

## Optimization of Education System Implementation in Aceh Besar Regency

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**Abstract:** In some developed countries, education is one of the main problems in increasing human resource capacity, especially in Indonesia. The principle of decentralization allows the government to create independent laws that give local governments the authority to manage all aspects of education. This study aims to determine the implementation of the education system in Aceh Besar Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach to understand the optimization of the implementation of the education system in Aceh Besar District. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and analysis of data from various literature and previous research. The research findings show that the Aceh Besar District government has taken systematic steps in formulating policies, developing programs, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating education programs. Some of the main programs implemented include the Mobilizer School Program, data-based planning, implementation of the Independent Curriculum, and development of educational facilities and infrastructure. Monitoring and evaluation is carried out through periodic assessments, collecting feedback from stakeholders, and field visits. The evaluation results show an increase in student and teacher performance, as well as the positive impact of the implementation of the policy.

**Keywords:** Aceh; education management; policy; schools

**Abstrak:** Di beberapa negara maju pendidikan menjadi salah satu masalah utama dalam meningkatkan kapasitas sumber daya manusia, khususnya di Negara Indonesia. Asas desentralisasi memungkinkan pemerintah untuk membuat undang-undang mandiri yang memberikan wewenang kepada pemerintah daerah untuk mengelola semua aspek pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui penyelenggaraan sistem pendidikan di Kabupaten Aceh Besar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif untuk memahami optimalisasi penyelenggaraan sistem pendidikan di Kabupaten Aceh Besar. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis data dari berbagai literatur dan penelitian terdahulu. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemerintah Kabupaten Aceh Besar telah melakukan langkah-langkah sistematis dalam merumuskan kebijakan, menyusun program, mengimplementasikan, serta melakukan monitoring dan evaluasi terhadap program-program pendidikan yang dijalankan. Beberapa program utama yang diimplementasikan antara lain Program Sekolah Penggerak, perencanaan berbasis data, implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka, dan pengembangan sarana dan prasarana pendidikan. Monitoring dan evaluasi dilakukan melalui penilaian berkala, pengumpulan feedback dari stakeholder, dan kunjungan lapangan. Hasil evaluasi menunjukkan peningkatan kinerja siswa dan guru, serta dampak positif dari implementasi kebijakan tersebut.

**Keywords:** Aceh; kebijakan; manajemen pendidikan; sekolah

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is the most important basic aspect for a nation to progress and develop better. In this era of globalization, education is a fundamental aspect in producing human resources who have superior personalities. National education is intended to develop people to become people who are devout and have faith in God Almighty, as well as develop good national ethics and civilization in relation to the formation of national life (Agustina et al., 2023). Education is a preventive alternative, education builds a new generation of a better nation, and education can minimize and mitigate the causes of various cultural problems and national character in various ways. Educational activities ensure the quality of graduates in accordance with expectations, namely competencies as stated in the education plan, both cognitively, psychometrically, and attitudes (Aprianti & Maulia, 2023; Nurholis et al., 2022; Setyawan et al., 2021).

Indonesian national education rooted in Indonesian culture is structured in a national education system. The Indonesian national education system is the foundation of Indonesian culture and is based on the practice of the principles of Pancasila and contained in the 1945 Constitution as the crystallization of the values of the Indonesian nation. Good ethics, healthy and knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible citizens in accordance with the mandate contained in the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 (Imam Rohani, 2020). The implementation of the national education system is structured in such a way, although in general there are similarities with the national education systems of other nations. This is intended to be in accordance with the need for education from the Indonesian nation which geographically, demographically, historically, and culturally has distinctive characteristics (Putra & Sajida, 2023). The importance of education quality improvement policies to produce people who have a living spirit, have the ability to think, and the ability to integrate with others (Lallo et al., 2021).

