

Analysis of Education Policy Issues in Agam Regency

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Importance of Education Policy

Education is an important factor in building the civilization of a country. Through education, the younger generation equips them with the knowledge, skills and values to face future challenges. Therefore, appropriate education policies are essential to ensure quality and effective education systems. As stated by Tilaar (2009), education policy is the key to success in achieving national education goals. Good education policies can provide direction and guidelines for the implementation of education in a country (Nugroho, 2014). One of the important things is to ensure access and equality of education for all citizens without discrimination, so as to create a society that is educated and has the opportunity to develop its own potential (Suharyo, 2018).

Education policy also plays a role in improving the quality of education, including efforts to improve the quality of educators, curriculum, infrastructure and effective evaluation systems (Tilaar, 2009). In this way, education policy can provide a basis for continuously improving the quality of education. In Indonesia, education policy plays an important role in realizing the national education goals stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. National education policy must be able to provide direction and foundation for the implementation of quality, relevant and efficient education (Mulyasa, 2007).

With the right education policies, it is hoped that the education system in Indonesia can continue to develop and produce a young generation that is quality, has global competitiveness, and is able to contribute to nation building.

Geographical Description of Agam Regency

Agam Regency, a region located in West Sumatra, has stunning natural charm. With an area of 2,232.30 km², this district stretches from coordinates 00°01'34" to 00°28'43" South Latitude and 99°46'39" to 100°32'50" East Longitude. This area is traversed by two basin lines that form mountains, namely Batang Agam in the north and Batang Antokan in the south. The geographical uniqueness of Agam Regency is increasingly visible with the existence of two small islands, Tangah Island and Ujung Island, each of which has an area of 1 km². Apart from that, this district also has a coastline of 43 km which directly borders the Indian Ocean. Several small rivers, such as Batang Agam and Batang Antokan, flow and empty into the open sea. Two towering mountains add to the panoramic beauty of

Agam Regency. Mount Marapi, which is located in Banuhampu District, has a height of 2,891 meters, while Mount Singgalang in IV Koto District reaches 2,877 meters. Not only mountains, Agam Regency also has a charming lake, namely Lake Maninjau which is located in Tanjung Raya District with an area of 9.95 km². Agam Regency has a diverse topography, from lowlands to high mountains. The height of the area ranges from 0 meters to 2,891 meters above sea level. The western part of this district is relatively flat with a slope of less than 8%, while the southern and southeastern parts tend to be steep with a slope of more than 45%.

A tropical climate dominates Agam Regency, with a minimum temperature of 25°C and a maximum of 30°C. The average annual rainfall reaches 3,200 mm, with areas around the mountains having higher rainfall than coastal areas. Wind speeds in this district range from 4 km/hour to 20 km/hour. The biodiversity of Agam Regency is no less amazing. More than 38.1% of the area, or around 85 square kilometers, is still covered by forest. These forests not only function as water storage, but also as habitats for various types of protected animals. Some of them are Sumatran tigers, deer, gibbons, and various birds such as pheasants, magpies, ketitiran, pungguk and balam birds.

With stunning natural beauty and abundant biodiversity, Agam Regency is an attractive destination for nature lovers and adventurers. This region not only offers amazing natural charm, but also has a wealth of flora and fauna that is worth preserving.

Literature Review

Understanding Policy

Policy is a political action carried out deliberately based on wise and planned considerations by organizations, institutions or government agencies in resolving problems in order to reach decisions that are in line with the desired goals (Risnawan, 2017). Policy is a series of actions, steps, attitudes, program plans and decisions carried out by related parties as an effort to resolve the problems faced (Herdiana, 2018). In the field of education, policy involves a series of decisions and steps taken to manage, supervise and improve the effectiveness of the education system (Tilaar, 2017). Education policy covers various aspects, starting from curriculum development, setting educational standards, allocating financial resources, to formulating teaching and learning strategies (Suryadi, 2018).

Policy is an important aspect in every organization or institution, including in the world of education. According to Thomas R. Dye (2013), policy can be defined as "whatever governments choose to do or not to do" (whatever chosen by the government to do or not to do). Educational policy, specifically, refers to a set of rules, regulations, and guidelines established by a government or educational authority to direct and regulate educational practices within a particular region or institution.

