

Reconnoitring Decentralization Policy of Education in Indonesia

Maharina Desimaria¹, Amy Yayuk Sri Rahayu²

¹ Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia; maharina2020@gmail.com

² Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia; maharina2020@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Decentralization;
Policy of Education;
Education in Indonesia

Article history:

Received 2022-01-10

Revised 2022-02-20

Accepted 2022-04-25

ABSTRACT

Education decentralization is a form of independent policy given by the government to regions in managing any educational practices. With a decentralized system, regions have the authority to determine all policies related to education, whether in curriculum structure, financing, supervision, etc. This study is a systematic literature review that scrutinizes the implementation of the decentralization policy of education in Indonesia. Using the concept of Materla et al. 's (2017) systematic literature review that comprises review planning, review conducting, and review report and dissemination, this study included fifteen articles garnered from the databases obtained from Google Scholar and Pro-Quest. For the analysis process, a content analysis was employed using good governance principles that promote democracy, observance of human rights, accountability, transparency, and greater efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector (Agere, 2000). The findings report that the published literature discussing educational decentralization in Indonesia and improving the local governance environment mainly concerns three main foci: contributions to local economic performance and competitiveness, empowerment of educational outcomes, and improvement of local public services. This article also provides recommendations for future researchers.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license.



Corresponding Author:

Maharina Desimaria

Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia; maharina2020@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The fundamental challenges in Indonesian education are closely related to management problems in education. As a solution, various efforts have been made by the government aimed at improving the quality of education in Indonesia, which is always hit by many problems from time to time. To answer this challenge, education decentralization programs are increasingly encouraged by the government at all levels of education. Education decentralization policy has provided great opportunities for regions to optimize their potential for educational development by regional specificities, the success of which can be seen, among other things, by improving the quality of educational outcomes (Hidayati & Rustyawati,

2019). Therefore, the Indonesian government has been attempting to implement this policy to strive for a better quality of education.

Education decentralization is an educational management process that will go right if everything is controlled from the center. More significant roles are educators at the lower level. This situation will create the creativity that appears in implementing education so that there will be a constant conscious effort to advance the quality of education in Indonesia (Kompri, 2015). The starting point of the decline of our education system was the issuance of the SDN Inpres No.10/1973. The government has taken ownership of the school that initially belonged to the community and became a government-owned school and fully managed centrally (center). So the impact of that taste has a community of schools that did not even care. Before the community gets involved, answer with the change, and make society participate in organizing educational activities (Kompri, 2015). The goal of decentralization of education is to improve education services to the community, meaning that decentralization of education is a "tool" and not a "goal." This is very important to avoid decentralization, simply the transfer of the center from Jakarta to the district/city capital (Nurdin, 2021).

Understanding the goals of decentralization of education and some of these policies as a series does not seem to be good and evenly distributed in society. Various comments from observers and studies show that the transition period for decentralization of education has not been able to run as it should (Bjork, 2003; Holzhacker, 2016). Decentralization of education should reach schools, meaning that schools are given the authority to regulate school households to suit the situation and conditions of the local community. Decision-making related to this authority must be carried out in a participatory manner by the school community. In other words, decision-making must involve school stakeholders by implementing participatory management. The strengthening of aspirations for the autonomy and decentralization of education cannot be separated from the fact that there are two conceptual weaknesses in the implementation of national education, (1) the national education policy is very centralized and uniform, which in turn ignores diversity by the reality of conditions, economy, and culture of the Indonesian people in various regions, (2) policies and implementation of national education are more oriented towards achieving specific targets, such as curriculum targets, which in turn ignores effective learning processes and can reach all domains and potentials of students (Hadiyanto, 2004).