The issue of education is indeed one of the main problems in increasing the capacity of human resources, especially in Indonesia. By applying the principle of decentralization, the government can form independent policies given to local governments in managing every aspect of education (Wulandari et al., 2022). Decentralization of education can create a system that ensures effectiveness and efficiency to realize the course of quality education. Good education system governance must be supported by management and administrative operations to break the bureaucratic and wasteful chain of centralized administration to increase financial efficiency and responsibility and strengthen regional supervision (Papadopoulou, 2013; Wulandari et al., 2022; Luthfi et al., 2023). Therefore, the education sector is always made the priority, a sector that is directly related to community rights and is closely related to the development of human resources in the future, by allocating funds as much as part of the state budget every year (Luthfi, 2015; Sibuea, 2020). The state budget must primarily be allocated by decision-makers in the field of education so that there is a real improvement in the quality of education (Winardi, 2017; Wulandari et al., 2022).

The quality of education needs to be improved in order to create equal distribution of education for the community (Hermanto, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2022). As an effort to improve the quality of human resources in the region, the Aceh Besar Regency Government needs to make various fundamental improvements in order to improve the implementation of the education system and at the same time have the aim of providing education to children from

an early age. In Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the National Education System, it is stated that the National Education System is a whole of interrelated education components in an integrated manner to achieve the goals of national education, namely developing capabilities and improving the quality of life and human dignity of Indonesia (Hermanto, 2020; Sujana, 2019). Education is a matter of basic services that must be carried out by local governments for the community from an early age (Yufriidawati et al., 2020). It should be realized that development in the field of education is a process that plays a very important role in improving the quality of human resources. The importance of improving the quality of human resources, local governments make efforts through curriculum development and improvement, improvement of educational facilities, development of teaching materials, and training for education personnel (Aprianti & Maulia, 2023; Nurholis et al., 2022; Sujana, 2019; Yansah et al., 2023).

The implementation of education in Aceh Besar Regency began with the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 28 of 2016 concerning the Quality Service Improvement System for Primary and Secondary Education, where education units must carry out education quality service improvement (Mahadi & Konadi, 2020). The implementation of education in Aceh District also refers to special policies that are in accordance with the principle of decentralization. Because Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province is autonomously privileged as part of special autonomy which means that the province has very broad authority in regulating education affairs (Fitriah, 2020; Papadopoulou, 2013; Winardi, 2017). This allows Aceh to develop an education system that suits its local needs and characteristics while taking into account national standards.

By holding a province with special autonomy, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province automatically in education matters has its own regulations. The implementation of education in Aceh refers to Qanun Number 1 of 2022 concerning the integrated education system in Aceh Besar District. The regulation regulates the occurrence of a culture of quality in education units prepared by the Education Office and Balai Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan (BPMP). Aceh is the only province in Indonesia that officially implements sharia law. Some Qanun in Aceh can reflect the implementation of Islamic values in education, such as rules on Islamic religious learning, student clothing or uniforms, as well as other aspects relevant to Sharia-based education (Fajri et al., 2021; Fitriah, 2020). Qanun in the education system in Aceh not only serves as a legal instrument, but also as a tool to promote local values, maintain cultural identity, and organize an education system that suits the specific needs and characteristics of Aceh Province.

Despite the many regulations and institutions established in Aceh, Acehnese education is still relatively lagging behind other regions in Indonesia. The funds available for education do not show a positive correlation with the quality of education in Aceh. The quality of elementary school graduates up to high school is ranked 30th out of 34 provinces in Indonesia on average (Majid, 2014). The low quality of graduates is partly due to the low ability and quality of teachers, who are also ranked 30th nationally (Nazamuddin, 2021). The quality of education in Aceh Besar is particularly lagging due to uneven education-supporting infrastructure and the availability of teachers or teaching staff. From the results of the background presentation above, this article will discuss "Optimization of Education System Implementation in Aceh Besar

District" to analyze in terms of regulations and local government policies in overcoming education problems.

