

A Model of Affordable and High Quality Education Policy in Tulungagung Regency East Java Indonesia

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Received: August 14, 2015

Accepted: August 24, 2015

Online Published: September 18, 2015

doi:10.5539/ijbm.v10n10p263

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v10n10p263>

Abstract

This research is aiming at arranging a policy of affordable and high quality education in Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018. This research was conducted in primary and secondary levels of education in six districts in Tulungagung Regency. The sources of data were secondary data, survey, in-depth interview, and Focus Group Discussion (henceforth: FGD). The research findings showed that the resources in Primary and Secondary Education Office of Tulungagung Regency have not met the Minimum Standard of Service yet. There was also a gap between the real condition and the expected condition. The strategy to implement the policy of affordable and high quality education in Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018 was needed by increasing the school operational fund, improving the productivity of human resources. Thus, the service quality and relevancy in the primary and secondary education is getting better, improving the affordability of the schools, improving the management and teacher placement based on their capacity.

Keywords: policy, affordable, high quality education, Tulungagung Regency

1. Introduction

Education master plan is a reference for the education stakeholders to develop educated, knowledgeable, technology literate, and competitive human beings based on the faith to The God Almighty. Beside the Educational Planning arrangement can become the direction for the policy makers and implementation of education in Tulungagung Regency (KAK Master plan, 2014; Education Officials of Tulungagung Regency, 2014).

The quality of education is determined by three components, namely: input, process, and output. Among those three components, the education process is one of the most decisive components in improving the quality of education. Therefore, the education process has to be the concern of the stakeholders who are responsible for improving the quality of education (Anonymous, 2007; Farida, 2010).

The problems in educational services in Tulungagung Regency are mostly on the low quality of human resources and unfulfilled needs of students' competences. This is because of the low quality of teachers and lack of learning facilities. The gap in equality and extension of opportunity to have education not only caused by the geographic factor, but also economic factor. There are some education issues in Tulungagung Regency. They are education quality, management, facilities, teachers, budget, and improvement of graduates and teachers based on the local culture, improvement of informational technology to implement better education (Profile Data Base of Tulungagung Regency, 2012; Anonymous, 2005).

This research is aiming at arranging a policy strategy to implement affordable and high quality education in Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018. This research is expected to be able to become the guidance for the educational stakeholders and give a direction to create and implement low budget and quality education in Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018.

Standard of education financing is one of the decisive aspects to create qualified graduates in every educational institution. The standard refers to Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No.19 Year 2007 on the Management Standards of Primary and Secondary Education. On Article 1 verse 10, it is said the financing standard is a standard, which regulates components and costs of educational operation within a year. The standard of education financing consists of investment cost, operational cost, and personal cost. The

investment cost includes providing the facilities, developing the human resources, and capital. The operational costs are the education costs paid by the students to join the learning activity regularly and sustainably (National Education Development Strategic Plan for the 2010-2014; Anonymous, 2008; Bernandin & Joyce, 2007; Irawan, 2008; Coordinating Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2010).

2. Method

The research took place in public elementary schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools in six districts in Tulungagung Regency. Those six districts were chosen because they were likely to represent all of the districts in Tulungagung Regency. Moreover, those districts represented the geographic condition of west, south, and north area of Tulungagung. Those six districts were Rejotangan, Sumbergempol, Kauman, Boyolangu, Tanggunggunung, and Gondang. The research was carried out in six months.

The data collection was done in some steps. First, the researchers approached the research setting to get the general information about the site they were working on. In this initial step, the researcher met the stakeholders who directly involved in the educational units to see the real situation. Second, the researchers did an exploration. They collected the data of resources existed in the educational units. They were principals, teaching staffs and main informants who understood and concerned with educational activities.

Another significant step in designing a survey research was deciding techniques the researcher was going to use in collecting the data. Common data collection techniques used in a survey research was questionnaire, in-depth interview, and observation to school activities as well as its stakeholders, especially to principals, teachers, and related officials. Furthermore, the data were collected by using test composition, and reaction towards verbal language (the result of interview with informants was made into transcript as the result of discussion between the researches and informants).