There have been ample studies discussing the implementation of decentralization in Indonesian education. These studies are investigated from different perspectives (see Kuswandi, 2011; Sudarsana, 2018; Athiyah, 2019; Fatkhuri, 2019). For example, Azis (2019) carried out a study that focused on the concepts, implementations, and constraints of education decentralization in the autonomy regions. He further reports that the main obstacles to these efforts are the curriculum, human resources, and educational facilities. Moreover, Firman (2020) highlights the participation of society in public policy, mainly in the education sector. This implies the practice of decentralization which involves not only the government and school but also the local public. The most recent study is conducted by Amalianita et al. (2021), which examines the implementation of a decentralized education system and efforts to improve the quality of services by developing professionalism in counseling teachers. They conveyed that the professional formation of counseling teachers can be improved through professional development programs. This means that counseling teachers can have an attitude or way of working that prioritizes professionalism at work, always wants to develop their profession, has a sense of pride in their profession, and always tries to improve their abilities and skills to realize good quality guidance and counseling services. This proves that a decentralized education system has positively contributed to providing programs to develop teachers' professionalism and quality.

The above information intrigued the researchers to follow up on the study. After analyzing the previous studies, the researchers conclude that they are weak in the research methodology since less information on the practical issues in conducting the research is presented. Therefore, the researchers are interested in conducting a systematic literature review by analyzing fifteen published papers written in English and Bahasa Indonesia gained from Indonesian journals. This study is conducted under the following research question, "What are the contributing factors that facilitate the success of education

decentralization policy?" After accomplishing this study, it is expected that there will be some benefits obtained from the findings. This can be a foundation for policymakers considering the effectiveness of decentralized implementation in the educational sector. Moreover, this research is also expected to benefit the school managers to be more creative, innovative, and independent in improving the quality of education. Last but not least, the result can become a reference for future researchers who would conduct similar studies like this one.

2. METHODS

A systematic review was utilized to identify the current policy of the Indonesian government regarding the implementation of decentralization in education towards curriculum development, education quality, and financing. Fifteen selected papers published in English and *Bahasa Indonesia* from 2015 until 2021 were taken as the data of this study. Those papers were chosen because of several reasons. Firstly, they represented the information required to depict the condition of decentralization practice as part of local autonomy policy. Secondly, the papers presented up-to-date information. From the search conducted in Google Scholar and ProQuest, fifteen papers were identified as the data sources informing the implication of this policy towards curriculum development, financing management, and public services that contribute to the success of education decentralization policy. This systematic review followed the phases introduced by Materla et al. (2017), consisting of three main stages: planning the review, conducting the review, and reporting and disseminating. The following chart describes the steps more clearly.

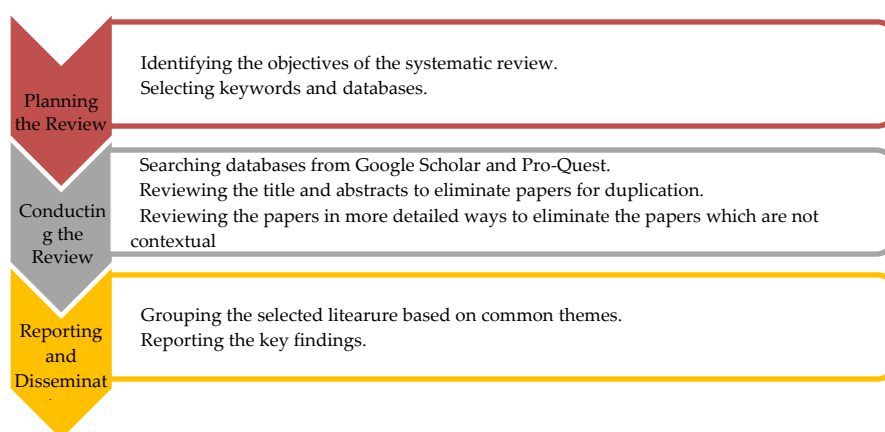


Fig. 1 Materla et al.'s (2017) Concept of Systematic Review Methodology

Grounded on that concept, the researchers began by identifying the research articles' content and understanding the concerns. This process took several weeks since the researchers also conducted an intertextual reading activity in which they compared the sources with other relevant articles to result in more comparable findings. For the analysis process, a content analysis was employed using good governance principles that promote democracy, observance of human rights, accountability, transparency, and greater efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector (Agere, 2000). Eventually, the researchers segregated the contents into three main foci; curriculum development, which impacts educational outcomes. Supervision improves the quality of public services, and financing management contributes to economic development.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this current study inform three diverse areas of discussion, namely curriculum development, supervision, and financing. Those themes were explained subsequently.

