

Education Policy: Understanding Policy Analysis in the Education Sector in Indonesia

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Corresponding Author: Name of Corresponding: Deding Ishak E-mail: dedingishak@yahoo.com</p>	<p>This research aims to explore and analyze education policies in Indonesia to understand the impacts, challenges and potential improvements in the national education system. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research results indicate that methods and formulations in formulating education policies in Indonesia play a central role in successful implementation in the field. The importance of selecting methods that involve in-depth analysis of the social, economic and cultural context of society is a determining factor in creating responsive and relevant policies. Synergy between government, educational institutions, community leaders, and education experts provides the basis for integrated education policies, ensuring harmony between key components such as curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment. Along with that, the research results also highlight the importance of prospective, retrospective, and integrated policy analysis as instruments for predicting policy impacts before implementation, understanding policy impacts after implementation, and creating responsive and sustainable policies in the face of changing social and economic dynamics.</p> <p>Keywords: Policy Analysis, Education Policy, Prospective Policy Analysis, Retrospective Policy Analysis, Integrated Policy Analysis</p>

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INTRODUCTION

Education occupies a central role in the development of a country's human resources. By making education a top priority, a country can experience sustainable progress and development (Silalahi, 2003). Investment in quality education is not only an investment in the current generation, but is also an effort to build a solid foundation for the future. The quality of well-educated human resources is the key to facing global challenges and exploiting existing development opportunities (Bakry, 2010).

To achieve this goal, it is necessary to carry out in-depth policy analysis in dealing with the various educational problems that have been formulated. This analysis involves an in-depth understanding of the implementation of education policies, an assessment of the impact that has been achieved, and identification of challenges that may arise along the way (Musfah, 2016). Through policy analysis, countries can adapt and improve existing education strategies, while responding to the dynamics of change in society and the world of education. In this way, improvements and improvements in the quality of education can continue to be made, making a positive contribution to the development of human resources and the progress of the nation as a whole (Aziz et al, 2020).

Making education policy in Indonesia is the direct responsibility of the government as the main authority in setting the direction and priorities of national education. Fattah (2013) explains that education policy analysis provides an overview of how the country plans and directs its focus on the education sector. This analysis process involves determining educational priorities that are in accordance with the needs and goals of the country. Furthermore, the results of the policy analysis must be prepared by considering global factors that influence education policy. In other words, education policy is not only a response to internal needs, but is also part of the global context that influences the dynamics of national education (Purwanti et al, 2021).

In involving global factors, the government needs to consider developments and trends in international education, as well as collaborate with other countries in terms of innovation and knowledge exchange (Rusdiana, 2014). Therefore, the education policies created should not only reflect local conditions, but also anticipate challenges and opportunities on a global scale. Thus, the implementation of education policies can have a wider impact and support efforts to improve the quality of Indonesia's human resources in facing global competition (Wijaya et al, 2016).

In the process of formulating education policies, it is important to pay attention to several key aspects, especially the quality of education which currently has not yet reached the level of perfection (Nashidin, 2019). This obstacle does not solely lie in the implementation in the field or the results produced, but rather in the policies designed by the government and then implemented in various schools and educational institutions. Some policies may not be fully appropriate to the needs and dynamics of society and do not pay attention to variations in conditions at the local level (Madjid, 2018).

Thus, a thorough evaluation of existing education policies is needed, focusing on aspects that can influence the overall quality of education (Ishak, 2022). This evaluation must involve key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the educational community. Through this approach, the government can listen to various views and feedback which will help improve policies so that they are more responsive to real needs in the field (Hasan et al, 2022).

During its journey, Indonesia, through the Ministry of Education, has made several curriculum changes in response to current developments and societal needs (Maskur, 2023). This change was not simply carried out without a clear purpose, but rather to ensure that the education system can remain relevant and provide provisions that are in line with the demands of the times. With these changes, Indonesia is trying to improve the quality of education and produce graduates who are able to compete at the national and international level (Munandar, 2018).

However, in the process of updating this policy, there are obstacles that arise. Challenges such as resistance from related parties, limited resources, and difficulties in implementation at the school level can be significant obstacles (Ishak, 2021). Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education as the axis of education in Indonesia continues to strive to overcome these obstacles. The solution sought involves collaboration with various parties, organizing training for teachers, and using educational technology to increase the effectiveness of policy implementation (Hamidah et al, 2022). With this dynamic and responsive attitude, the Ministry of Education and Culture is committed to continuing to update and revise education policies, so that they can respond to the changing needs of educational institutions that continue to move forward (Duryat, 2022).