## LITERATUR REVIEW

### Policy Implementation

Implementation is defined as the implementation or application of an activity in order to achieve certain goals. In summary, implementation can be interpreted as a decision-making process in the form of laws and regulations, government regulations, presidential orders, presidential decrees, and judicial decisions (Rasmitadila et al., 2023; Fajarianto et al., 2024). Implementation is not only related to the mechanism of elaborating political decisions through bureaucracy, but also covers broad aspects such as conflicts, decisions, and beneficiaries. Therefore, implementation is considered very important in a series of implementation processes. Meanwhile, the term policy is often equated with policy, although it is not clear whether policy really means policy. In a philosophical context, policy is viewed as a product or framework, whereas policy can be seen as a set of principles or desired conditions, a collection of conclusions or recommendations, or a process evaluated based on the workings of programs and mechanisms to achieve objectives (Alfirzan et al., 2021).

Grindle's policy implementation theory is a popular approach to analyzing the success or failure of public policy implementation. This theory was developed by Merilee S. Grindle, a public policy expert from the United States. Grindle proposes two main variables that affect the success of policy implementation, namely the content of the policy and implementation environment (*context of implementation*) (Abdal et al., 2021). The content of the policy includes aspects such as interests affected, types of benefits to be received, degree of change desired, resources involved, and so on. The implementation environment includes the strengths, interests, and strategies of the actors involved in the implementation, the characteristics of the institutions and regimes in power, and the level of compliance and responsiveness of the target group (Harmayani et al., 2024).

In his theory, Grindle emphasized the importance of understanding policy content and implementation environment comprehensively to predict the success or failure of policy implementation. Unclear, inconsistent, or unclear policy content can hinder successful implementation. In addition, an uncondusive implementation environment, such as conflicts of interest between actors or low capacity of implementing agencies, can also lead to implementation failures (Delly & Nugroho, 2019). Therefore, Grindle suggests that policy implementation analysis considers these two variables simultaneously. One of the main strengths of Grindle's theory is its ability to explain the complexity of the policy implementation process by looking at the interaction between policy content and the implementation environment. This theory recognizes that policy implementation does not only involve administrative processes, but is also influenced by political, economic, and social factors that exist in the implementation environment (Elwijaya et al., 2022; Tanjung et al., 2023). Thus, Grindle's theory provides a holistic and contextual analytical framework in understanding the dynamics of policy implementation.

## **Education System**

The term "system" comes from the Greek word "systema", which refers to a series of elements that are structured and interconnected to form a unified whole. The concept of a system is used to describe a logically organized set of ideas or ideas. The system consists of various components or elements that have regular functional relationships and support each other to achieve certain goals. In the context of education, the education system can be considered as a whole of elements that interact to achieve results in accordance with predetermined goals. This includes educational objectives, learners, education managers, curriculum structure, as well as supporting facilities. Each activity in this system is directed to achieve a predetermined goal (Elwijaya et al., 2022; Yansah et al., 2023).

Therefore, the educational process is considered as a system called the education system (Hasbullah, 2017). The components that exist in the education system include objectives, educators, learners, and educational tools. These components are interconnected and work together regularly in the education system to achieve the goals that have been set. Goals become a guide to be achieved, while educators, students, and educational tools are elements that support each other in the educational process to realize these goals.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses qualitative research methods where this research is carried out by understanding the facts that occur in research subjects such as situations, conditions, policies, actions, and others. Holistically, and by way of description in words and language, in a specific, natural context, and by utilizing a variety of natural methods. This type of research is descriptive qualitative research because the source of information is in the form of words and actions of individuals interviewed or observed in several elementary and junior high schools in Aceh Besar Regency. Therefore this research is classified as field research. Field research is research using information obtained from research targets hereinafter called informants or respondents through data collection instruments such as observations, interviews, and so on. Research activities include data collection and preparation of research reports. The technique of obtaining data is by observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique follows Hubberman's model (Miles & Huberman, n.d., 1994), namely: Data reduction: after interviews with data informants, reductions are made so that less relevant data is filtered properly. Presentation of data and concluding the results carried out. Information validity checking techniques are a way to ensure the quality of research information (Creswell, 2016).