3. Results

The Master Plan of affordable and high quality education in Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018 is prioritized on the equality and expansion of competitive education program to improve the quality of education with affordable cost. The educational master plan of Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018 is aiming at developing the educational facilities to improve the learning process so that it meets the national education standard. Moreover, the improvement is expected to be able to qualify the competence and skill of teachers and administration staffs for sustainable educational program units based on the national education standard.

In the aspect of facilities, most schools in Tulungagung Regency had poor facilities. The school facilities were considered unable to fulfill the school needs, so it could be said that the facilities has not met the Minimum Service Standard yet. In the Junior High School level, the classrooms and laboratories have been met the Minimum Service Standard. In the elementary school and secondary school levels, not all school facilities have met the Minimum Service Standard. Accordingly, the number of classrooms, laboratories, and libraries should be increased. Even, some elementary school did not have any laboratory. Laboratories were important to facilitate practical subjects, such as technology and information, science, and other subjects, which needed practical session so that the students would be easier in understanding the materials. Below is the profile of resources owned by each educational units in Tulungagung Regency.

Table 1. Dikdasmen facilities in 2012/2013 of Tulungagung regency

No.	Variable	Elementary School	Yunior High School	Senior High School	Total
1	School	778	117	62	957
2	Learning group	7,804	1,456	941	10,201
3	Classroom	4,636	1,491	757	6,884
4	Library	312	86	41	439
5	UKS room	353	81	46	480
6	Computer room	160	69	62	291
7	Laboratory	-	216	178	394

Sources: Education Officials of Tulungagung Regency, 2014.

The culture of using schools as places to create high quality and characterized human resources should be improved among the schools. Moreover, education system was school system that was affordable to discuss among the stakeholders. Therefore, in making a plan in education system, it was better to separate the public business and group business so that the planning was free from politics, religion, and other businesses (Nasikh, 2013; Putnami, 2000; Anonymous, 2004).

A public policy in education aspect was made to give significant effects to the society. The positive effect was meant to give values to them. The policy analysis must include the question of who would get the impact of the policy. It meant that the analysis should know who would get the advantage and disadvantage over the implementation of the policy. The question “Will interfere from local government give solution to the affordable and high quality education?” should be asked. In addition, the analysis should accommodate the idea of which normative idea would give positive effect to the society in general, not only to some groups. This needed to be reviewed and analyzed comprehensively to create a policy, which could fulfill the hope of the stakeholders.

A public policy was made by the policy makers due to a problem existed in the society. For example, parents were worried over their capability to pay their children’s tuition fee. This kind of problem has become a social problem, which was under the government domain. This was a public policy’s domain, even though only few people really understood how the public policy worked and how the public policy affected people personally.

Public policies consist of politic decisions to run a program in order to reach a social goal. The politic decision reflected value consensus. When analyzed, public policies consisted of action plan, program, and goals or in other words “map and meaning”. The goals referred to what we wanted to achieve by creating a policy. The goal also referred to whom the policy will affect. The public policy program maps referred to the process or important steps to achieve the goal. This also referred to how to apply the policy. For example, a new public policy about affordable and high quality education included an explanation of why this policy was important to improve the competitive human beings. The program might be in the form of fund, logistic, or material, which supported the affordable and high quality education policy (Simanjuntak, 1985; Giddens, 2005; Hidayat, 2004; Roberts, 2002).

Three aspects that determine the quality of human beings are knowledge, faith, and deeds. These three aspects should be implemented to build high quality and competitive human beings. The attempt to do so should have been planned in short, medium, and long terms education master plan. In short, master plan is an image of wants, dreams, and hopes which is formulated in a long-term plan. The master plan becomes the guidance and direction to all the education managers (managers in education units, managers in Regional Units, and education stakeholders) to implement education development in Tulungagung Regency.

Therefore, the public policy in education fields closely related to people, value, needs, and choices. The biggest challenge in creating a public policy in education field was a limitation of resources. People could not get all things they wanted. The resources were very limited, while humans’ want was unlimited. Because of that, humans had to be clever in choosing which and how many or much things and services to buy. Because of those limitations, the local government had to allocate the resources carefully and wisely.

The limited purchasing power and fund allocation from the local government were obstacles in applying the policy of affordable and high quality education. The limitations exist because there is no resources could fulfill all humans’ needs. If the problem of limitation and obstacles could be solved, people might be able to have appropriate resources to fulfill what they need.

