

Education Policy 2025: Between Hope, Reality and Implementation

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Submitted: 03/01/2025	The year 2025 is an important milestone in the journey of education reform in Indonesia. The government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has launched various strategic policies, such as strengthening the Merdeka curriculum, expanding access to 13-year education, and transforming the national evaluation system through SPMB. This article critically examines the dynamics between the ideal expectations brought by these policies, the realities on the ground faced by teachers, students, and educational institutions, and the implementation challenges that arise in various regions. With a policy analysis approach and case studies, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of education policies in 2025 as well as recommendations for continuous improvement towards a more inclusive, equitable, and adaptive education system to the changing times.
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INTRODUCTION

Education is the main foundation in the development of superior and competitive human resources. In the midst of globalization and rapid technological development, the Indonesian education system is required to be able to produce graduates who are not only academically intelligent, but also adaptive, creative, and characterful. The Government of Indonesia through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Kemendikdasmen) has set 2025 as an important momentum to launch various strategic policies to strengthen the national education system (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025).

Some of the main policies that will be the focus in 2025 include the expansion of the 13-year compulsory education program, the transformation of the student admission system through the New Student Admission Selection (SPMB), the strengthening of the Independent curriculum, and the introduction of coding and artificial intelligence lessons at the elementary and secondary school levels (CNN Indonesia, 2025; NewsOne, 2025). In addition, the deep learning approach and character strengthening through the "7 Great Indonesian Children" program are also part of the national education strategy (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025).

However, in its implementation, various challenges have arisen in the field. Inequality in educational infrastructure, uneven distribution of teachers, and limited access to technology in disadvantaged areas are serious obstacles in realizing the vision of quality education for all. In addition, resistance to change from some educators and lack of training in implementing the new curriculum have also slowed down the process of educational transformation (Indonesian Talent Development Agency, 2025).

This reality shows that there is a gap between the normative expectations of the 2025 education policy and the factual conditions on the ground. This raises questions about the effectiveness of the policies that have been designed and the extent to which they can be implemented optimally. Therefore, it is important to conduct a critical study of education policy in 2025 to evaluate its successes, obstacles, and opportunities for improvement in the future (Kompas.com, 2025).

This research aims to examine in depth the dynamics between expectations, reality, and implementation of education policies in 2025 in Indonesia. By using a policy analysis approach and case studies, this research is expected to contribute to the development of an education system that is more inclusive, equitable, and adaptive to ongoing social and technological changes (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of understanding in depth the dynamics of the implementation of education policy in 2025 in Indonesia. This approach was chosen because it is able to describe social and policy realities contextually, and allows researchers to explore the meaning, perception, and experience of education actors towards the policies implemented.

The type of research used is case studies, focusing on the implementation of education policies in several areas that represent different geographical and social characteristics, such as urban, suburban, and rural areas. These case studies allow researchers to observe first-hand how national policies translate into practice at the local level, as well as identify the factors that influence their success or obstacles.

Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted with various key informants, such as school principals, teachers, education officials, and parents of students. Observations are carried out in the school environment to see the implementation of the policy directly, while the documentation study includes analysis of policy documents, implementation reports, and educational statistical data.

The data analysis technique used is thematic analysis, which is by identifying patterns, themes, and categories of the data obtained. The analysis process is carried out continuously from the data collection stage to the writing of the report, using data reduction techniques, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The validity of the data

is maintained through triangulation of sources and methods, as well as member checking to informants to ensure the accuracy of interpretation.

This research also pays attention to research ethics, such as maintaining the confidentiality of informant identities, asking for consent before interviews, and presenting research results objectively. With this method, it is hoped that the research can provide a comprehensive picture of how the 2025 education policy is implemented in the field, as well as provide relevant recommendations for policymakers and education practitioners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results show that education policy in 2025 has undergone a significant transformation, especially in terms of learning approaches and evaluation systems. One of the main achievements is the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum nationally, which emphasizes project-based learning, character strengthening, and flexibility in choosing subjects. In several pilot schools, this curriculum has succeeded in increasing student active participation and teacher creativity in designing learning (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025).