The importance of education policy cannot be underestimated. As stated by Michael Fullan (2007), education policy functions as a guideline that provides direction and goals for all stakeholders in the education system. This policy ensures uniform standards and quality, and creates a clear framework to support the achievement of educational goals effectively and efficiently.

In analyzing education policy issues in Agam Regency, this research is based on several relevant theories and expert opinions. One important theory is the public policy theory put forward by James E. Anderson (2015). Anderson states that public policy is a series of actions that have certain goals and are followed by a series of actors related to a particular problem or issue. Apart from that, the theory of policy implementation from Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) is also an important basis for this research. This theory emphasizes the importance of communication, resources, actor mentality or attitudes, and bureaucratic structures in ensuring effective policy implementation

Steps in Making a Policy Emphasizes Policy Content and Policy Formulation

In overcoming the shortage of teachers in Agam Regency, West Sumatra, strategic steps are needed in policy making. The first step is to analyze the content of the policy, which includes identifying problems, setting goals, and determining alternative solutions. Second, policy formulation which involves formulating policy drafts, public consultations, and policy finalization. Dr. Hendra Naldi, M.Sc., a public policy researcher from Padang State University, emphasized the importance of community participation in the policy-making process. "Involving the community, especially teachers and education stakeholders, can provide a broader perspective and ensure the policies produced are in line with needs in the field," he said. Meanwhile, Drs. Miftahul Jannah, M.Pd., education observer from Imam Bonjol Padang State Islamic University, believes that policies must be prepared based on accurate data. "The government needs to map teacher needs comprehensively, both in terms of numbers and distribution. This data will be the basis for formulating effective policies," he explained. Apart from that, Dr. Eko Prasajo, M.Si., Professor of Administrative Sciences, University of Indonesia, in his article in the Journal of Civil Service Policy and Management (2019), emphasized the importance of synergy between

institutions in implementing policies. He stated, "The success of the teacher procurement policy requires good coordination between the Ministry of Education and Culture, Kemenpan RB, BKN, and regional governments."

By considering comprehensive policy content, a participatory formulation process, and synergy in implementation, it is hoped that the teacher procurement policy in Agam Regency can be implemented optimally. This will contribute to improving the quality of education and achieving national education goals.

Policy Issues

Agam Regency, West Sumatra, is facing a shortage of 390 teachers at the elementary and middle school levels. According to the Agam Education and Culture Office, currently there are 4,490 teachers, consisting of 2,020 PPPK and 2,470 PNS, for 61,364 students. This number does not meet the ideal need of 4,880 teachers. Prof. Dr. Nana Supriyatna, M.Pd., an education expert from Padang State University, emphasized the importance of equal distribution of teachers to overcome gaps in the quality of education and teacher welfare. Meanwhile, Dr. Ria Ariany, M.Sc., a public policy observer from Andalas University, encourages synergy between the central and regional governments in overcoming the teacher shortage. The teacher shortage is a national problem. Ministry of Education and Culture data (2023) shows that Indonesia still lacks around 1.1 million teachers. The Agam Education and Culture Department has submitted a request to the provincial and central governments to meet teacher needs through recruitment. Joint efforts from various parties are needed to ensure the availability of quality teachers for the future of education.

2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS

This research uses library research methods with a qualitative approach. Data is collected from various written sources such as books, magazines, reports and related documents that are relevant and of good quality. The data obtained is descriptive in the form of words or narrative descriptions. The focus of the research is to examine the implementation of the independent curriculum policy in Agam Regency. The collected literature is systematically selected, presented, analyzed and synthesized to gain a comprehensive understanding of education policy issues in the region. Through a qualitative approach and extensive literature review, this research aims to provide in-depth insight and critical analysis of education policy issues in Agam Regency.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Policy Issues Finding

1. Limited Access to Education: Hilly and remote geographical conditions and inadequate transportation infrastructure. The impact is that students in remote areas experience difficulties in accessing educational facilities, which results in low school enrollment rates.
2. Quality of Education Personnel: Many teachers do not meet qualification and competency standards, and training programs are not optimal. Impact: Low quality of teaching which has an impact on low student learning outcomes.
3. Educational Facilities: Many schools have inadequate facilities and limited education budgets. The impact is that poor facilities hamper the teaching and learning process and reduce student learning motivation.
4. Low Educational Participation: Public awareness of the importance of education is still low, family economic conditions are less supportive, and children prefer to work to help the family. Impact: High dropout rate and low rate of continuing education to a higher level.