Curriculum Development in the Decentralized Regions for Better Outcomes

In implementing education decentralization, each region should have curriculum designs that concern quality improvement as the elaboration or implementation of the education curriculum set by the central government. The selected studies discuss that efforts to improve the quality of education in schools need to strive and get significant attention in organizing school education management and curriculum management. There is minimal possibility of quality improvement in schools without any improvement or implementation of the correct educational curriculum following quality management standards.

Table 1 Literature highlighting curriculum development in education decentralization

Author(s)	Year	Discussions
Sutjipto	2015	A policy that allows curriculum customization has been enacted to promote variety that evolves through time while adhering to national educational goals.
Ervannudin & Widodo	2016	Decentralization of education attempts to make officials and actors in the region have the authority to regulate and manage their potential.
Firman	2020	Decentralization in education and school-based management (SBM) is being implemented to construct and develop new concepts in education management, such as managing, organizing, and developing better human resources.
Yuliani	2020	The national education system requires a curriculum that can respond to the current order, such as the demands of democratization, the challenges of the era of universalism, and Indonesia's low educational quality. A new Indonesian society will emerge from a curriculum that can fit the needs of democratization. In the age of globalization, tough competition necessitates a curriculum design that can lead the Indonesian people to reach greatness in scientific and technical mastery.
Yuhasnil & Anggraeni	2020	Local governments and the schools are given the freedom to describe programs' quality improvement so that, in the future, each region competes with each other for the advancement of education in their respective regions.

Educational autonomy is the impact of autonomy, which implies that the role and responsibility for providing education have been submitted to local governments: the responsibility to improve quality education (Isjoni, 2006). Education quality can be related to policies, such as organization and learning, teacher management, structure and planning, funding sources, and regional curriculum development. In the context of such a curriculum, Nasir (2013) gives terms to the curriculum developed by the region into two forms, namely: inherent in all subjects and in the form of a different activity that does not exist in the subject. The activity itself can be interpreted as a subject that stands alone (Sutjipto, 2015). He continues that many factors influence the success of educational autonomy, such as the size of regional funding, personnel qualifications (educators and education personnel) available, curriculum development that contains content learning according to the characteristics and regional needs, and resources other supporters.

In this regard, Ilyasin and Nurhayati (2012) argue that educational autonomy and the new paradigm of education lead educational institutions in new directions by changing the rearrangement phenomenon centralized national education system towards a system that provides broad opportunities for community initiatives. Local, even the management of education that initially centered on the central government began from micro and macro switch to the management of education on the pattern management of educational institutions where the educational institution is located more known as regional autonomy. Borrowing the term of Gadjong (2007) that one of the principles of delegation of authority to autonomous regions is to guarantee a harmonious relationship between the central government and the local government based on a unitary integrity state.

Education Quality at Decentralized Schools in Indonesia

From table 2, it can be inferred that education decentralization has positively impacted education quality. This quality will furthermore support the improvement of regions' welfare. This is relevant to Indradjati (2003), that mentions that regional autonomy was carried out because of a need with the aim of improving people's welfare, equity, justice, democratization, and developing local cultural values as well as exploring regional potential and diversity, not only central to regencies and cities. Likewise, educational autonomy aims to improve the quality of education for all levels of society.

Table 2 Literature focusing on education quality in decentralized schools

Author(s)	Year	Discussions
Muttaqin et al.	2015	Rural areas and less developed municipalities have trailed behind in the quest to enhance Indonesia's educational attainment.
Channa	2016	Quality outcomes are formed by design and execution aspects, which are fundamentally shaped by economic realities and the politics of donors and local players.
Setyaningsih	2017	Educational institutions are the way out of the fulfillment of human resources capable of supporting regional development by optimizing the uniqueness and potential.
Sari	2019	Improving access to high-quality education has continued to be a pressing agenda for governments in developing economies. The challenge has shifted from improving the quantity of education to improving its quality.
Surya et al.	2021	This study shows that decentralization has no substantial impact on education services in border communities. Looking at numerous phenomena in the area, including physical and non-physical changes, the resulting influence tends to be negative.

