recommendations all of which collectively contribute to the broader advancement of educational quality. In the context of Indonesian education, accreditation assumes a critical significance, as it provides through a systematic and methodically structured series of steps a transparent and reliable depiction of the extent to which an educational institution meets prevailing national standards, while simultaneously serving as a guiding

²⁷ BAN-PDM, “Panduan Penjelasan Instrumen Akreditasi 2024 untuk SD/MI, SMP/Mts dan SMA/MA versi 2025,” BAN PDM, t.t.

²⁸ BAN-PDM, “Panduan Penjelasan Instrumen Akreditasi 2024 untuk SD/MI, SMP/Mts dan SMA/MA versi 2025.”

mechanism through which schools and madrasahs are supported in their endeavors to improve and continuously elevate the caliber of education they provide.²⁹

1. Self-Preparation:

Before a school applies for accreditation, there is a sufficient amount of time to prepare the four components of the 2020 IASP: the component encompassing graduate quality and competency attainment, the component pertaining to the quality and effectiveness of the learning process, the component addressing the professional quality of teaching personnel, and the component relating to the governance and administrative management of the school or institution. These four components will demonstrate the performance of the school, teachers, and students in improving the quality of education. Schools/madrasahs targeted for accreditation must meet the mandatory requirements set by BAN-S/M to be eligible for a site visit. Sufficiency assessment is the process of evaluating the adequacy of schools/madrasahs that have met: (1) absolute fulfillment indicators (IPM), (2) completeness of relative fulfillment indicators (IPR), (3) completeness of accreditation data forms (DIA), and (4) completeness of uploaded documents.³⁰

Educational institutions play a role in preparing all accreditation requirements, starting with the formation of an accreditation team; they are also responsible for conducting self-evaluations (internal evaluations) by collecting data, documents, and evidence of compliance with standards—such as graduate quality, the learning process, teacher quality, and management—in accordance with the 2020 Educational Institution Accreditation Instrument (IASP). They also prepare for the external assessment by completing the Accreditation Data Form (DIA) and ensuring the completeness of both mandatory and relative indicators. This drives improvements in activities aligned with the 8 National Education Standards (SNP).

The next step after preparation is for the educational institution to submit an accreditation application, where the school or madrasah submits the application through the online system provided by the National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasah (BAN-S/M). Subsequently, the school proceeds to complete the accreditation instrument, which encompasses an evaluation of the eight national education standards, namely: graduate competency standards, content standards, process standards, educational assessment standards, educator standards, facilities and infrastructure standards, management standards, and funding standards. Completing this instrument is a crucial step in demonstrating how the school or madrasah has implemented these standards in daily practice.

²⁹ Abdul Malik dkk., *Peran Akreditasi dalam Meningkatkan Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan*, 3, no. 2 (2025): 110, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37348/aksi.v3i2.635>.

³⁰ Eldawati Koto, “Peran Akreditasi Sekolah atau Madrasah dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pendidikan Indonesia,” *El-Mujtama: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 4, no. 3 (2024).

Completing the accreditation instrument requires precision and a thorough understanding of the established standards. Here are the steps:

- a. Understand the accreditation guidelines. Schools/madrasahs must read the guidelines for completing the accreditation instrument issued by BAN-S/M.
- b. Prepare supporting documents. Gather relevant documents, such as the curriculum, Lesson Plans (RPP), financial reports, and student learning assessment results (Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 13/2018).
- c. Enter data into the online system. Input data according to the instrument categories, which include:
 - 1) School/madrasah profile
 - 2) Content, process, and evaluation standards
 - 3) Funding and management standards (BAN-S/M, 2023).
- d. Validate the data. Before submission, ensure all data is entered correctly and completely. Double-check the data to avoid errors that could affect the accreditation results (BAN-S/M, 2023).
- e. Participate in technical guidance. If available, schools/madrasahs may participate in training or technical guidance sessions organized by the local education office to facilitate the completion of the instrument (Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 13/2018)³¹

2. Conduct of the Site Visit

During the accreditation process, the educational institution provides full access for classroom observations, interviews with teachers, students, and parents, as well as document reviews by the assessment team from BAN-S/M or BAN-PT. To demonstrate compliance with IASP2020 during the site visit:

- a. Observations conducted over a two-day period by assessors, such as classroom observations to evaluate teachers' instruction, observations of the school environment, facilities and infrastructure, and the school atmosphere during the learning process.
- b. Document review, covering all learning materials, school regulations (time discipline, uniforms, etc.), student and school achievement records, MOUs with government/private entities, student and teacher creative works, financial records, and many other aspects.
- c. Interviews conducted with the principal, students, teachers, parents, the school committee, and alumni to gather information on performance over the past three years.