Policy Issue Analysis

Table 1. Policy Issue

Policy Issue	Cause of Issue	Policy Solution
Limited access to education	Hilly and remote geography and inadequate transportation infrastructure	Building schools in remote areas, improving transportation infrastructure and using distance education technology (e-learning)

Quality of educational staff	Many teachers do not meet qualification and competency standards	Continuous training and development programs for teachers, recruitment of quality teachers and collaboration with higher education institutions for training
Educational Facilities	Many schools have adequate facilities and limited education budgets	Investment in construction and renovation of school facilities, use of CSR funds from private companies and optimization BOS and APBD funds
Low educational participation	Public awareness of the importance of education is still low, family economic conditions which is less supportive and Children prefer to work to help the family	Educational awareness campaigns through community and religious figures, Providing scholarships and educational assistance for underprivileged students and Increased collaboration with NGOs and the private sector for scholarship and support programs education

Policy Formulation

Table 2. Policy Formulation

Policy Solution	Policy Formulation
Building schools in remote areas, improving transportation infrastructure and using distance education technology (e-learning)	Local governments must plan and implement the construction of new schools in remote areas to ensure equitable access to education, Invest in the construction and repair of roads, bridges and other means of transportation to facilitate access to schools in remote areas and Implement e-learning programs by providing technological devices and access internet for students and teachers in remote areas.
Continuous training and development programs for teachers, recruitment of quality teachers and collaboration with higher education institutions for training	Organizing regular training and professional development for teachers to improve competency and quality of teaching, Recruiting teachers who meet high qualification and competency standards and providing incentives to teach in remote areas and Establishing partnerships with universities and higher education institutions for training programs and increasing capacity for teachers in Agam Regency.
Investment in the construction and renovation of school facilities, use of CSR funds from private companies and optimization of BOS and APBD funds	Allocating funds for new construction and renovation of existing school facilities, including classrooms, libraries and laboratories, Raising CSR funds from private companies to support

	the construction and improvement of educational facilities and Maximizing the use of BOS (School Operational Assistance) and APBD funds (Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget) to support school operational and construction activities.
Educational awareness campaigns through community and religious figures, Providing scholarships and educational assistance for underprivileged students, as well as Improvement cooperation with NGOs and private sector for scholarship programs and educational support	Involving community and religious leaders in awareness campaigns on the importance of education to increase educational participation, Providing scholarships and educational assistance to students from underprivileged families to reduce school dropout rates and Increasing collaboration with NGOs and the private sector for scholarship programs and other educational support.

Discussion of Policy Formulation

Formulating policies regarding the importance of knowledge sharing in increasing employee innovative behavior is currently the main focus of organizations. This policy aims to encourage and facilitate the exchange of knowledge between employees in all organizational units and departments, both at head office and branch offices. The process of formulating this policy involves organizational management, the human resources division, and all company employees.

The background for formulating this policy is based on empirical evidence showing that knowledge sharing has a positive and significant influence on employee innovative behavior (Kang & Lee, 2017; Mura et al., 2013; Rahmahthia & Etikariena, 2019). By increasing the intensity of knowledge sharing, organizations can encourage the creation of innovative ideas and their implementation. Therefore, organizations need to design comprehensive policies to create a conducive environment for knowledge exchange.

The process of formulating this policy will be carried out in 2023, with a target of gradual implementation starting in 2024. The steps in formulating the policy include analyzing needs and mapping the potential for knowledge sharing in the organization, preparing a draft policy involving management, the HR division and employee representatives, consulting with experts and benchmarking with organizations that have successfully implemented knowledge sharing, finalized policies and prepared supporting infrastructure, as well as socializing policies to all employees through various internal communication media.

With the right knowledge sharing policy, organizations are expected to be able to create a strong knowledge sharing culture and encourage innovative employee behavior. This will ultimately increase the organization's competitiveness in facing increasingly complex business challenges.

4. CONCLUSION

Appropriate education policies are needed to overcome various challenges in education in Agam Regency. The proposed policy solutions include increasing access to education, improving the quality of educational personnel, improving educational facilities, and increasing educational participation. Through a policy formulation process involving various stakeholders, it is hoped Agam Regency can improve the quality and access to education in a sustainable manner.

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