



Reviewing the Education Social Disparities in Indonesia: Sustaining the Future]of Education

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Abstrak

Indonesia memiliki sejarah kependidikan yang sebelumnya dicontoh oleh negara-negara lain dan dengan perubahan revolusi industrial 4.0 dimana disini menjadikan Indonesia berada di posisi yang tidak memuaskan. Pendidikan di Indonesia membutuhkan system yang sustainable dan berkemajuan mengikuti zaman, namun masih banyak kekurangan dan perbedaan yang signifikan dari banyaknya sekolah yang tersebar di Indonesia. Peranan pemangku kepentingan diperlukan dalam merestrukturisasi sustainability dari pendidikan Indonesia itu sendiri, dan pentingnya dari peranan pemerintah dalam urgensinya untuk menyetarakan fasilitas dan menstandarisasikannya setara se-Nusantara. Kajian ini merupakan kajian kualitatif dimana melihat peluang yang secara kolaboratif diharapkan membuat karakter siswa Indonesia maju dan menjadi bangsa yang kuat dan berkelanjutan melalui pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: *Kesetaraan Pendidikan, Pendidikan Berkelanjutan, Strategi Pendidikan*

Abstract

Indonesia has an educational history previously imitated by other countries, and the changes in the industrial revolution 4.0 here put Indonesia in an unsatisfactory position. Education in Indonesia requires a sustainable system that progresses according to the times. However, many shortcomings and significant differences exist among the many schools spread across Indonesia. The role of stakeholders is needed in restructuring the sustainability of Indonesian education itself, and the importance of the government's role in its urgency to equalise facilities and standardise them equally throughout the archipelago. This study is a qualitative study that sees opportunities that are collaboratively expected to make the character of Indonesian students progress and become a strong and sustainable nation through education.

Keywords: *Education Equality, Continuing Education, Education Strategy*

INTRODUCTION

After Indonesia's independence 77 years ago, the ideals of liberation initiated by the nation's founding fathers became the responsibility of all levels of society to continue the pillars of the struggle for the national movement. Educate life towards a promising future. The journey of time is quite long; it is natural for this nation to learn valuable lessons that will become the essential capital for creating history in a better future. Indonesia was once praised as one of the countries that succeeded in raising the Human

Development Index fantastically. In fact, in the 1960s, many teaching staff from Indonesia were assigned to teach in neighbouring countries. Many students from neighbouring countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand were examples of studying in Indonesia (Ardanawati, 2019).

Education is an ethical endeavour that can develop one's talents to an optimal level within the limits of individual nature. Every human being can honourably participate in human development, and their society continues to achieve a higher dignity of life. Education is an element that cannot be separated from human beings. From the womb to growing up, old humans experience the educational process. Education is a light that guides humans in determining the direction, purpose, and meaning of this life. There are several academic problems in Indonesia, ranging from curriculum, quality, competence, and even leadership competencies, both at the top and bottom levels (Ab Ghani *et al.*, 2020). Various complaints occurred in the field; school leaders and educators regretted the dimensions of leadership, such as management, discipline, bureaucracy and administration, which were in disarray. Leadership in schools also plays a role in colouring the face of global education and widening educators' gaps and internal conflicts. Coupled with regional autonomy, the national education system must make changes and adjustments to realise a democratic educational process, pay attention to diversity and regional needs, and encourage community participation.

The community has given full rights to the government in administering the state with all its needs and the extent to which the government's moral responsibility includes the leadership apparatus and its staff in preparing, providing and developing education. The dynamic condition is quite an ironic dilemma and significantly impacts the quality of education. Thinking about the concepts and mechanisms of education, especially for Indonesian people developing in a pluralist society, is undoubtedly challenging. But even so, it still refers to education as a human right of every individual child of the nation, as stated in the 1945 Constitution Article 31 paragraph (1), which states that every citizen has the right to education.

Some criticisms from education practitioners and national education observers need a clear direction. The absence of unclear leadership in national education shows the loss of the vital elan that drives the education system to realise the shared ideals of an extraordinary Indonesia. So this paper discusses the problems of national education, which can be seen in two things: 1) The gap in infrastructure and educational equity, and 2) The problem of education policy related to the leadership dimension (Anderson & Dexter, 2005).