This method was tried by checking information about researchers' efforts to obtain and analyze information. The technique of achieving validity or integrity of information carried out by triangulation is a way of testing integrity through checking information from various techniques, the base, and the duration of information obtained. The triangulation technique tried in this research is a triangulation method by trying integrity by checking the base of information similar to different methods.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

On June 11, 2003, the DPR and President passed the National Education System Law Number 2 of 1989 to increase human resource quality, catch up in all sectors of life, and conform to the Indonesian national identity. National Education System Law Number 20 of

2003, which comprises of 22 chapters and 77 paragraphs, also embodies one of the widespread reform requests since 1998. The new National Education System Law proposes substantial changes in education, including democratization and decentralization, community participation, globalization problems, equity and balance, educational pathways, and students. With the decentralization of education implementation and community empowerment, education funding becomes a joint responsibility between the government (central), regional governments, responsible for providing education budgets as regulated in article 31 paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (state prioritize the education budget of at least twenty percent of the state revenue and expenditure budget as well as the national education budget).

Education policy is the government's obligation in implementing national education; the state should be the primary and alone responsibility for realizing the Indonesian nation's aspirations of educating the Indonesian people. National education is founded on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, with a focus on religious principles, Indonesian national culture, and responsibility for changing circumstances. Discussions regarding national education policy issues will, of course, always be linked to discussions about the political factors that shape them. It may be argued that all educational initiatives are ultimately political decisions. Overall, education policy involves political aspects. The education system formed by educational policy is essentially the government's efforts as a minority elite group in power in a country to maintain its power status and hegemony over the majority of the people who would be affected by the policy.

### **Policy Formulation**

Indonesia's government continues to make serious attempts to develop the country. One of the measures made is to enhance the education sector. Because a country's progress is no longer solely dependent on its natural riches, but also on the quality of its people resources. Improving the quality of human resources through education elevates education to a central position, plays a strategic role in development, and serves as the intermediary between all development sectors. Improving the quality of human resources through education must align with the policy direction outlined in the Aceh Besar District Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMD) 2017-2022. This has an impact on the quality of education and Dayah graduates' ability to produce knowledgeable, Sharia-compliant human resources. Policy formulation is the first and most important step in the implementation of education policy in Aceh Besar District. This policy was formulated to address various challenges in the field of education and improve the quality of education in the area. Based on documents prepared by BAPPEDA Aceh Besar Regency, education policy in Aceh Besar is based on national and regional laws and regulations, such as Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the National Education System and Qanun Number 1 of 2022 concerning the Integrated Education System in Aceh Besar. This policy is also in line with the vision of regional development that focuses on improving the quality of human resources.

**Table 1.** data of elementary and junior high school students in Aceh Besar District

No	Region/District	Elementry School			Junior High School		
		Total	Man	Woman	Total	Man	Woma n
1	Kec. Darul Imarah	4.325	2.263	2.062	2.056	1.190	866
2	Kec. Ingin Jaya	3.271	1.710	1.561	1.589	720	869
3	Kec. Mesjid Raya	2.101	1.081	1.020	933	491	442
4	Kec. Seulimeum	1.972	1.021	951	822	478	344
5	Kec. Kuta Baro	1.652	877	775	994	562	432
6	Kec. Baitussalam	2.011	1.069	942	344	185	159
7	Kec. Peukan Bada	1.442	792	650	763	368	395
8	Kec. Blang Bintang	1.165	588	577	574	360	214
9	Kec. Indrapuri	1.307	685	622	526	288	238
10	Kec. Kota Jantho	800	397	403	753	478	275
11	Kec. Lembah Seulawah	1.470	742	728	676	345	331
12	Kec. Montasik	1.044	527	517	554	301	253
13	Kec. Kuta Cot Glie	1.443	754	689	479	250	229
14	Kec. Darussalam	1.613	832	781	321	189	132
15	Kec. Lhoknga	843	462	381	452	257	195
16	Kec. Kuta Malaka	358	187	171	879	418	461
17	Kec. Lhoong	899	455	444	271	155	116
18	Kec. Suka Makmur	424	206	218	404	303	101
19	Kec. Krung Barona Jaya	847	424	423	0	0	0
20	Kec. Darul Kamal	547	299	248	373	214	159
21	Kec. Pulo Aceh	517	267	250	223	128	95
22	Kec. Simpang Tiga	385	204	181	119	75	44
23	Kec. Leupung	239	129	110	102	57	45
Total		30.675	15.971	14.704	14.210	7.812	6.395

