

CONTROVERSIES ON THE NATIONAL EDUCATION EXAMINATION POLICY

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Abstract

This study aims at describing and finding out the root cause of controversies on the national education examination policy especially on the formulation of laws on the administration of the national examination. The controversies started when the national examination was deemed to determine whether a student graduated from his school or not, while the regulations at the higher level did not really stipulate it. In fact, they almost tended to deny it. These controversies then resulted in deviations and systemic moral hazards in many regions since schools tended to achieve high levels of graduation. These controversies reached their peak when some individuals' lawsuit was accepted by the Supreme Court and the government's plea was rejected. Moreover, the government was deemed to neglect its citizens' human rights. Eventually, these controversies on the national examination challenged the government to reorganize its policy and enhance its valuation standard on the national education system. This study employed qualitative research approach the method of which was intrinsic case study intensively focusing on controversies on the national examination policy as the determinant on a student's graduation. The data were obtained from national education's policy makers both from executive branch and from the legislature branch, and from school principals and regional heads of educational department as the field executors who became crucial elements in implementing those policies. The result show that Lack of adequate long-term strategic plans in realizing the educational standard and its evaluation was one of the causes on these controversies. Policy making process errors in fact bred various conflicts in their implementations. The society's active participation significantly affect the government's policy change process.

Keywords: *The National Examination, Controversies, Policy Formulations*

Controversies on the national examination policies started when some individuals filed a lawsuit against those policies to the Central Jakarta State Court. That lawsuit was accumulation of massive problems expressed in the form of the society's protests. That lawsuit against the policies stipulating the national examination as the determinant in a student's graduation, followed by a verdict issued by the South Jakarta State court stating that the government, as the defendant, was negligent in fulfilling its citizens' educational rights in the citizen lawsuit on the national examination policies made by the government in 2007. This verdict was confirmed by Jakarta's High Court verdict that also approve the previous verdict stating that the defendant was ordered to take concrete steps in overcoming students' psychological and mental disorders caused by the national examination, and was ordered to reconsider that national education system. It reached its climax when the Supreme Court rejected the government's plea on that national examination matter the case number of which was 2596 K/Pdt/2008 where the government was deemed to neglect to fulfill its citizens' human rights especially on the educational rights and on the rights of students who became victims of the national examination. The government was also deemed to neglect to enhance the teachers' quality especially school facilities and infrastructures, complete information in all of the

regions before implementing the national examination policy. The government was also requested to take concrete steps in overcoming the students' psychological and mental disorders caused by that national examination.

Many people from educational elements launched rallied to refuse the policies. Many students made istighatsah before the national examination was started. Many sets of national examination were systemically leaked. Moral hazards arose everywhere. Many students became depressed and even some of them committed suicide when they knew they flunked in their national examination. These phenomena made these national policies become more controversial.

The controversy on the national examination policies was found in Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005, Article 69 (c) stipulated that the national examination became the determinant factor in a student's graduation. On the other hand, article 58 (1) of Law Number 20 of 2003 stipulated that "a student's learning outcome evaluation was conducted by the teacher. The society interpreted that the determinant factor of a student's graduation was the teacher or his school. However, a state institution through the national examination took over this authority.

Eventually, the government realized its mistakes by issuing Government Regulation Number 13 of 2015 that for the second time amended Government Regulation Number 18 of 2005. The new regulation annulled the national examination as the determinant factor of a student's graduation and returned it to the hand of his teacher of school. Previously, the government had issued Government Regulation number 32 of 2013 that for the first time amended Government Regulation number 18 of 2005 that annulled the administration of the national examination in the elementary school levels.

The national examination policy that became an effort to observe the valuation standard became controversial. Government Regulation number 18 stipulated that graduate's competency standard was the graduate's competency qualification including attitudes, knowledge and skills. The national examination obviously was merely able to observe its cognitive knowledge which was only limited to several subjects, while graduate's competency standard of his attitudes and skills were not measured as the national examination policies.

National examination should be able to play its important role as national education's and management's quality control if the government conducts its strategic policies through enhancing the teachers' quality especially the school's facilities and infrastructures, complete information access in all of the regions before implementing the national examination policy as implemented in developed countries and this is the one that becomes the controversial side. Even after I finished this study, national examination hadn't been able to find its standard procedure.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach the model of which was intrinsic case study.

