

POLITICAL EFFECT IN *MERDEKA* BELAJAR EDUCATION ERA OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

Political influence in education is like compulsory instruction, while it is difficult to create without astute individuals. Even the brightest individuals have to be framed through school. Education is directly or by implication influenced by government issues. The amalgamation of instructions and governance issues is plural. For a while, teaching can shape people who participate in political life. The reason for the school is to make students mentally minded and have great personalities. The training framework must produce millennial students who can compete in the modern-based 4.0 era. Therefore, the educational framework in Pamekasan continues to improve and change. Changes in

schooling began with Nadiem Makarim's discourse, who proposed the development of "Merdeka Belajar". Nadiem's opportunity aims to make independent instructors have an essential meaning for academic units or schools for educators and their students to have the chance to advance, adapt freely, and be creative, especially during this coronavirus pandemic.

Keywords: *Political Influence, Merdeka Belajar, Pandemic*

Abstrak

Pengaruh politik dalam pendidikan seperti instruksi wajib, sementara itu sulit untuk menciptakan tanpa individu yang cerdas. Bahkan individu yang paling cemerlang pun harus dibingkai melalui sekolah. Pendidikan secara langsung atau implikasinya dipengaruhi oleh isu-isu pemerintah. Penggabungan instruksi dan isu-isu pemerintahan adalah jamak. Untuk sementara, melalui pengajaran dapat membentuk orang-orang yang mengambil bagian dalam kehidupan politik. Alasan sekolah adalah untuk membuat siswa berwawasan mental serta memiliki pribadi yang hebat. Kerangka pelatihan harus mampu melahirkan siswa milenial yang mampu bersaing di era 4.0 berbasis modern. Oleh karena itu, kerangka pendidikan di Pamekasan terus mengalami peningkatan dan perubahan. Perubahan persekolahan diawali dengan wacana Nadiem Makarim yang mengusulkan pengembangan "Merdeka Belajar". Kesempatan usulan Nadiem, bertujuan agar instruktur mandiri memiliki arti penting satuan pendidikan atau sekolah pendidik dan anak didiknya memiliki kesempatan

untuk maju, beradaptasi secara bebas, dan berkreasi, terutama di masa pandemi virus corona ini.

Kata Kunci: Pengaruh Politik, Merdeka Belajar, Pandemi

Introduction

The relationship between education and politics is very close and even always related. With this situation, we can know that state politics plays a crucial role in determining the direction of education development in a country. It will not be an exaggeration if many experts argue that education is one of the efforts or means to preserve state power. Apple explains that the political culture is channeled through its educational institutions so that in education political will or system of control is conducted in a society (Tilaar, 2003; Rozi et al., 2020).

The public understands the relationship between education and politics in two ways. First, people say that education is education and politics is politics or that the two are separate. Second, groups of people think that the two are interrelated.

Which opinion is most appropriate is debatable; the first opinion assumes that mixing education and politics will harm education because, in politics, there are bad or wrong conditions according to the idea of specific community groups. The second opinion is quite reasonable because politics cannot be understood only in a narrow sense; it should be remembered that some people interpret politics in a limited sense as politics in the arena of national life in which there is competition between certain groups or groups to fight over a desired position or position by justifying everything method. Politics in the field of education exists; an example, a vocational school principal who decides the policy regarding the pattern of apprenticeships for his students, whether that decision cannot be considered a political decision.

Method

The research method used in this research is normative legal research that uses laws and regulations as the object of study. According to Johnny Ibrahim, normative legal research is a scientific research procedure

to find the truth based on scientific logic from the normative side (Kulkarni & Harman, 2011). The normative side here is not limited to laws and regulations. As stated by Peter Mahmud, legal research is normative research, not only positivist law research (Neuman, 2007).

In that context, this research examines the influence of politics in *merdeka belajar* education in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic in Pamekasan. In addition, the extent of political influence on the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar* Education, especially during this pandemic.

Results and Discussion

Politics as a Reference for the Implementation of Education

The implementation of education in Indonesia is strictly regulated in the Undang-Undang Dasar 1945, namely article 29, including its amendments. Education is the responsibility and obligation of the State and is supported by all its people. However, until now, the implementation of this mandate has not been fully implemented in the field of education, even though it is felt

that it is still very far from what it aspired to. Although in terms of funding in 2009, the government has targeted a budget of 20% of the state budget.