Source: Processed from Dinas Pendidikan Kab. Aceh Besar (2023)

Data in Table 1. shows that the total number of students in Aceh Besar District in 2023 will be 30,675, with 15,971 male students and 14,704 female students at the elementary level, and 14,210 students at the junior high school level consisting of 7,812 male students and 6,395 female students. Although female students are slightly lower than male at both levels of education, access to education is generally fairly balanced by gender. However, there are sub-districts such as Lhoknga that show significant imbalances and require special attention. Awareness of these differences is important for developing inclusive strategies that consider the needs of all students. This imbalance can be caused by a variety of factors such as social norms, school accessibility, or local education policies. Awareness of these differences is an important first step to developing inclusive strategies that support all students regardless of

gender. These inclusive strategies should consider the needs and challenges facing male and female students, with a deep understanding of the local social and cultural context.

The development of this strategy can involve various parties such as educational institutions, local communities, and non-governmental organizations that care about gender equality. Gender-sensitive programs and the empowerment of female students can also be an integral part of this solution. Thus, awareness of the gender imbalance in access to education in Lhoknga sub-district can be a trigger for positive change. Involving all stakeholders is expected to produce concrete steps that not only equalize access to education, but also ensure equal opportunities and well-being of students, regardless of gender. Education policy in Aceh Besar District is formulated through a process of consultation and participation of various parties, including local governments, education offices, educational institutions, communities, and education experts. This participatory approach aims to ensure that the resulting policies are not only relevant but also have the support of all parties involved. Some of the main objectives of this policy are:

1. **Improving the Quality of Education:** Improving the quality of education through the development of relevant curricula, improving the quality of teachers, and providing adequate facilities and infrastructure.
2. **Improved Access to Education:** Ensure that all children in Aceh Besar District have access to proper education, including inclusive education for children with special needs.
3. **Local Curriculum Development:** Developing a curriculum based on local wisdom to instill local cultural values and traditions to students.
4. **Strengthening Education Management and Governance:** Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education management at the school and education office levels.

### **Program Development**

Education simply aims to improve the quality of a country's human capital. This indicates that improving the level of education in a country will directly or indirectly improve the quality of its people resources. According to Law Number 20 of 2004 concerning the National Education System, education is a conscious and planned effort to create conditions, processes, and learning outcomes that allow students to actively develop their potential and possess the self-control and skills required for themselves and society. As a result, careful attention and planning are required to ensure that education is implemented effectively and appropriately, allowing national education goals to be accomplished in accordance with the Law. After the policy is established, the next step is the preparation of operational programs aimed at achieving the policy objectives. The preparation of this program involves several key steps, namely:

1. **Identification of Educational Needs:** This analysis includes the need for improving the quality of teachers, providing educational facilities and infrastructure, and developing curricula that are appropriate to local conditions. Data shows that some schools in this area still lack basic facilities such as laboratories, libraries, and access to information technology.
2. **Strategic Program Development:** Based on the needs analysis, some of the strategic programs developed include:

- a. Mobilizer School Program: This program aims to improve the quality of education through the development of excellent schools. These schools are expected to become models and have a positive impact on other schools in the vicinity.
- b. Data-Driven Planning: Using accurate and relevant data for planning and evaluating educational programs. This data includes information about student performance, teacher needs, and the condition of educational facilities and infrastructure.
- c. Implementation of Curriculum Merdeka: Curriculum Merdeka provides flexibility for schools and teachers to develop teaching methods that suit the needs of students and the times. The curriculum also emphasizes the development of 21st century character and skills.
- d. Development of Facilities and Infrastructure: Improve educational facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and access to information technology in schools.