Education decentralization in Indonesia is an opportunity to improve the quality of teaching and learning activities in schools. In other words, it is an opportunity to improve the quality of education in each region. This is because of the attention to improving the quality of teachers, improving the quality of central school management, improving educational facilities and infrastructure, and financing education for the better if managed by education officials in the regions (Toifur, 2011). In the end, the goal of education decentralization is to increase equity in the quality of education. He continues that the next potential is the policy of creating community institutions that are more democratic in supporting education in the regions and schools, namely the education board and school committee. The Education Council at the district/city level (some are also at the provincial level) is an independent

institution whose members represent figures who care about education. The education council has a strategic role, for example, acting as a provider of consideration and support to the executive and legislative parties in education, supervising the implementation of education policies by the executive, and acting as a liaison between the legislature and the executive society in general.

Very unluckily, education decentralization in some areas of Indonesia has not encouraged students' learning outcomes. In other words, it can be said that the policy has not yet been improving the quality of education in those areas. In this regard, Cardao-Pito (2012) contends that partnership relations between education stakeholders have not been able to encourage the development of education because no regulation has legal force, regulates the authority and power of the government, community, and parents of students; has not yet developed a forum that allows many parties to meet each other, discuss, and build a shared commitment, and; efforts to motivate parents, the community, and foundations have not yet been developed education providers to establish synergistic and mutually beneficial relationships profitable with the government. These issues become homework for the Indonesian government to realize education equity throughout all regions in Indonesia.

Decentralized School Supervision as an Effort of Public Service Improvement

Among the essential aspects of succeeding education, decentralization is supervision from school principals. To become a professional principal, many things to understand, many problems to solve, and many strategies to master. It is unfair if the appointment of the principal is only based on the experience of being a teacher as measured in terms of time (long time as a teacher). To become a professional school principal, it is necessary to start with a professional appointment (Mulyasa, 2003). The following literature discusses how adequate supervision contributes in diverse contexts, from elementary to high schools. Moreover, they also depict the significant characteristics that supervisors must have.

Table 3 Literature highlighting the impacts

Author(s)	Year	Discussions
Firdaus	2016	In the era of decentralization, supervision of the implementation of education in schools does not only come from internal functions. Still, it will also come from external functions, namely from external education customers, especially parents and the community.
Harinurdi	2016	Islamic education supervisors have the task of fostering teachers to have a religious integration type by modeling so that teachers also imitate doing the same thing. Supervisors who can carry out their roles always know and monitor the conditions and competencies of the teachers being supervised.
Hidayati & Rustiawati	2019	Whether the influence is positive or negative, a person's leadership style will significantly impact the organization. Experience, boldness, initiative, assertiveness, thoughtfulness, fairness, tenacity, an excellent spirit, ability, and willingness to assume full responsibility can guarantee his teamwork and management of the issue, and he has profound sympathy and understanding are some of the grounds for a leader's success.
Nurdin	2021	Supervision of supervisors through managerial supervision effectively improves the performance of school principals in the fostered schools of East Lombok Regency.

Author(s)	Year	Discussions
Mevlevi et al.	2021	The principal who facilitates teachers with a variety of a place for self-development influences teachers' performance results and influences student learning outcomes.

Table 3 provides information about the quality of supervision that could lead to a better quality of public services in education. The existence of supervision to oversee decentralization is necessary for changes in the implementation of supervision in the dimensions of concepts, paradigms, and applications in schools. So far, the presence of supervisors in schools acts as a carrier of ideas from the center rather than encouraging the development of teachers' potential to become professional. In other words, instructional leadership development is underdeveloped in the school environment. Perhaps the main problem is that the focus is not on coaching teachers who emphasize the help paradigm but on the control paradigm. Besides, there is still a strong show culture for teachers, so there is no creativity and contextuality (Harinurdi, 2016).

