

# ANALYSIS OF ACTOR INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION POLICY NETWORKS

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Keywords:

Actor Engagement, Policy Network, education policy

## ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the involvement of various actors in a complex education policy network. The main focus of this research is to understand the dynamics of interaction between the actors involved in the process of formulating, implementing and evaluating education policies. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. In this research, the focus is given to the role and involvement of various actors in the education policy formulation process in Indonesia. These actors include legislators, executives, administrators, political parties, interest groups, community organizations, universities, and individual figures. In the policy formulation process, they play a significant role in determining policy direction and implementation. Factors such as political, economic, social, cultural, as well as technology and globalization also influence their involvement. This study highlights the importance of collaboration between actors and inclusive strategies to create effective and sustainable education policies, which are able to have a positive impact on society and the education system as a whole.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Effective and inclusive education is the key to the development of individuals and society as a whole. In the current era of fast-paced globalization, education has an important role in equipping the younger generation with the skills needed to compete in an increasingly competitive job market (Sya'bani, 2017). Not only focusing on mastering academic material, holistic education also aims to form strong character and moral values, as well as develop critical and creative abilities (Sulindawati, 2018).

Apart from that, quality education also plays a role in raising awareness of the importance of environmental and social issues, thereby creating a caring and responsible society (Sari et al, 2020). By getting a good education, a person has a better opportunity to explore one's potential, understand differences, and appreciate diversity, which in turn will strengthen diversity and inclusion in society (Widiansyah, 2017).

Therefore, sufficient investment and seriousness in developing the education system is very important. Cooperation is needed between the government, educational institutions, the business world and society in developing relevant curricula, increasing accessibility and strengthening the quality of the learning process (Bakry, 2010). Thus, education can be a means that can open doors of opportunity for every individual to achieve a better future, while also building a strong foundation for the progress and prosperity of society (Talakua, 2018).

Policy is often interpreted as social engineering, so that policies are often formulated by the authorities. Along with this, policies are generally interpreted as stages of action carried out or not by certain individuals or groups (Handoyo, 2012). The action in question consists of several actions in order to achieve the goal of changing people's behavior through social engineering. Policy as a guide to action, can be simple or complex, general or detailed, qualitative or quantitative, public or private. Policy in this context can be a declaration of a basis, or a guideline for action, a direction of action or a specific activity program or plan (Suwitri, 2008)

From the various understandings of policy from various experts and management figures above, a common thread can be drawn from the concept of policy as written rules or provisions from formal decisions of institutions or organizations, which are binding in nature, regulate people's behavior to achieve goals, create new values in institutions or organizations (Hamidah, 2020). Policies are also a reference for members of an organization or institution in their behavior. Policies are problem solving and proactive, different from regulations and laws and policies can be more adaptive and interpretive,

regulating what is allowed and what is not allowed. Policies should be general in nature without eliminating specific local characteristics (Lengkena & Sofa, 2017).

Education policy is part of the study of public policy in the field of education that regulates regulations related to budget absorption, resource allocation, distribution of resources, and rules of behavior for educators. (Yuliah, 2020). Therefore, education policy at the macro level becomes an application of educational science as well as part of applied sciences in the field of education at school and outside school. The principles of educational science are no different from the principles and concepts of public policy in general. The function of education is a series of public policy formulations. Including the application of educational administration directed at supporting the achievement of educational goals, as well as other functions and strategies from the managerial concept, the principles are the same as those implemented within the scope of management studied in public policy. (Sutapa, 2005)

Education policy is a complex policy network, involving various actors and institutions with diverse interests and objectives. This network covers various levels, from central to regional government levels, and involves various educational institutions, community organizations, industry players and the wider community (Anggariani, 2018). Apart from that, education policies are also influenced by the social, economic, political and cultural dynamics that exist in society, which directly or indirectly play a role in the process of formulating, implementing and evaluating education policies. The complexity of this education policy network requires effective coordination between various related parties and a deep understanding of the existing dynamics, in order to ensure the realization of education policies that are holistic, inclusive and responsive to changes occurring in society and the global environment (Sidiq & Widyawati, 2019).

The involvement of actors in complex education policy networks is a crucial factor in determining the effectiveness and success of policy implementation. These actors include government, educational institutions, society, the industrial world, and non-profit organizations, each of which has different roles and interests (Lambelanova, 2017). The involvement of these actors does not only cover the policy formulation stage, but also involves the process of policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Synergistic collaboration between these actors in the education policy network is important to ensure that the policies formulated can achieve the desired targets, and can have a positive and significant impact on improving the overall quality of education (Madjid, 2018).

