



Education Standardization Policy and its Impact on Quality in Indonesia

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Abstract

To ensure the quality of Indonesian education, the government is implementing a policy of standardization of education in Indonesia, which aims to achieve uniformity in the implementation of education throughout the country. This study aims to analyze the education standardization policy and its impact on quality in Indonesia by using the library research method. This study covers various aspects of education standardization policies, the impact of policies on the quality of education, factors affecting standardization to the challenges and opportunities of standardization education, although Indonesia is still lagging behind some countries that have advanced education such as Finland and Singapore but the government continues to strive to carry out this standardization policy in improving the quality of education in Indonesia. This study concludes that education standardization policies need to be balanced with efforts to improve the distribution of educational resources and increase the capacity of educators in improving the quality of education throughout Indonesia.

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Introduction

Education is an important component of a country's development. In Indonesia, improving the quality of education is a top priority to improve the quality of human resources. One of the ways the Indonesian government ensures the quality of education is by implementing an education standardization policy, which aims to create uniformity in the implementation of education throughout Indonesia. Education standardization in Indonesia covers many things, ranging from the curriculum, educational facilities, to the quality of educators. The National Education Standards (SNP), the National Examination (UN) and various teacher quality improvement programs are some of the policies that have been implemented in the context of education standardization. The aim of these policies is to regulate and measure the quality of education at the school level, ensuring that each school can meet the standards that have been set.

Although education standardization policies aim to improve the quality of education, there are many difficulties when implementing them. The desired standards are often hampered by limited resources, geographical differences and differences in the readiness of schools and educators. In addition, there is debate about the impact of the policy on the quality of education in Indonesia. It is unclear whether the policy has really improved the quality of education equitably or has instead created disparities between developed and underdeveloped areas. However, this study aims to evaluate the education standardization policy in Indonesia and its impact on education quality. It will also evaluate the extent to which the policy has been successful in improving the quality of education in different regions and identify the challenges and opportunities arising from the implementation of the policy. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide a better picture of how the policy is implemented and how it impacts on quality.

Discussion

Definition and Concept of Education Standardization Education standardization means the application of certain standards in education delivery to ensure uniformity and quality across regions.

According to Hargreaves, the purpose of education standardization is to establish clear measures of quality to reduce inequalities in the quality of education in different regions. This standardization covers various elements, such as learning evaluation, curriculum, teaching staff and facilities. The purpose of education standardization policy in Indonesia (Hargreaves, 2009) ^[2]. Meanwhile, according to Arikunto, it is to achieve equity in the quality of education across the country, especially by addressing the significant differences between metropolitan and rural areas. In addition, it involves standardized assessments, such as the National Exam (UN), which are used to evaluate the level of educational success (Arikunto, 2013) ^[1].

Education Standardization Policy in Indonesia

The National Education Standards (SNP) were initiated in the 2000s to regulate the quality of education in Indonesia. The SNP consists of eight main components: educational content, learning process, educators and education personnel, facilities and infrastructure, management, financing, educational assessment, and graduate competency standards. The National Examination (Ujian Nasional, UN) is an important policy conducted to assess the success of schools and students in meeting national standards. However, this policy has been criticized for focusing too much on exam results and neglecting the quality of the learning process (Wibowo, 2016) ^[7]. In addition, to improve education standards in Indonesia, other policies, such as the teacher certification policy and the implementation of the 2013 curriculum. Indonesia's education standardization policy has evolved over time. (Purnomo, 2018) ^[4]. Some of the main policies used to achieve the desired education standards include:

- a. **National Education Standards (SNP):** The SNP is the basis of education standardization policy in Indonesia, which is regulated by the government through Government Regulation No. 19/2005 on National Education Standards. The SNP consists of eight essential components: educational content, learning process, infrastructure, educators, and teaching staff. The aim of this policy is to improve education equitably across Indonesia, ensuring that everyone gets an education of the same standard wherever they are.
- b. **National Exam (UN):** One of the most well-known education standardization programs in Indonesia is the National Exam. The UN aims to measure student competency achievement across the country. The UN still plays an important role in Indonesia's education evaluation policy, although it has been criticized for its perceived over-focus on exam results.
- c. **Teacher Certification:** The government also implemented a teacher certification policy to improve the quality of educators. The program provides incentives to passing teachers to improve classroom teaching.

The Impact of Education Standardization Policy on Education Quality in Indonesia

The impact of education standardization policy in Indonesia on the quality of education can be analyzed in several aspects, among others:

- a. **Improved Teaching Quality:** Research results (Supriyadi, 2020) ^[5] show that standardization policies - especially teacher certification - have contributed to

improved teaching competencies. Teachers who have gone through the certification program show a better understanding of the curriculum and more creative teaching approaches. Despite progress, the main obstacles in the implementation of this policy continue to be uneven training and limited time to attend training in some places.