Instrumental case study, We employ this case study to research on a certain case in order that we can generate a perspective of a certain issue or as a means to understand other aspects outside of the case such as in order to prove or enhance an existing theory. Collective case study, This study case researches on several cases simultaneously in order that it can research on the phenomenon, population, and general condition. This study is conducted in order to draw a conclusion or to generalize phenomena or populations of the cases. Collective study case wants to create a theory on the basis of equation and regularity obtained from each case that is investigated. Based on that Creswell's opinion, this study was a case study where the author wanted to more deeply dig a bounded system on a program namely national examination policy. Moreover, pursuant to that Stake's opinion mentioned above, in accordance with the core problem that the author exposes in this study, this case study took the form of intrinsic case study, where this study would explore controversies found in the national examination policy (case specificity) Resource persons of this study were decision makers from executive branch such as officials from Puspendik, Balitbang, Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education, and Secretariat General of the Ministry of Education and Culture, decision makers from legislature branch such as members of the House of

Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia from Commission Ten (Commission overseeing educational matters), prominent educators involved in the formulation of Law on National Education System of 2002, Regional Heads of Education Departments and High School Principals in Aceh and Jakarta as the field executors that also became crucial elements in the organizations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Controversies on the Administration of the national Examination

Controversies on the national education policy have not ended yet due to the unfinished main considerations of the policy making. In regards to the legislation, the government has returned the teacher's and the school's right to determine a graduation as stipulated in Article 58 (1) of Law Number 20 of 2003, which previously the government based the administration of national examination on Article 57(2) of Law Number 20 of 2003. However, in terms of its implementation, the government has not made a unanimous decision whether this national examination will still be administered or erased. We can obviously see the efforts through the administration of the 2018 National Examination that obligates all of the subjects other than that of the national examination must be examined at UASBN.

The society is no longer anxious since that condition has been annulled by Government Regulation Number 13 of 2015, so students who just wish to graduate from high school can fulfill their targets. On the other hand, those who wish to continue their study to state or private universities are challenged to study more diligently since the national examination is a prerequisite to the higher level of education.

National examination, which is also part of the standard national education achievement nasional, still become controversial on the standard competency of national examination graduates, where the graduate's standard competency on his or her competency qualifications including attitudes, knowledge, and skills have not been finished yet. National examination merely evaluates a student's knowledge qualification and only comprises of several subjects. It means that national education is only limited to evaluate the cognitive aspect, but not the affective and psycho-motoric aspects. Nevertheless, the quality of national examination has become better since it is now in the form of computer-based examination, both in terms of its quality and the integrity of its administration. However, it seems that the government no longer develops this computer-based examination optimally since they have made a new policy stipulating that the remaining subjects that were previously submitted to the student's own school are now obligated in the form of UASBN the national standard of which are submitted to the provincial government without any qualification standard of the examination makers, with parameters that are not fully prepared and without any supervision in its administration. Consequently, the 100-percent target of computer-based national examination becomes abandoned. In fact, the government has realized that there are many weaknesses of the National Examination System; however, when trying to enhance it, the government is constrained by policies they have made before.

National Education Standard

National education standard is a crucial factor in order to realize the quality of national education. Law on National Education System has mandated the government to administer a national education system that show that all graduates from Aceh, Sabang to Merauke have the same graduation competency standard and the same academic capability. In reality, Table below shows us the standard of national examination participants' graduation grades the policy of which have changed from year to year and it always increases. At the same time it is not equaled with the enhancement of the teacher's quality and the enhancement of Minimum Educational Service Standard in terms of its facilities and infrastructures.