The aim of this research is to provide a deeper understanding of the involvement of actors in education policy networks and the dynamics of their interactions in the process of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. It is hoped that the benefits of this research will provide a more holistic view of the complex dynamics of the education policy network, as well as providing a strong foundation for the development of education policies that are more responsive, inclusive and adaptive to current needs and demands. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to efforts to improve the quality of education and advance the social and economic development of a country.

## 2. METHOD

Researchers in this type of research use a qualitative approach that emphasizes meaning rather than generalization in their findings. Qualitative research uses post-positivist philosophy, data collection techniques using triangulation, and qualitative data analysis to ensure that qualitative research results emphasize meaning, not just generalizations (Sugiyono, 2015). For the purposes of this investigation, data is divided into two types: primary and secondary. Primary information is collected through observation and direct data collection, while secondary information is collected through reading and other methods, such as letters from individuals or diaries and official documents from government agencies (Moleong, 2014). Direct observation and literacy studies on sustainable tourism management in Bandung were used to collect data. The interactive model is used by researchers to analyze data which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Actors in policy formulation have a significant role in determining the direction and success of public policy. They fall into the categories of individuals, groups, government institutions, private institutions, and civil society who are actively involved in the political decision-making process (Solichin, 2015). In developed countries, actors often include politicians, government officials, industry leaders, academics, and other key decision makers who play an important role in shaping public policy. They have diverse interests, often driven by specific political, economic, or social goals. In developing countries, these actors can also include community leaders, traditional leaders and local elites who have significant

influence within their communities (Wahab, 2021). The existence of these actors plays an important role in shaping policies which ultimately influence people's daily lives.

In political analysis, the roles and interests of these various actors are the main focus. Political scientists and researchers often study the dynamics of interactions between these actors to understand how political power works in a political system. They examine the interactions between these actors, including coalitions and conflicts between actors, as well as the strategies used by each actor to influence policy outcomes. An in-depth analysis of these actors helps in exploring the complexity of political and policy processes, provides better insight into political dynamics in a particular context, and provides a broader understanding of the factors that influence the formation of public policy.

According to Liddblom (1980), in general the actors or those involved in the public policy process are divided into two large categories, namely inside government actors and outside government actors. (Suaib, 2016).

In the Indonesian context (which is different from other countries), the actors in government are:

- a. chief executive (president: presidential council: ministers, regional leaders), which is usually a political position;
- b. member of the national representative council (law/DPR and MPR);
- c. from the judiciary and individuals;
- d. bureaucracy starting from the regional secretariat, heads of regional offices down to the lowest level (for example: trantip officers as level bureaucrats), who ensure regional order in the regions).

Meanwhile, actors outside the government in the context of the Indonesian state are as follows:

- a. Interest groups, which can be non-governmental organizations (NGOs), e.g. professional groups/associations, business groups, trade unions, religious organizations or institutions.
- b. academics, researchers and consultants, individuals (companies providing services on behalf of the state).
- c. politician
- d. Policy target groups (beneficiaries).
- e. Mass media.
- f. Fund-contributing institutions (including the World Bank, IMF, which in Indonesia are quite influential in determining policies and their implementation).

In the context of education policy, actors are involved in the process of formulating policy formulations that will provide support and demands and become the targets of the policies produced by the policy system. The most dominant actor in the policy formulation stage with internal demands, in the sense of having the power or authority to determine the content and provide legitimacy to the policy formulation, is called the policy maker. Meanwhile, actors who have qualifications or other characteristics with external demands are known as interest groups, political parties, professional elite leaders and others. The actors involved in the education policy formulation process are divided into:

a) Legislative

The legislature is often intended to form laws and formulate policies. Their role is very decisive, because the ratification of regulations to become policies such as laws, government regulations and regional regulations is in their hands. The legislature is said to be the main actor in formulating/ratifying policies, these legislators are at the MPR, DPD, DPR, DPRD I, and DPRD II levels.

b) Executive

The executive here is the implementer of the law and also plays a role in formulating policies so that policies created or formulated by the legislature can be implemented in accordance with conditional and situational factors. The executive usually reformulates policies made by the legislature in the form of detailed policies. The executive has the power to implement or not implement policies made by the legislature as well as reformulate or not formulate them for certain reasons. Executive actors here include the President, Ministers, Governors, Regents, Mayors and Heads of Service. Meanwhile, the executive actors in the education sector are the Minister of National Education, Minister of Religion, Director General, Head of Service, and Chancellor.

c) Administrator

Administrators as policy formulators and implementers play an important role in achieving state goals which will be implemented in every real program that will be felt by the community, with the main goal being a prosperous society.

d) Political Parties (Parpol)