METHOD

This study is qualitative and focuses on a literature review and author observations as the primary data source. The explanation is prioritised with social gaps in education in Indonesia and the importance of stakeholders' role in forming a characterful personality. Therefore, generating ideas and linking them to the interests of education in Indonesia and looking at collaboratively opportunities will make Indonesian students progress and become sustainable and solid nations through education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Social Problems and Gaps in Education

Looking at the history of Indonesian education, the direction of teaching is adjusted to the circumstances and interests of the rulers; when the rulers need political power in that direction, education is directed. When viewed more from the political aspect of education. Education is a tool for particular interests, such as ideological and political, to maintain the status quo. For example, education was a

powerful tool during the Orde Baru era, eliminating real education's essence. Even education is used as an indoctrination tool (Raharjo, 2012). A bureaucratic system directly controlled the implementation of education with a long chain from the main level to the regional level, even to the education unit level. This kind of leadership certainly impacts education, where the guidelines and basis for acting educators no longer refer to professionalism but instructions from superiors. Such conditions result in siding with leaders and eliminating professional rights and authority. As a result, education produces obedient humans who do not dare to take decisions; there is no independence because they are more forced and pretend (Hallinger, 2003).

As national education is subordinated to practical political forces, political parties have included teaching in the arena of power struggles. Education is no longer to build Indonesian people as a whole but to build the strength of certain practical political parties to benefit their group. When the implementation of regional autonomy is accompanied by educational freedom, many regional heads prioritise subjectivity rather than objectivity in placing professional people in education. It means that the leadership dimension in the regions also affects education at the regional level.

However, the regional autonomy policy will have enormous implications in various central and regional governance arrangements, not least in education. In the education decentralisation policy, the transfer of authority from the central government to local governments is not the most important thing; what is essential is to encourage the process of autonomy for both local governments to manage and provide quality and proper education (Maspul & Amalia, 2021). It is necessary to regulate the balance of authority between the centre and the regions, and each has a high commitment to make it happen. Because the success or failure of the implementation of regional autonomy is at least the principle and will of the provincial government itself, this is very important because many are worried that restricted freedom, which gives the region authority and power, will not change anything. This demand for change is principally to build a shared commitment, including the willingness to change the behaviour of local elites.

Meanwhile, the orientation of the curriculum applied is also based on the educational background of the minister. Changing the curriculum is not a problem because the change in curriculum is expected to make the subject matter better and more responsive to global challenges. But the problem is when the curriculum needs to be balanced by the portion of the humanism and local wisdom content. This curriculum change also adds to parents' burden on financing education. Because automatically, if the curriculum changes, it will tend to change books, and automatically spending on children's books will increase. No one can dispute the opinion that education is essential. Everyone agrees that education is a crucial tool to improve the quality of life. Although education is vital for life, only some have the same commitment to advancing education, especially leaders' commitment to the importance of education. The core problem of education in Indonesia is the low awareness of the nation's leaders towards education and the insufficient funds allocated for education.

National leadership is always expected to be able to think more about and side with the progress of education. Especially with the policy regarding the formation of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and the Ministry of Research and Higher Education brings fresh air for change and progress of this nation. People hope a lot for this new leader to transform education so that problems in education can be resolved; at least there is a change in a better direction for the progress of this nation. Significantly, the demands and challenges of education are increasingly complex, along with the complexity of social issues. A pile of orders and aspirations of the community are increasingly rising and competitively focused on educational institutions, with the hope that the presence of education will be able to overcome and

anticipate various problems and the increasingly global transformation of life. Meanwhile, educational institutions need help to deal with multiple issues concerning systems, conceptions, mechanisms, and implementation strategies in other parts.

A rapid social transformation has occurred in the last millennium. Social change cannot be separated from political leadership and education development. On the other hand, it will also be determined by the leading figure in the context of the government. The leader has an arduous task, not just seeking power, position, facilities, and wealth. So the leader should be able to solve various problems of the nation and bring them towards the welfare and prosperity of the country. Leaders must have a spirit of devotion to the government and state. In the process of social transformation, the transformation of Indonesian education is a necessity. The direction and form of educational change will be much influenced by leadership. It is hoped that this new leader will be able to transform education so that problems in the field of education can be resolved; at least, there is a change in a better direction for the progress of this nation. Disparities in education in Indonesia still occur in various ways, such as infrastructure and teaching staff resources, related to the following:

1. Educators

The quantity and quality of teachers today are also challenging things. The current number of teachers is objectively inadequate, but this cannot be just averaged. However, it must be admitted that the small number of teachers is one indicator of the gap in the problem of teacher distribution. This inadequate number of teachers mainly occurs in rural, remote and border areas. Meanwhile, there is an accumulation of teachers in urban areas with adequate facilities and infrastructure. Even in one elementary school, only a handful of teachers, including the principal. Therefore, schools developed in urban areas can continue to survive with their progress, while schools lacking teachers in rural/remote areas are increasingly isolated and worsening.