The public policy in education field focused on choices made by the government. A “no free lunch” saying showed that limitation made them choose correctly and delete other alternative. This seemed as a clear idea, but many people still assumed that there was a free lunch. For example, many people talk about “schools with free tuition fee charge”. This “free” term showed no sacrifice is made to get there. However, what actually happened was not like what it seemed.

If the decision were made based on one choice only, there would be a cost problem. The cost was equal to the wanted goods or services. In other words, choosing one alternative mean sacrificing the other opportunity. For example, when the government chose to create a policy of affordable and high quality education, it means that they agreed to prioritize it more than other programs (such as public health service).

4. Discussion

In discussing and analyzing a public policy, such as affordable and high quality education in Tulungagung Regency, the government could not separate it from the normative characteristic of public policy. Normative analysis focused on questions about what qualities affordable and high quality education policy must have. A statement likes “what the government should do to improve the quality of affordable and high quality education

in Tulungagung Regency becomes the key to set the strategy". It means that the recent policy was less effective. It was normative to propose better policy in the future. The normative analysis was related to the ways the government applies. This is to justify the authority to achieve the goal of giving the best service to the society, especially for primary to secondary level of education.

The strategies to improve the human resources in affordable and high quality education in the primary and secondary level of education are as follow. a) Increasing the school operational fund. It is divided into four main components: teaching and learning development, students' potential development, academic staff, operational, and maintaining development, and institutional development. b) Improving the primary and secondary levels of education service. The service is in the form of national standard building, school facilities, professional and competence teachers, library materials, school operational costs, and supporting facilities for intra and extracurricular activities. c) Improving the service affordability of primary and secondary levels of education. In some remote areas, there are many schools located far away from people's settlement. This cause the students have to spend some times to reach their school. d) Improving the quality and relevancy of primary and secondary levels of educations service. Around 2,700 (17.12%) teachers are not considered competence. These teachers need to improve their competence by attending teacher training. This is urgently needed to improve the competitiveness of the students. e) The success of BOS (School Operational Fund) program in Tulungagung Regency could be achieved by transparent and accountable management system. The schools need to have responsibility to minimize the misused of BOS fund. Revitalization is also needed to maximize the role and function of the Committee of Education of Tulungagung Regency. Moreover, The Committee of Education has to control and encourage the role of society in improving the quality of education. f) Improving teachers' management and placement based on their capacity. The recruitment, placement, and improvement have to be done effectively and efficiently. The efficiency of teachers could be done by improving the ratio of teachers and students.

Flowchart below shows the research model.

Human development is considered good when its development can help each individual and the society to fulfill their needs, wants, hope, and problems in a whole. Therefore, it is expected that the human development be adjusted to their social environment. There are some challenges faced by our nation these days, such as nation disintegration, crisis of belief, and disasters (e.g. earthquake, eruption, tsunami, etc.), as well as crime and terrors which affect to the degradation of characters as a big, dignified, and virtuous nation. Many times we are proud of ourselves because we have a big and powerful nation and we can get our independence by the heroic actions of the heroes which is never been found in other countries. (Lee, 2003; Moeljarto, 2003; Raba, 2006). The independence we have is the implementation of bravery as well as a gift from God Almighty.

The national education goal which is developing human beings as a whole is based on the planning. The graduates are expected to have certain intelligence and competences. However, their mental, emotional, and spiritual intelligence still need to be improved. Many Indonesian people cannot attend school because of their low economic condition. The good quality education tends to be for the rich. The curriculum seems not to reflect on the students' development and environment suitability. The knowledge the students get at schools tends to be less relevant to the needs in real life. This makes the number of intellect jobless get higher. Therefore, in order to prepare the students to fit to the real life's needs, it is important to understand that the nature of sustainable development and national education reorientation improve the quality of education in a whole.