- b. **Equitable Quality of Education:** One of the main objectives of the education standardization policy is to reduce educational disparities between urban and rural communities. The disproportion between developed and disadvantaged areas is still very large, although this goal has been partially achieved. A study conducted by (Wijayanti, 2018) ^[8] found that schools in remote areas often do not have sufficient facilities to meet government standards, resulting in students receiving low-quality education.
- c. **Educational Facilities and Infrastructure:** The success of education standardization policies is greatly influenced by the infrastructure component of education. Schools in remote areas often lack adequate facilities, such as proper classrooms, technology facilities, and curriculum-appropriate books and teaching aids, according to data collected by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Education does not reach the expected standard due to this infrastructure imbalance.
- d. **Education Evaluation and the National Exam (UN):** The UN uses the national exam as a tool to measure the quality of education in Indonesia. On the one hand, the UN sets a clear standard to measure students' academic achievement across the country. On the other hand, the national exam has shown mixed results. Focusing too much attention on exam results takes away from students' creativity and character development. As shown by (Suryani, 2017) ^[6], teachers are more likely to teach students to prepare for exams than to teach critical and creative thinking skills.

Factors affecting the success of education standardization policies

The success of education standardization policies depends on several important factors. One of them is the quality of the teaching staff. Teachers who have high competence and good motivation will be more able to implement the standards set effectively. Research conducted by (Haryono, 2019) shows that the teacher certification program can improve teaching competencies, although its implementation still faces challenges, such as inequality of training and lack of facilities. The successful implementation of education standardization policies in Indonesia depends on several important factors:

- a. **Teacher Quality and Readiness:** Teachers' ability to implement standardized education policies is critical. Teachers who understand educational evaluation and curriculum implementation can better teach students and meet standards. However, the lack of equitable training and teachers' low willingness to attend training are major problems in many places.
- b. **Local Government Support:** The level of local government support for this policy, especially in terms of funding and resource distribution, affects the success of this policy. Regions with larger budgets tend to find it easier to meet the set education standards while those with more limited budgets face problems providing

adequate facilities.

- c. **Community and parent participation:** The involvement of parents and communities in the education process is also very important to support education standardization policies. High community involvement can create a supportive environment for the success of education policies, such as by establishing non-formal education institutions or providing additional facilities for under-resourced schools.

Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing the Education Standardization Policy

In implementing the education standardization policy, there are several challenges and opportunities, namely, the inequality between regions is the biggest obstacle in implementing the education standardization policy. Remote or less developed areas often face difficulties due to limited resources, while more developed and wealthier areas can more easily meet the standards. In addition, many people are still resistant to change, especially when it comes to incorporating new curricula or national exams that focus heavily on the cognitive. While the threat is that the education standardization policy offers great opportunities to improve the quality of education, despite the constraints. One of them is improving the quality of teachers through continuous training and certification programs. In addition, this policy enables equitable development of education infrastructure. Underdeveloped areas can receive a larger budget to improve the educational facilities they currently have.

Comparison with other countries

International studies have shown that countries such as Finland and Singapore, despite having strict standardization policies, show that the quality of teaching and the availability of adequate resource support for each school and teacher determine more success in improving the quality of education. Therefore, Indonesia should learn from the best practices of these countries by emphasizing on improving the quality of the teaching force.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that education standardization policies in Indonesia, including the National Education Standards (SNP), the National Exam (UN) and teacher certification, have a significant influence on education quality. Although these policies aim to improve education quality proportionally across Indonesia, there are still some problems in the implementation process. One of the positive impacts seen is the improvement in teaching quality and education equity in some areas. The teacher certification program, for example, has helped improve the competence of educators, although teachers in disadvantaged areas still lack training. On the other hand, adequate facilities to meet school standards are still a problem in some areas because the education standards policy forces schools to comply with these standards.

The biggest dilemma is the difference in the quality of education between regions, which hinders equitable distribution of education. Schools in urban areas have an easier time meeting academic requirements, but schools in rural and remote areas still face limitations in terms of the availability of facilities and infrastructure, as well as qualified teaching staff. Consequently, to ensure the success of this policy, equality of resources, more equitable provision of

educational facilities across Indonesia and improved teacher quality through continuous training are required.

Although the education standardization policy has great potential to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, its achievement is still affected by many factors, such as education infrastructure, teacher quality and local government support. Therefore, the main focus of implementing this policy should be to improve the equality of educational resources and increase the capacity of educators.

Recommendations

1. Improving Education Infrastructure and Access

The government needs to improve the distribution of educational resources, so that there is no inequality between developed and remote areas such as infrastructure, books, teaching quality and information technology.

2. Improving Teacher Quality and Training

Improve teacher training programs to enhance teachers' understanding of the appropriate curriculum and incorporate skills- and competency-based teaching approaches.

3. Evaluation of the National Exam and Development of Alternative Assessments

It is imperative to evaluate the National Exam system, which is still used as a measure of educational success. Compared to knowledge-based tests, more thorough and student-centered assessments, such as critical and creative thinking, would be more effective.

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