Through the careful application of methods and policy formulation, it is hoped that it can make a significant contribution to solving policy problems in the education sector (Khadowmi, 2019). The method includes in-depth policy analysis, involving key stakeholders, such as teachers, parents and non-governmental organizations, to gain a holistic understanding of challenges and potential solutions in the educational context. Apart from that, formulating policies that are responsive to current developments and community needs is the key to overcoming emerging problems (Rambung et al, 2023). Thus, through a data-based and participatory policy formulation process, it is hoped that it will be able to create a dynamic and quality educational environment, as well as provide effective solutions to advance the education system in Indonesia.

METHOD

This research chooses qualitative methods, especially literature study methods, as the main approach to obtain in-depth technical information. This process involves reading, researching, studying, understanding, analyzing and collecting information from various literary sources and related rules. In accordance with the views of Yulianah (2022), the literature study method was adopted in this research to detail understanding of the research topic. The research uses a literature review method, where data and information are obtained through exploration of previous articles and research results that are considered valid, especially from reference sources such as international journals and related books.

The choice of this method gives researchers the freedom to carry out a careful analysis process of concepts and findings that have been developed in previous scientific literature. By combining library research and literature review approaches, this research aims to present an in-depth analysis of the research theme. It is hoped that the choice of this qualitative method will open up a deeper understanding of the problems raised, describe their complexity, and provide a solid theoretical basis to support research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Education Policy in Indonesia

Methods and formulations in designing education policies are a crucial basis for successful implementation in the field. Fattah (2013) emphasized that method selection includes a series of analytical steps to understand the social, economic and cultural context of society. These in-depth studies enable stakeholders to identify specific needs in different regions or community groups. With a deep understanding of local realities, education policies can be designed in such a way that they are more responsive and relevant.

Policy formulation also requires synergy between government, educational institutions, community leaders and education experts. Involving various parties ensures that policies not only reflect the interests of the government, but also reflect the aspirations and needs of society at large. This close collaboration results in integrated education policies, considering multiple perspectives and ensuring alignment between key components such as curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment. Thus, appropriate methods and formulations pave the way for educational policies that are measurable, integrated and effective in achieving higher educational standards.

Methods and formulations in formulating education policies are critical processes that involve stakeholders by considering various relevant aspects. Fattah (2013) highlights this complexity, where stakeholders must take strategic steps in selecting methods and formulations that will form the basis of policy. This process includes an in-depth analysis of various factors, such as social, economic and cultural conditions in society. A deep understanding of this context allows them to choose policies that not only meet general needs, but also accommodate the differences and complexity of each educational context.

Apart from that, methods and formulations also consider the extent to which the policy can be implemented effectively. Policy selection must consider the availability of resources, the capacity of educational institutions, and support from the community. Therefore, practical and measurable steps are needed to ensure that policies not only exist in formal documents, but can also be implemented well in the field. Thus, involving various methods and formulations not only creates responsive and impactful policies, but also ensures the continuity and sustainability of education that meets the needs of society. The use of policy analysis procedures, which involve steps such as problem formulation, forecasting, monitoring, evaluation, and recommendations, forms an essential framework for transforming information from one form to another. Problem formulation is an important starting point in determining the direction and scope of policy analysis. At this stage, analysts identify problems or issues that need to be addressed, providing the basis for the next steps in the analysis process.

The next step is forecasting, where analysts use historical data and trends to make estimates about possible future developments. This process provides a solid foundation for decision making, enabling policy makers to plan solutions that fit future expectations. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation plays an important role in assessing the effectiveness of policies that have been implemented. Through continuous monitoring, stakeholders can understand the impact of policies in real-time, while evaluation provides in-depth insight into the success or failure of a policy. Problem formulation plays a central role in the entire policy analysis process, placing it at the core of the policy framework. According to Leslie A. Pal, as quoted by Fattah (2013: 56), public policy can be interpreted as a guide for determining concrete actions or steps. In this context, problem formulation becomes the main foundation that guides the entire policy analysis process. Identification of clear and well-defined problems becomes the basis for formulating effective and relevant solutions.

Furthermore, the concept of public policy as a hypothetical solution for people facing problems highlights the responsive nature of policy to society's needs. A good policy should be able to provide adequate answers or solutions to problems faced by certain individuals or community groups. Therefore, public policy is not only directive, but also functions as a tool to achieve adequate solutions to the challenges and problems faced by society. By recognizing the central role of problem formulation in guiding public policy, the policy analysis process can be more focused and the results more appropriate to the needs of the community that is the focus of its implementation. In carrying out the policy process, Leslie A. Pal differentiates policy analysis into academic policy analysis and applied policy analysis practitioners.