The position of the teacher is very vital in education. In terms of quantity and distribution of teachers, the problem is a dilemma, some schools have an excess of teachers, but some schools lack teachers. One of Indonesia's teacher distribution gap factors is that Indonesia's geographical condition is extensive. This gap in the distribution of educators is a work that must be resolved; the distribution of teachers can be realised. The government's efforts take time to solve the problem. Various efforts have been made, such as adding teachers through recruiting Civil Servant Candidates (CPNS) and contract teachers and providing special allowances for teachers living in remote areas. Not to mention talking about the quality of teachers. A teacher with a strategic position to achieve a better quality of education is highly demanded of his professional abilities.

Skills and professionalism must continually be improved, especially in preparing human resources capable of facing global competition. Therefore, the government must make a breakthrough in building education. This means that teachers must have equal distribution and quality in Indonesia. This could be overcome by the existence of a regional autonomy law. In addition, central and provincial governments must create programs that stimulate teachers willing to serve in the regions, especially in remote areas. For example, there is a special allowance for teachers who want to devote themselves to regions/villages classified as remote so that there is a kind of cost and benefits measure for teachers from a rational point of view and social demands.

Regarding the quality of teachers, it should also be prioritised to prepare competent teachers with high skills/abilities. This is in line with what is stated in the law on teachers and lecturers Chapter V Article 10, which reads: teacher competence includes pedagogic competence, personality competence, social

competence, and professional competence obtained through professional education. The problem of teacher competence is severe, for it is necessary to carry out good coaching; besides that, teachers continue to learn to develop insight and intellect, which can build teacher creativity (Hakim, 2015). The government is expected to allocate funds to improve teachers' quality because it cannot be denied that teachers are the spearhead of the success of education.

2. Parents

Apart from being daily teachers in daily life, parents as the most critical stakeholders in developing education in Indonesia. In addition to teachers, it is necessary to establish characteristics as civilised and virtuous Nusantara citizens. The role of parents is significant, especially during the Covid-19 outbreak in Indonesia, where it urgently enables the role of parents in protecting the daily lives of students at home, as well as hybrid learning which cannot be separated from communication between teachers and parents in protecting student learning both at home and abroad school and at home (Maspul & Amalia, 2021a). Parents here need centralised guidance besides having the capacity and authority to guide children; additional information is required as a form of guidelines in recommending students' character at home and how they are confident in building creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication in students' personalities. The role of government is needed in making this challenge a solution that can be adequately met for parents, for example, by distributing these guidelines through visualisation of videos and ebooks that can be accessed online or sent directly through schools in digital form to each individual's email.

3. Educational Facilities

The issue of facilities and infrastructure is a crucial issue in improving and developing the education system in Indonesia and is also an essential requirement or element. There is a significant disparity in the quality of education between schools in urban and remote areas. Generally, schools in urban areas are better than those in rural areas. Often seen in person or through the news on television and in newspapers, the condition of schools in rural and remote areas is deplorable. For example, the shape of a fragile building about to collapse, plus a leaky roof, often hampered teaching and learning activities. With the damage to infrastructure in large numbers, the educational process cannot be effective. The severe damage to educational facilities coupled with the educational infrastructure that does not support a conducive learning process is one of the main factors affecting the success of education.

Generally, schools in rural and remote areas are constrained by educational facilities and infrastructure, such as classrooms, libraries and laboratories. Kalua also received assistance, such as classroom rehabilitation, but that was not all. The process is only for certain parts, such as roofing and painting. Another gap is the availability of books in urban and remote areas and on the border. Meanwhile, the availability of books is significant educational support because this will support the success of the educational process. The problem of facilities and infrastructure is related to the education budget. An adequate education budget is one factor that influences the quality and suitability of education. This education budget will involve the size of the funding and budget allocations.