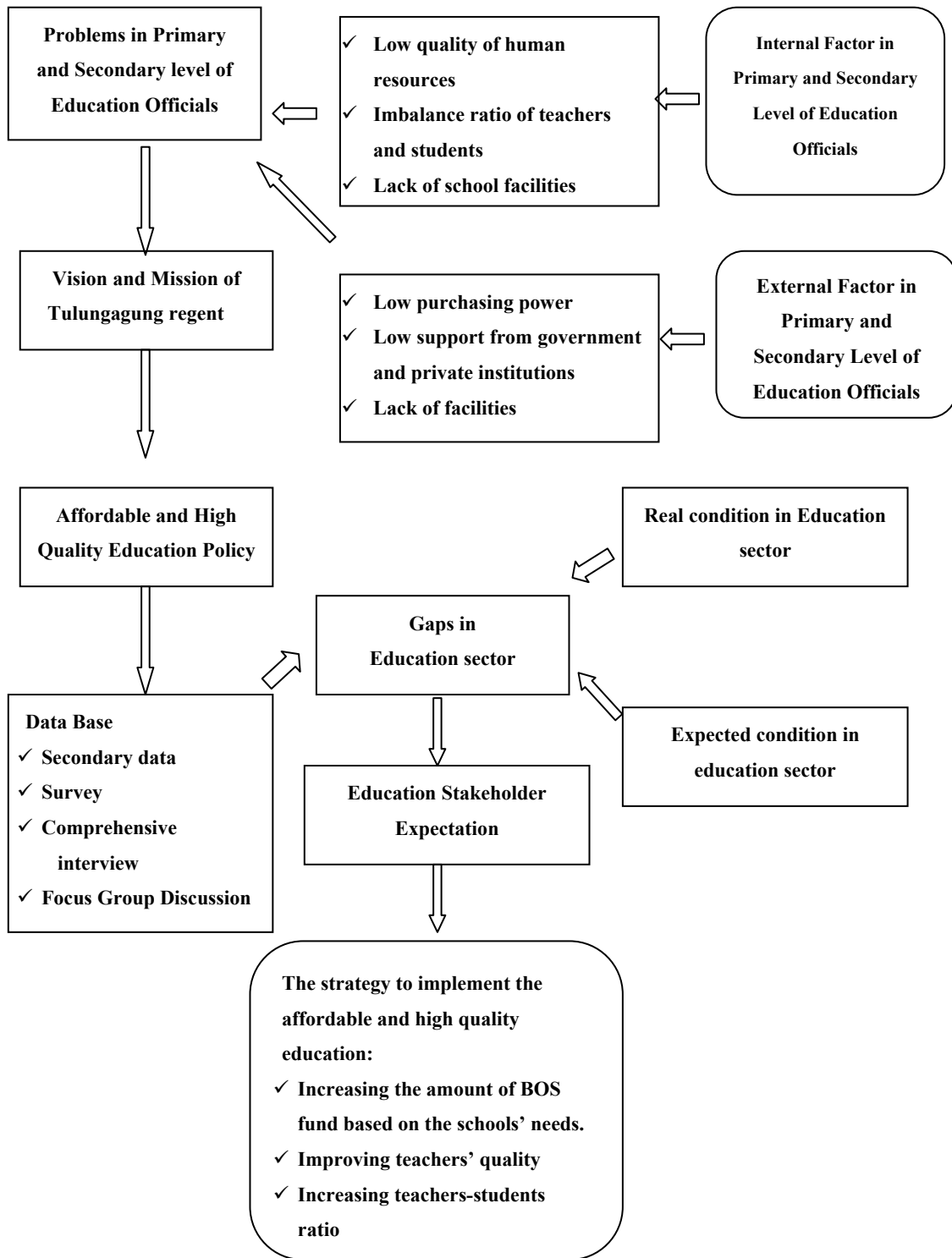


Figure 1. Research model of affordable and high quality education in Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018

5. Conclusion

The resources in Primary and Secondary Levels of Education Official of Tulungagung Regency have not met the minimum service standard. The education policies to implement the affordable and high quality education in Tulungagung Regency in 2015-2018 are (a) increasing the school operational fund, (b) improving the productivity of human resources so the quality and relevancy of primary and secondary levels of education service gets better, (c) improving the affordability of service of primary and secondary levels of education, and (d) improving the teachers' management and placement based on the capacity development to manage the

recruitment, placement, and quality improvement effectively and efficiently.

Acknowledgements

This is a joint research between Faculty of Economics, Universitas Negeri Malang with BAPPEDA of Tulungagung Regency, East Java, Indonesia in 2014. Therefore, we would like to thank to Chief of BAPPEDA of Tulungagung Regency, Regency, and Dean of Faculty of Economics, Universitas Negeri Malang.

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