Table. Minimum Standard of Graduation Grades

Year	Minimum Grade	Minimum Average	NE Graduation Requirement
2005	4.25	4.25	100% Permendiknas No 45 of 2006
2006		4.50	
2007	<u>5.00</u>		
2008	4.25	5.25	
2009		5.50	
2010			
2011	4.00	5.50	60%-40% Permendiknas No 45 of 2010
2012			60%-40% Permendikbud No 59 of 2011
2013			60%- 40% Permendikbud No 97 of 3013
2014			50%-50% Permendikbud No 144 of 2014
2015	<i>Determined by the student's school and not stipulates NE as the graduation requirement</i>		0% <i>Permendikbud 5/2005</i>

Actually, the key to enhancing the educational standard is the teacher, namely by giving them different support depending on their own capability. Teacher with less capability can be accompanied by the more qualified ones. We can also enhance the teacher's quality by making different approaches depending on their own capacity. If they already have the same capacity we can agree on the achievement standard target. However, if the teachers are below the standard, we should give them various trainings from skills assistance to student's achievement measurement.

Education standard requires the same process, the same input, the same quality of the teacher, the same facilities and infrastructures although the contexts are already different. Therefore, what we should stick to is the graduation competency standard of each levels and how to examine it.

From a different perspective, if observed more thoroughly, the purpose of determining whether a student of a certain educational institution graduates or not is to find out whether he or she already masters a certain, expected competency through the learning process in his or her school. When determining whether a student has already mastered a certain competency through the learning process in his or school, we can employ several methods. Normatively, a student's learning evaluation process should start from the beginning of the learning year, so the evaluation results will become more comprehensive. However, there are several conditions that must be met when the school is fully authorized to determine its own students' graduation, namely other than high level of the teacher's integrity and quality, enhancing the learning process that enables the teachers to get feedback from their students on the educational process that has taken place.

Enhancing the Quality of National Education

Standardized national examination is meant to measure the quality of education and to take responsibility of the education administration in the national, provincial, municipal levels up to the

level of education units. It is also meant to control the quality of education nationally, to enhance the quality of education nationally, to be a parameter in determining a student's graduation, and to be a factor in admitting a student in higher level of his or her education.

Enhancing the quality of education starts from enhancing the quality of teachers. Re-empower Teacher's Working Group (KKG), Subject Teacher Symposium (MGMP), Principal's Symposium (MKKS) as a means of skills sharpening in enhancing teaching techniques and as a dynamic forum to exchange ideas and experience, to solve problems, to measure progress, and to develop parameters.

We can enhance the teachers' capacity and quality by giving them opportunities to continue their studies in the best national universities and giving them opportunities to continue their studies abroad in accordance with their majors. An informant in this study has reminded us that Indonesia is so vast, so we must be careful in making any decision on education inequality is still found in many aspects such as in facilities, teacher distribution, and teacher quality. Therefore, evaluations that we make must be in the framework of controlling the quality of accountable national education and they must be carried out by the teachers who are able to see the process, the progress, and the improvement of their students' learning outcomes continuously. However, an independent institution should also evaluate the students, the educational unit, and the educational programs periodically, thoroughly, transparently, and systematically in order to achieve the national standard.

From a broader perspective, the quality of education really depends on the effectiveness of a national education system as a big organization that is aimed at seeking and administering an education system that is educating. As an organizational system of education, it is closely related to the management of education including its capability of realizing its vision and missions, implementing it managerial functions such as organizing, staffing, leading or directing, and controlling.

CONCLUSION

Controversies on the national examination policy has challenged the government to always fix up the national examination system. As a result, the government has managed to enhance the quality of the national examination the result of which has been acknowledged by several developed countries. The controversies started from the considerations of the contradictory national education policy basis especially by stipulating that the national education determined a student's graduation. That policy was made by imposing the government's will without adequate preparation. Therefore, it negatively impacted on the social and psychological aspects of the educational world, and the society filed a lawsuit against it and won the case.

The controversies has not ended yet since it enters a political domain; it the national examination should be annulled or not. As a result, the administration of national examination has not found its expected pattern whether some subjects are examined through the national examination, and the others are examined through the school examination or whether some subjects are examined through the national examination and the others are examined through UASBN. National Examination is actually a means of measurement that is partial and limited. Law on National Education System requires that the components of education consists of cognitive, affective, and psycho-motoric educations that are able to shape the students' attitude that enable them to express their opinions, make a discussion, and create things with good manners. Therefore, we need several good means of measurement and good educational service in order to obtain a quality education standard. The quality of national examination can be enhanced as assignment for learning in order that the students know their strengths and their weaknesses. Therefore, they will be able to develop their potentials and apply them in the world of business.

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