The efforts to facilitate education decentralization success aim to create good governance. Good governance is a term that has currently gained popularity in the public sector. It emphasizes the role of public managers in providing high-quality services that citizens value; it promotes managerial autonomy, mainly by reducing central agency controls; and it demands, measures, and rewards both organizational and individual performance (Agere, 2000). Governments are increasingly forming public-private partnerships to promote, support, and organize events. This engagement frequently results in governments becoming entangled in highly politicized conflicts over community benefit, effect mitigation, decision-making transparency, and lack of input before, during, and after the event (Whitford et al., 2014).

4. CONCLUSION

Decentralization education policy in Indonesia has gained many successes, especially in improving the quality of education, which many aspects contribute to this improvement. For instance, as one of the factors contributing to education decentralization success, curriculum designs need to adjust to the local potentials and resources. This will effectively boost better learning outcomes. Regarding the quality of education, studies agree that the more it improves, the more it contributes to its welfare. Meanwhile, the participation of the school supervision also becomes a powerful means of evaluating the running programs in schools. This aims at improving the excellence of public services. To provide adequate supervision, leaders who become the core principals at any school must have competent performance, such as being the role models of the teachers. This current study needs improvements due to its weaknesses. For example, the databases that were still limited are required to elaborate. Thus, it will develop the quality of the selected articles. From the fifteen articles, limited sources were presented in the method sections. Therefore, future researchers must clarify those sections. Moreover, future studies based on the primary data from the fields are recommended to unveil the actual condition of education decentralization practices. Last but not least, studies concerning critics of these practices are also encouraged to facilitate better public services.

REFERENCES

- Agere, S. (2000). Promoting good governance: Principles, practices, and perspectives (Vol. 11). Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Amalianita, B., Firman, F., & Ahmad, R. (2021). Penerapan sistem pendidikan desentralisasi serta upaya peningkatan mutu layanan dengan pengembangan profesionalisme guru bimbingan konseling. *JRTI (Jurnal Riset Tindakan Indonesia)*, 6(1), 9-14.