Policy analysis from an academic perspective is not limited to understanding the relationship between policy determinants and policy content, or simply revealing the nature, characteristics and profile of policies. Furthermore, the orientation of policy analysis in academic circles is multidisciplinary, embracing the fields of politics, science, history, sociology and economics. In an effort to avoid bias both descriptively and normatively, academics tend to focus more attention on the impacts produced by policies. This focus allows them to go beyond simply understanding the substance of the policy, engaging in broader research regarding the practical implications and consequences of the policy in society. Thus,

policy analysis carried out by academics combines scientific frameworks with exposure to real impacts, enriching our understanding of how policies can shape and influence various aspects of people's lives .

Practitioners of applied policy analysis tend to exhibit characteristics that are more pragmatic and directly related to the context of policy implementation. Compared to academic policy analysis which may be more theoretical and multidisciplinary, applied policy analysis practitioners focus more on the relationship between policy material (policy content) and concrete impacts that can be measured (policy impact). They focus on the practical and implementable aspects of policies, with the main aim of understanding the extent to which policies can achieve their objectives and provide desired benefits in real environments. This approach allows applied policy analysis practitioners to provide more direct and relevant input to policy makers and implementers in the field, by emphasizing concrete aspects that can be applied in subsequent policy improvements or adjustments.

Two types of policy analysis, namely academic policy analysis and applied policy analysis, can be distinguished based on institutions and their function in the policy ecosystem. Academic policy analysis, generally carried out in universities and "Think Tanks" institutions such as the Institute for Public Policy Research, has the primary aim of producing information, theories, and models that can serve as a basis for policy-making practitioners. They serve as a source of in-depth knowledge and are often multidisciplinary, providing a broad perspective on policy aspects. On the other hand, applied policy analysis practitioners work directly for governments, private consultants, and interest groups. Their main focus is to apply practical understanding and provide concrete solutions that can be implemented in a public policy context. Given their differences in institutions and functions, these two types of policy analysis complement each other, creating continuity between academic research and policy implementation in the field.

Academic policy analysis plays a crucial role in providing in-depth insights for higher education researchers. The focus is primarily on a deep understanding of policy issues, the process of forming the public agenda, and the dynamics behind the community groups involved. For example, when dealing with the issue of school closures, academic policy analysis can explain how the issue emerged, how it became a public agenda, and the constellation of community groups involved in discussing and influencing policy. This analysis also tends to outline possible policy impacts and applies relevant theories to provide a conceptual framework.

However, academic policy analysis has limitations in providing direct advice for policy processes in the field. This limitation arises because academic policy analysis tends to focus more on theoretical and conceptual aspects. As a result, while they can provide an in-depth understanding of the issue and its context, they may not provide practical guidance that policymakers can immediately apply to a particular situation. Therefore, while academic policy analysis provides a strong theoretical foundation, it often requires collaboration with applied policy analysis practitioners so that research results can be more directly relevant and contribute to effective policy-making processes.

Forms of education policy analysis in Indonesia

The three main forms of education policy analysis are prospective policy analysis, retrospective policy analysis, and integrated policy analysis (Dunn, 2003).

a. Prospective Policy Analysis

Prospective policy analysis, known as *ex ante* analysis, has an important role in detailing the production and transformation of information prior to the implementation of policy actions. This method is designed to predict the impact and implications of a policy before the policy is implemented, enabling policy makers to make informed decisions. In the context of education policy, prospective policy analysis can help detect potential challenges and previous policy impacts, allowing policy makers to identify more effective solutions.

However, it should be noted that prospective policy analyzes often create a significant gap between the solutions proposed by the analysis and government efforts to solve the problem. This phenomenon, as pointed out by Schick (1997), indicates that policy implementation is often more complicated than anticipated by prospective analysis. In the context of education policy, this may manifest in a mismatch between the solutions proposed in the analysis and actual conditions on the ground, such as social, economic, or cultural challenges that may not be fully accommodated by prospective policy analysis.

Therefore, although prospective policy analysis provides a valuable basis for decision making, the limitations and complexities in policy implementation need to be acknowledged. It is important for education policymakers to use the results of this analysis as a guide, but also to remain responsive to the complex dynamics of society and the education system. Collaborative integration between prospective policy analysis and field experience can be the key to creating effective and sustainable education policies.

b. Retrospective policy analysis

Retrospective policy analysis, or *ex post* analysis, involves the transformation of information forms and products after policy implementation. One form of retrospective analysis is the first, discipline-

oriented, consisting of political scientists and sociologists. They focus on developing and testing theories that explain the causes and effects of policies that have been implemented. In this context, this analysis focuses less on identifying specific goals and targets that policymakers may initially desire.