**Figure 1.** PBD cycle based on Education Report Card

Source: [pusatinformasi.raporpendidikan.kemdikbud.go.id/](https://pusatinformasi.raporpendidikan.kemdikbud.go.id/) (2023)

Figure 1 describes the overall education evaluation system starting with the Education Report Card and International Assessment as an evaluation of the education system. This evaluation system consists of Internal Evaluations conducted by the school or educational institution itself, and External Evaluations such as National Education Assessments (PPN, UN) conducted by external parties. Both types of evaluation refer to Education Standards consisting of Minimum Service Standards (SPM) and National Education Standards (SNP). The results of internal and external evaluations and their conformity with educational standards will be input for the process of improving the quality of education on an ongoing basis to improve the quality of education from time to time.

The Minimum Service Standard Index (SPM) Education Report is a method for assessing the level of achievement of minimum service standards in the educational sector. This index assesses several key characteristics of regional education implementation, including educational quality, facility availability, teacher competency, and student learning outcomes. The SPM index is intended to guarantee that each region achieves fundamental standards for providing quality education services to the population. The SPM Education Report Index is

intended to help each region enhance the quality of its educational services, ensuring that all Indonesian children obtain a decent and excellent education.

### **Implementation**

The availability of facilities and infrastructure has a significant impact on the quality of education. Inadequate facilities and infrastructure have a negative impact on student creativity, enthusiasm to learn, and the overall quality of education in Indonesia. As a result, the Indonesian government must devote significant resources to developing educational facilities and infrastructure. A lack of proper educational facilities and infrastructure might impede educational advancement. As a result, the learning process in schools is not ideal, making it difficult to attain the required educational objectives. The implementation phase involves the implementation of the programs that have been designed. This implementation requires good coordination between the various parties involved, including local governments, education offices, schools, and communities. Some of the implementation steps carried out in Aceh Besar Regency include:

1. **Implementation of the Mobilizer School Program:** The Mobilizer School Program has been implemented in several leading schools in Aceh Besar District. Based on existing data, this program has shown improvements in the quality of learning and student learning outcomes in these schools. Schools participating in this program are provided with intensive training and mentoring to improve their capacity to manage schools and implement innovative curricula.
2. **Data-Driven Planning:** The implementation of data-driven planning has helped in identifying specific and urgent educational needs. The data collected are used to plan appropriate interventions and assess the effectiveness of ongoing programs. For example, data shows that some schools still lack basic facilities such as laboratories and libraries. This information is then used for priority development of facilities and infrastructure.
3. **Facilities and Infrastructure Development:** One of the main focuses of implementation is the improvement of educational facilities in various schools. This includes renovation of school buildings, provision of adequate learning tools, and increased access to information technology. Data from the report shows that these facility improvements have positively impacted teaching and learning in the schools that received the intervention.

Looking at the conditions of education with a full day system, researchers directly saw in the field that learning conditions were in effect from the morning and afternoon hours. Where students after learning in the morning they return to class to take part in learning from the afternoon to the afternoon. A visit to SMP Negeri I Darul Imarah, where from observations it was seen that students performed midday prayers in congregation, and after prayer each student was given the opportunity to eat lunch which had been prepared by each student which was a lunch bag they had brought from home. In observations at this school, full day education as stated by Aceh Besar education figures is actually implemented in junior high schools. Congregational prayers performed by students at SMP Negeri 1 Darul Imarah were held in the

school prayer room with inadequate capacity for all students, so from the results of observers it could be seen that some used the classroom facilities to perform congregational prayers.



**Figure 2.** The condition of SMPN 1 Darul Imanah

Source: Author documentation (2023)

Figure 2 shows a school building showing the development of educational facilities and infrastructure. In front of the building, there are boards displaying various logos and symbols related to education and learning. This indicates that the school has received assistance or programs to improve educational facilities and equipment. The development of facilities and infrastructure such as building renovation, provision of learning tools, and access to information technology is one of the main focuses in the implementation of education quality improvement programs. This effort aims to create a more conducive and adequate learning environment for students. Data from the report shows that improvements in educational facilities as shown in the figure have had a positive impact on teaching and learning in schools that receive intervention or assistance.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation is a very important stage to ensure that the implemented programs run according to plan and achieve the expected goals. In Aceh Besar District, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms include periodic assessments conducted to measure the progress and effectiveness of education programs. This assessment includes evaluations of teacher performance, student learning outcomes, and the success of educational programs. Based on the results of periodic assessments, there is a significant improvement in the performance of students and teachers in schools participating in the Mobilizer School Program. In addition, the evaluation also shows that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has had a positive impact on teaching and learning methods in the classroom.