³¹ Abdul Malik dkk., "Peran Akreditasi dalam Meningkatkan Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan."

d. An online survey for students on bullying³²

During this evaluation period, educational institutions should strive to demonstrate tangible performance such as student achievements and financial management—to prove their eligibility. This process is mandatory under Government Regulation No. 17/2010 and Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 13/2018, ensuring public accountability.

3. Follow-Up on Findings

After the school/madrasah has been visited, the assessor will provide recommendations to the school regarding which of the four components in the assessment instrument have weaknesses or require improvement. These recommendations will then be returned to the school/madrasah, and the school supervisor, together with school stakeholders, will develop a Follow-Up Plan to address these shortcomings, which will serve as the school's priority program moving forward.³³

The follow-up actions that educational institutions must implement after accreditation are:

- a. Cultivating a culture among all school staff that is focused on educational quality,
- b. Developing a school program plan that significantly improves the quality of the educational institution,
- c. Ensuring educational quality through an internal quality assurance system (SPMI). (Karyanto et al., 2015)

Another form of follow-up to accreditation results can also involve integrated (holistic) internal procedures, which include internal audits that are an integral part of the internal quality assurance system.³⁴

Follow-up on accreditation results has a significant impact on the development of learning outcomes by promoting improvements in the quality of education through a comprehensive evaluation of various aspects of the school. The accreditation process helps schools identify their strengths and weaknesses, thereby enabling continuous improvement, such as enhancing the curriculum, managing facilities and infrastructure, and improving educator competencies. By meeting national education standards, accreditation ensures that the learning environment holistically supports students' needs, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Additionally, accreditation results provide legitimacy to the quality of education offered by the school, increasing public trust and encouraging more active participation from all stakeholders. This creates a learning environment that is more

³² Eldawati Koto, "Peran Akreditasi Sekolah atau Madrasah dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pendidikan Indonesia."

³³ Eldawati Koto, "Peran Akreditasi Sekolah atau Madrasah dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pendidikan Indonesia."

³⁴ Yumesri dkk., "Tantangan Akreditasi Sekolah di Era Digitalisasi Pendidikan."

inclusive, innovative, and focused on helping students reach their full potential, thereby significantly improving overall learning outcomes.³⁵

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that school/madrasah accreditation occupies a central and strategic position within Indonesia's national education quality assurance system. Grounded in a robust legal framework, spanning from Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System to the technically refined IASP 2020, accreditation functions not merely as an administrative formality, but as a comprehensive, performance-based evaluation mechanism designed to encourage continuous institutional improvement and public accountability.

The principles underlying accreditation, including objectivity, comprehensiveness, fairness, transparency, accountability, professionalism, and the more recent emphases on meaningfulness, inclusivity, and contextuality, collectively ensure that the accreditation process is conducted in a manner that is equitable, credible, and responsive to the diverse conditions of educational institutions across Indonesia. These principles reflect a significant evolution in the approach to quality assurance, shifting from a compliance-oriented checklist toward a more substantive, context-sensitive assessment of real institutional performance.

Furthermore, educational institutions are not passive subjects in the accreditation process, but rather active participants whose roles are pivotal at every stage, from self-preparation and internal evaluation, through the site visit, to the follow-up on assessor recommendations. The quality of this institutional engagement directly determines the extent to which accreditation translates into genuine and lasting educational improvement, rather than remaining a symbolic exercise in legitimacy-seeking.

Taken together, these findings underscore that effective accreditation requires the synergistic commitment of all stakeholders (government, accrediting bodies, and educational institutions) to treat accreditation not as an end in itself, but as a continuous vehicle for building a culture of quality, particularly within the ecosystem of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia.

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³⁵ Elfizar, "Peran Akreditasi Sekolah terhadap Pengembangan hasil Belajar Siswa di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 6 Samudera."

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