However, the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum has not been evenly distributed throughout Indonesia. Schools in 3T areas (frontier, outermost, disadvantaged) still face obstacles in terms of human resources, infrastructure, and access to teacher training. Many teachers in the area admitted that they did not fully understand the philosophy and technicalities of implementing the new curriculum, so learning still tended to be conventional (Kompas.com, 2025).

The policy of redistributing ASN teachers to private schools is also in the spotlight. On the one hand, this policy helps to overcome the shortage of teachers in private schools which have been short of teaching staff. However, on the other hand, some teachers feel that this policy has not been accompanied by an adequate incentive system and career protection, thus causing resistance and uncertainty among ASN teachers (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025).

The transformation of the student admission system through SPMB (New Student Admission Selection) also showed mixed results. In some areas, this system is considered fairer because it reduces dependence on report card scores and provides space for students with non-academic potential. However, in other regions, the lack of socialization and readiness of digital infrastructure leads to confusion and inequality in access to information (BeritaSatu, 2025).

The character strengthening program through the "7 Great Indonesian Children's Habits" is starting to show a positive impact in schools that actively implement it. Students become more disciplined, responsible, and have higher social awareness. However, the effectiveness of this program is highly dependent on the commitment of principals and teachers in integrating it into the school culture (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025).

The introduction of coding and artificial intelligence (AI) lessons at the primary and secondary levels is a progressive step that is appreciated by many. In schools that have adequate facilities, students show high enthusiasm for this material. However, the digital divide is still a major challenge, especially in schools that do not have computer laboratories or stable internet connections (National Consolidation of the Ministry of Education and Culture, 2025).

In terms of evaluation, the replacement of the National Exam with the Academic Ability Test (TKA) is considered more humane and relevant. TKA not only measures

cognitive aspects, but also critical thinking and problem-solving skills. However, some teachers state that there is not enough training to prepare students for this new evaluation format (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025).

Cross-ministerial support, such as the Ministry of PAN-RB and the Ministry of Finance, is also an important factor in the successful implementation of the policy. The Ministry of PAN-RB, for example, has simplified the functional positions of teachers to accelerate the process of redistribution and career development. Meanwhile, the allocation of the education budget which reaches 20% of the state budget provides sufficient fiscal space to support priority programs (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025)

However, the results of the study also found that the orientation of education policy still tends to be short-term and symbolic. Many programs place more emphasis on image and administrative achievement than on the long-term impact on the quality of education. This can be seen from the frequent policy changes every time there is a change of leadership in the ministry (Kompas.com, 2025).

Overall, the 2025 education policy brings many innovations and new expectations. However, the success of its implementation is highly dependent on policy consistency, resource readiness, and program sustainability. Periodic evaluation and active involvement of all stakeholders are needed so that education transformation truly has an impact on improving the quality and equity of education in Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Indonesia's education policy in 2025 shows a progressive transformation direction with various innovations, such as the Merdeka curriculum, a 13-year compulsory education program, and a more inclusive university entrance selection system through SPMB. This policy reflects the government's efforts to create an education system that is adaptive to the times and the needs of students. However, the results of the study show that the implementation of the policy is not completely even and still faces serious challenges, especially in the 3T area. Limited infrastructure, lack of teacher training, and digital divide are the main obstacles in realizing equal distribution of education. Therefore, while this policy brings great hope, its success depends heavily on consistency of implementation, cross-sectoral support, and active involvement of all stakeholders.

Suggestion

To increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the 2025 education policy, it is recommended that the central government strengthen training and mentoring programs for teachers, especially in areas with limited resources. Local governments also need to take an active role in supporting national policies by adapting them to the local context. In addition, it is necessary to conduct regular and data-driven policy evaluations in order to identify obstacles and formulate appropriate solutions. Improving digital literacy among teachers and students must also be a priority, given that many policies are technology-based. Finally, it is important for the government to maintain the continuity of education policies so that they are not interrupted due to leadership changes, so that education transformation can run sustainably and have a real impact on future generations.

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