This group of discipline-oriented analysts tends to be less interested in identifying the specific goals of policymakers or in distinguishing between policy variables that can be changed through policy manipulation, and situational variables that cannot be manipulated. They rather seek to understand the general cause-and-effect relationships of policies without including these specific elements. While discipline-oriented analyzes can provide deep theoretical insights, this tendency can result in limitations in providing a more holistic understanding of policy implementation, especially in the context of policy makers' specific goals and objectives that may have changed over time.

Second, problem-oriented retrospective policy analysis involves a group of analysts consisting mostly of political scientists and sociologists. The goal of this group is to explain the cause and effect of policies with a focus on solving concrete problems. Compared with discipline-oriented groups, these groups emphasize problem orientation rather than theory development and testing in social science disciplines. Problem-oriented analysis tends to be more general and practical, focusing on concrete aspects of policy that influence the solution of a particular problem. For example, they can conduct global data analyzes on the influence of gender, technology, or social inequality on achievement test results. This approach allows analysts to detail the impact of policies on specific issues without focusing too much on a particular theoretical framework.

Although problem-oriented analysis provides a more direct understanding of the concrete impacts of policies, there is a risk of missing the broader insights that a more in-depth theoretical analysis might provide. Therefore, in crafting a problem-oriented retrospective analysis, it is important to maintain a good balance between practical understanding and contribution to social science theory more generally. Third, application-oriented retrospective policy analysis involves a broader group of analysts, including not only political scientists and sociologists, but also individuals from professional fields of study such as social work, public administration, and related fields of study, including evaluation research. This group aims to explain the causes and consequences of public policies and programs, paying special attention to the development and testing of basic theories.

In dealing with retrospective policy analysis, this group not only pays attention to policy variables but also identifies the goals and targets desired by policy makers and policy actors. This approach helps to better understand the context and motivation behind the policies that have been implemented and the extent to which these objectives have been achieved. This application-oriented analysis tends to provide a more holistic and comprehensive view, combining theoretical elements with practical understanding of policy implementation in the field.

By involving multiple disciplines and fields of study, application-oriented groups of analysts can make richer and more diverse contributions to our understanding of public policy. The involvement of professionals from the fields of social work and public administration also helps strengthen the relevance and applicability of the results of this retrospective policy analysis in the broader context of society and public services.

c. Integrated Policy Analysis

Integrated policy analysis marks a form of analysis that not only requires analysts to link retrospective and perspective stages of inquiry, but also demands continuity in generating and transforming information over time. This approach views policy analysis as a dynamic process that requires a deep understanding of the causes and effects of policies from the past to the future. This means that analysts not only assess the impact of policies that have been implemented, but also continuously collect and modify information to guide future policy changes.

Integrated policy analysis builds on the strengths of disciplines that specialize in perspective analysis, such as economics, systems engineering, and operations research. These disciplines bring powerful analytical frameworks to understand policy implications from economic, technological, and operational viewpoints. On the other hand, integrated policy analysis also includes retrospective aspects involving political science, sociology and law. Thus, there is an integration between perspective and retrospective analysis to create a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of public policy.

In the context of education policy, integrated policy analysis can provide a more solid foundation for understanding the dynamics of education policy. This allows policy makers to not only identify past policy successes or failures, but also adapt their policies in real-time to achieve better educational goals and be relevant to social and economic change. Thus, this integrated approach provides a powerful tool for policymakers to address complex challenges and dynamics in society and education systems.

CONCLUSION

In the analysis of education policy in Indonesia, policy formulation is a crucial aspect that influences the success of implementation in the field. The methods and formulations chosen have a direct impact on the responsiveness and relevance of policies to the social, economic and cultural context of society. Synergy between government, educational institutions, community leaders and education experts is the basis for integrated policies, considering various perspectives and ensuring harmony between key components. In addition, the policy formulation process also takes into account implementation aspects, including the availability of resources and community support, thereby ensuring the continuity of education that meets community needs. In the context of education policy analysis, there are three forms: prospective, retrospective, and integrated policy analysis. Prospective, or ex ante, policy analysis plays a role in forecasting the impact of policies before implementation, although it must be recognized that implementation is often more complex than anticipated. Meanwhile, retrospective policy analysis, whether discipline-oriented or problem-oriented, provides an in-depth understanding of the impact of policies after implementation. Integrated policy analysis is the key to understanding the dynamics of education policy as a whole, integrating perspective and retrospective. With an integrated approach, policymakers can better adapt their policies to social and economic change, creating responsive and sustainable education policies.

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