Meanwhile, technology and its role in helping these stakeholders make them competent in education advancements, such as proper classrooms and general literacy for students. The importance of utilising technology in the current era is crucial for schools in Indonesia; its distribution must be guaranteed by the government, and requires an audit of this facility every two years or a specific period is also very important. Then creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication through technology will

undoubtedly make it easier for students, teachers and parents as education stakeholders so that even the public can take advantage of the technology. Such as digital libraries and IT laboratories, where it is imperative to introduce them to students as early as possible, introducing them to coding, artificial intelligence and big data so that they are not technology-blind in this era of massive global technological progress.

With the shifting and improvisation of education facilities for teachers and parents in developing IQ and student characteristics, it is hoped that Indonesia will progress and be sustainable in big cities and hard-to-reach areas. Improving education in terms of equity is very important to realise the quality of education in all regions. One of the things that can be discovered is if sufficient funds and good management support it. There is great hope that educational autonomy as one of the national education policies can be adequately implemented and directed. Academic independence is expected to produce a more independent, open, democratic and advanced education system which is still far from being achieved.

Building Cultural Literacy in Cultivating Virtuous Indonesian Characters

To make Indonesia a cultured and virtuous citizen, it is necessary to build cultural literacy. Indonesia only owns this uniqueness by making literacy the main thing built on character for students at an early age, even college students. By collaborating with the public access library, which is not only a standard library but also has an additional role in shaping creativity and critical thinking from stakeholders (students, teachers, parents and the public). An example of the current cultural literacy centre is the one that was restructured in Jakarta during the Anies Baswedan period as Governor of Jakarta; Marzuki Ismail Park, Martha Tiahahu Park, and other Museums. This is crucial in making the library not only its nature as a library but also other spaces that shape the Indonesian National personality for students, such as providing public urbanism features to develop the character of each individual. Students can access digital libraries and historical visualisations of the global economy and the Nusantara, simultaneously making the place a sustainable one-stop learning centre.

It is hoped that this Cultural Literacy Center will not only be in Jakarta but with a significant role; it is hoped that it will be opened in all provinces in Indonesia, where equal distribution of this one-stop public learning centre can make students and Indonesian citizens independent and with character. Cultural literacy on IT is also essential in making the Indonesian nation advanced by developing critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication in helping reading, writing and another metric.

Indonesian Education; Challenges and Prospects

Education is the key to national development because education leadership is critical in directing and implementing education policies. It must be admitted that the problem of education is one of the most challenging problems to deal with. The government has carried various approaches, although they sometimes deviate from the provisions in practice. However, the government's efforts to overcome multiple educational problems must be appreciated. The primary thing Indonesians should consider, especially the government, is how to make a country with a large population in terms of its human resources. Thus, the biggest challenge of this nation is the low quality of education. This nation inevitably has to make improvements and reforms in various sectors related to education.

Indonesian education transformation is necessary; emerging leadership will significantly influence the direction and education transformation. The reformation era, which began in 1998, was a transitional era that entered the national education, among others, with the issuance of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. This law has provided room for changes, one of which is the

decentralisation of education. This change certainly brings consequences to the implementation of national education. The challenge for the government (central and regional) is how the issue of authority does not overlap or even become a source of problems between the central and provincial governments. Regarding the prospects of national education in the era of globalisation, global awareness about increasing human resources is essential for education. Education must be sensitive and responsive in preparing the education system according to the context and demands of the times. Along with globalisation, equity and improvement of the education quality in Indonesia are required, improving the quality of its human resources in the face of global competition. This is because education is a form of investment in preparing quality Indonesian human resources. Hopefully, the policies issued by the government in education are in the context of reforming national education in a better direction (Maspul & Amalia, 2021).

After Covid-19 and entering the new normal era, enormous challenges make Indonesia have to pursue future education to catch up with global education. Even though online learning has helped fill the emerging gap in Indonesia, all students can face this challenge with unlimited creativity in the era of digitalisation. In addition to helping improvise the openness of education with MOOC, which can be accessed by anyone, only here is needed from the education stakeholders themselves in helping their role in advancing the nation.

CONCLUSION

Education must get serious attention from every nation because education will be able to see the progress of a nation. The Indonesians want to live forward because the education aspect needs a sufficient portion with various advances in other fields. The primary thing for education development is influenced by the dimensions of leadership or government (central and regional). Therefore, the leader's policies must be evenly distributed to each region to prevent gaps. However, it should be realised that the problem of education development is the government's responsibility and the responsibility of all parties. In turn, decentralised education empowers and develops Nusantara society through education.

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