- Athiyah, C. U. (2019). Implementasi Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah Sebagai Alternatif Desentralisasi Pendidikan di MAN 4 Jakarta. *Andragogi: Jurnal Diklat Teknis Pendidikan dan Keagamaan*, 7(1), 130-145.
- Azis, H. S. L. (2019). Desentralisasi Pendidikan Di Era Otonomi Daerah Konsep, Implementasi, dan Kendalanya. *Foramadiahi*, 10(2), 167-189.
- Bjork, C. (2003). Local responses to decentralization policy in Indonesia. *Comparative Education Review*, 47(2), 184-216.
- Cardao-Pito, T. (2012). *Intangible Flow Theory, Operating Intangibility and Other Economic Characteristics of Firms* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Strathclyde).
- Channa, A. (2016). Popularity of the decentralization reform and its effects on the quality of education. *Prospects*, 46(1), 131-147.
- Ervannudin, N., & Widodo, B. W. (2016). Desentralisasi Pendidikan dan Peran Aktif Masyarakat Menuju Pendidikan Berkualitas. *Jurnal Penelitian*, 10(1), 147-172.
- Fatkhuri, F. (2019). Desentralisasi Pendidikan di Indonesia: Korupsi dan Problem Politik Kekuasaan. *KEMUDI: Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan*, 3(2), 278-297.
- Firman, F. (2020). Partisipasi Masyarakat Dalam Kebijakan Publik Bidang Pendidikan Di Kabupaten Jombang. *Jurnal Pedagogi: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pendidikan*, 1(1), 11-17.
- Gadjong, A.A. 2007. *Pemerintahan Daerah: Kajian Politik dan Hukum*. Bogor: Ghalia Indonesia.
- Hadiyanto. 2004. *Mencari Sosok Desentralisasi Manajemen Pendidikan di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Harinurdi, H. (2016). Peran Pengawas Dalam Merekonstruksi Pendidikan Islam. *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam (e-Journal)*, 4(2), 277-290.
- Hidayati, N., & Rustyawati, D. (2019). Kepala Sekolah Sebagai Penentu Kebijakan Pendidikan Di Sekolah Dasar. *Premiere: Journal of Islamic Elementary Education*, 1(2), 91-103.
- Holzhaecker, R. L., Wittek, R., & Woltjer, J. (2016). Decentralization and governance for a sustainable society in Indonesia. In *decentralization and governance in Indonesia* (pp. 3-29). Springer, Cham.
- Ilyasin, M & Nurhayati, N. (2012). *Manajemen Pendidikan*. Yogyakarta: Aditya Media Publishing.
- Indradjati. (2003). *Menuju Masyarakat Belajar Menggagas Paradigma Baru Pendidikan*, Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu.
- Isjoni. (2006). *Membangun Visi Bersama; Aspek-aspek Penting dalam Reformasi Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Kompri. (2015). *Manajemen pendidikan: Komponen-komponen elementer kemajuan sekolah*. Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media
- Kuswandi, A. (2011). Desentralisasi pendidikan dalam penyelenggaraan otonomi daerah di Indonesia. *governance*, 2(1), 69-98.
- Nurdin, N. (2021). Meningkatkan Kinerja Kepala Sekolah dalam Melaksanakan Supervisi Kelas melalui Supervisi Manajerial Pengawas pada Sekolah Binaan di Kecamatan Masbagik Kabupaten Lombok Timur. *MASALIQ*, 1(2), 190-218.
- Materla, T., Cudney, E. A., & Antony, J. (2019). The application of Kano model in the healthcare industry: a systematic literature review. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 30(5-6), 660-681.
- Mevlevi, M. T., Prihartini, P., & Kuswanto, K. (2021). Pengaruh Kepala Sekolah dalam Pengelolaan Pendidikan di Sekolah Dasar. *SAP (Susunan Artikel Pendidikan)*, 5(3).
- Mulyasa E, 2002. *Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah. Konsep, Strategi, dan Implementasi*. Bandung : PT. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Nasir, M. 2013. Pengembangan Kurikulum Muatan Lokal dalam Konteks Pendidikan Islam di Madrasah. *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika*, 10(1), hlm. 1-18
- Sari, V. A. (2019). Educational assistance and education quality in Indonesia: the role of decentralization. *Population and Development Review*, 123-154.
- Setyaningsih, K. (2017). *Esensi Tranformasi Sistem Sentralisasi-Desentralisasi Pendidikan Dalam*

- Pembangunan Masyarakat. *El-Idare: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 3(1), 76-94.
- Sudarsana, I. K. (2018). Peran Keluarga Dan Masyarakat Dalam Desentralisasi Pendidikan Nasional. *Maha Widya Bhuwana: Jurnal Pendidikan, Agama dan Budaya*, 1(1).
- Supriyadi, U. D. (2009). Pengaruh Desentralisasi Pendidikan Dasar Terhadap Kualitas Pendidikan Di Kabupaten Jembrana Provinsi Bali. *Jurnal Kependidikan: Penelitian Inovasi Pembelajaran*, 39(1).
- Surya, I., Budiman, B., Syarifuddin, T. I., & Nurmiyati, N. (2021). Dampak Desentralisasi Terhadap Pelayanan Pendidikan Di Daerah Perbatasan Kalimantan. *Jurnal Agregasi: Aksi Reformasi Government dalam Demokrasi*, 9(1), 1-23.
- Toifur, T. (2011). Peningkatan Kualitas Pendidikan Melalui Desentralisasi Pendidikan. *INSANIA: Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan*, 16(2), 219-233.
- Yuliani, N. (2020). Otonomi Pendidikan Dan Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi Sebagai Jawaban Atas Realitas Kekinian. *ZAHRA: Research and Thought Elementary School of Islam Journal*, 1(1), 8-18.
- Whitford, M., Phi, G. T., & Dredge, D. (2014). Principles to practice: Indicators for measuring event governance performance. *Event Management*, 18(3), 387-403.