A political party is a group of people who are organized and try to control the government so that it can implement its programs and place its members in government ranks. In Indonesia the role of political parties is very large so that almost all aspects of policy, including in the field of education, will involve political parties. The role of political parties here is to place their members in the legislature and state and regional leadership.

e) Interest Group (interested group)

An interest group is a group consisting of people who have the same interests, such as groups of workers, fishermen, farmers, teachers and other professional groups. This group tries to influence formal policy formulators so that their group's interests can be accommodated in the policies formulated. This group usually has specific, narrow and specific demands.

f) Community Organizations (Ormas)

Mass organizations are groups of people who have the same ideals and desires, are non-political in nature even though their work often comes into contact with political interests. Mass organizations can stand alone (independent) or be affiliated with certain political organizations. In formulating educational policies, mass organizations have hopes and aspirations which are then conveyed to formal policy formulators. In Indonesia, there are several mass organizations that have a big influence in the formulation of education policies by the government, such as NU, Muhammadiyah, ICMI, HMI, PMII, and KAHMI.

g) College

Higher education is an institution where academic elites reside. Universities are often used as spearheads in fighting for community aspirations which will be included in policy formulation. The role of universities is very important because this is where idealistic values are still maintained, and in pursuing various policies they cannot be separated from intellectual content. Good policy formulation should include academic texts that are discussed with academics at universities.

h) Individual characters.

In various constellations, individual figures play quite vital and sometimes very decisive roles, they can also be central figures. Individual figures can come from various fields such as religion, politics, economics, education, culture, arts, and so on.

The involvement of actors in education policy networks is complex and important in understanding the dynamics of the education system. These actors include various entities that play a role in formulating, implementing and evaluating education policies. In the policy formulation process, they are actively involved in discussing policies, proposing strategies, and preparing action plans to be taken. The government, both at the central and regional levels, is one of the main actors in policy formulation, with responsibility for coordinating various aspects of education policy with overall public policy. Apart from that, educational institutions, such as schools, colleges and training institutions, are also key actors who play a role in providing input based on their field experience and academic knowledge.

When an education policy has been formulated, the implementation process becomes the next important stage. The actors involved in implementing this policy range from teachers, school principals, administrative staff, to education supervisors. They are responsible for implementing policies in their respective environments, dealing with operational, logistical and social challenges that may arise. In addition, the involvement of civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the educational community also plays an important role in supporting policy implementation by mobilizing resources, advocating for community interests, and providing technical support.

The evaluation process then becomes another important stage in the education policy cycle. The actors involved in the evaluation include researchers, policy experts, and independent assessment institutions tasked with evaluating the effectiveness of policies and their impact on society and students. Through this assessment, they can identify the successes and shortcomings of policies that have been implemented, suggest necessary improvements, and provide valuable input for future policy formulation. Thus, through the involvement of these actors in the process of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, the education system can be gradually improved to provide greater benefits to society and overall educational progress.

There are several factors that can influence actor involvement in education policy networks. First, political and power factors play an important role in determining the extent to which actors are involved in the policy process. Actor involvement is often influenced by existing political interests, including political party considerations, public pressure, and the political influence of certain individuals or groups.

Second, economic factors can also influence actor involvement in education policy networks. This includes aspects such as budget allocation, available financial resources, as well as the impact of policies on the job market and economic growth. When resources are limited, certain actors may tend to be more active in advancing their interests, while others may find it difficult to engage due to financial constraints.

Third, social and cultural factors also play a role in influencing actor involvement in education policy networks. Community values, norms and beliefs related to education can influence the attitudes and participation of actors in the policy process. In addition, demographic factors such as education level, gender, and diversity can also influence actors' roles and participation in education policy networks.

Fourth, technological factors and globalization have an increasing impact on actor involvement in education policy networks. Advances in information and communication technology have opened up new opportunities for collaboration between actors, knowledge exchange, and more effective policy advocacy. Globalization also encourages educational actors to adapt to changes in the global environment and adapt their local policies to developing international standards. By understanding the factors that influence actor engagement, policymakers can develop more effective strategies to involve all relevant parties in sustainable and inclusive decision-making processes.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Actor involvement in education policy networks is an important factor influencing the formulation, implementation and evaluation of education policies. These actors include various entities, from governments, educational institutions, civil society, to private organizations, which play an important role in shaping the direction and success of public policy. Political, economic, socio-cultural factors, as well as technology and globalization play a key role in influencing actor involvement in the policy process. Understanding the roles and dynamics of interactions of these actors is important to gain better insight into political and policy dynamics, and to ensure the creation of responsive, inclusive and sustainable education policies. Therefore, it is important for policy makers to take these factors into account and involve all relevant parties in the decision-making process that has an impact on improving the education system as a whole.

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