The monitoring and evaluation mechanism in Aceh Besar District also involves collecting feedback from various stakeholders involved, including teachers, students, parents,

and the community. This input is invaluable for understanding the challenges faced and finding the right solutions. For example, feedback from teachers and students indicates the need for additional training for teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Based on this feedback, the local government and the education office conducted further training for teachers in schools in need. This feedback collection process is carried out regularly and openly, so that all parties can contribute to efforts to improve the quality of education. In addition to periodic assessments and feedback collection, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism in Aceh Besar District also involves field visits to schools to monitor program implementation directly. The monitoring team consists of representatives of local governments, education offices, and competent education experts. These field trips allow the team to observe the learning process, teacher and student interaction, and the educational facilities available. The results of these field visits are then analyzed and used as a basis for program refinement or development of new initiatives in an effort to improve the quality of education in the district.

### **Policy Changes**

The government's policy for boosting the quality of human resources is to improve educational standards. In response to changes in the educational environment and the present commercial world, professionalism is required in all disciplines, including education. National educational development is an attempt to educate the nation and improve the quality of life for Indonesians in order to achieve an advanced, just, and successful society. Based on the results of monitoring and evaluation, policy changes are made if obstacles or incompatibility with the expected objectives are found. This process includes:

1. Program Revision: Adjusting ineffective programs to ensure they better suit local needs and conditions. For example, some facilities and infrastructure development programs have changed their focus from physical development to improving the quality of learning tools and educational technology. Data from the evaluation show that more targeted interventions in the provision of learning tools and information technology can have a more significant impact on the quality of learning.
2. Establishment of New Policy: If needed, a new policy is formulated to replace the existing policy. For example, teacher training policies are adjusted to place more emphasis on mastering educational technology and innovative learning methods. In addition, the new policy also includes the development of more inclusive programs focused on increasing educational participation for children with special needs.

The optimization of the implementation of the education system in Aceh Besar District has followed the stages of systematic policy implementation based on the Grindle model, starting from policy formulation, program preparation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, to policy changes. Although it has shown positive results, there are still several challenges that need to be overcome, such as budget constraints, regional disparities, quality of human resources, and resistance to change. To overcome these challenges, more effective strategies are needed in resource allocation, increased training and mentoring for teachers, and strengthened monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In addition, active participation from various stakeholders, including the community, is essential to support the success of educational programs. With a comprehensive and collaborative approach, it is hoped that the

education system in Aceh Besar District can continue to be improved and make a positive contribution to the development of human resources in the area.

Through this research, it is intended that education policies and initiatives in Aceh Besar Regency can continue to evolve and have a broader and more long-term impact on society. On the one hand, the Aceh Besar government must continue to focus on one major issue: developing human resources, specifically teachers. Then there are changes in infrastructure and learning media, which increase pupils' enthusiasm for learning. The Aceh Besar District administration also promotes educator equality in order to eliminate regional disparities. A proactive and adaptable approach to changing needs and problems in the field will ensure the successful execution of an optimal and quality education system.

## CONCLUSION

The study examines efforts to optimize the education system in Aceh Besar District through Grindle's theory of policy implementation, revealing systematic government actions in policy formulation, program development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Key initiatives include the Mobilizer School Program, data-driven planning, Independent Curriculum implementation, and enhancing educational infrastructure. While evaluations demonstrate improved student and teacher performance, challenges like budget limitations, regional disparities, human resource quality, and resistance to change persist. Addressing these requires strategic resource allocation, enhanced teacher training, fortified monitoring, and evaluation systems. Recommendations include increasing education budget allocation equitably, intensifying teacher training in educational technology and innovative methods, improving monitoring through broader stakeholder engagement, promoting inclusive programs for special needs children and gender equity, and fostering collaboration with educational institutions, NGOs, and communities for synergistic educational enhancements in Aceh Besar Regency.

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