Efforts to preserve state power are generally distinguished in several systems or approaches (Tilaar, 2003); *first, Religious Moralism*. In this approach, the State gives direction to its education to maintain the religious, moral values adopted by the State. In the history of education, this is known in the scholastic era.

Second, the Aufklarung Period. The emergence of intellectualism encourages the State to direct its education to develop thinking skills which are the basis of progress. Intellectualism is the main goal in state-directed education.

Third, the Birth of Democracy. This is known primarily in the philosophy of education developed in the United States by the philosopher John Dewey, who said that when we talk about democracy, we enter the realm of education. Education is a means for the growth and development of democratic attitudes.

Fourth, Education as Human Resource Development.

From an economic point of view, this approach shows how important the human factor is in economic development. Economic life is vital in the life of the State. Therefore, the State is obliged to develop the capacity of its human resources as an asset for its economic development. The economic approach and the need for labor become very prominent in this view.

The prevailing political system in a country is always related to the policies made by the State, including policies in the field of education. The link lies in; (a) Policy formulation, (b) Legitimacy process, (c) Delivery process to the public, (d) Implementation process, and (e) Evaluation process.

Differences in policy formulation from one country to another are often caused by differences in the political system adopted. This also applies to differences in implementation and evaluation in a country. The political system chart from Irish & Proth (Imron, 1996) is as follows:

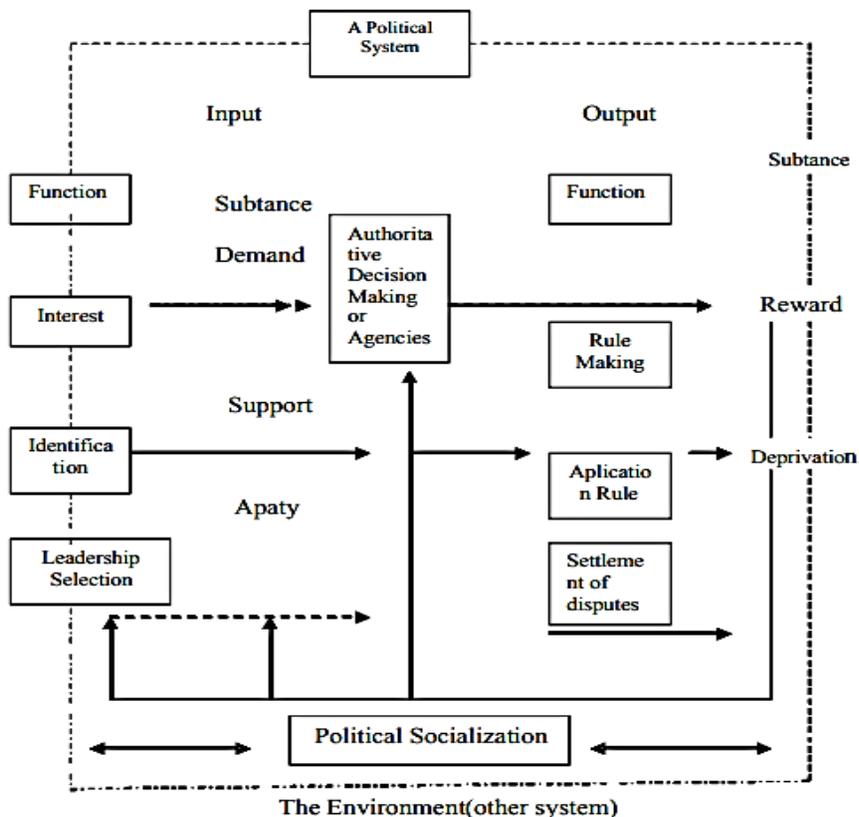


Figure 1. The Political System

Education as a Vehicle for Political Development

The public understands the relationship between education and politics in two ways. *First*, people say that education is education and politics is politics or that the two

are separate. *Second*, groups of people think that the two are interrelated.

Which opinion is most appropriate is debatable; the first opinion assumes that mixing education and politics will harm education because, in politics, there are wrong or bad conditions according to the statement of specific community groups. The second opinion is quite reasonable because politics cannot be understood only in a narrow sense. It should be remembered that some people define politics in a limited sense as politics in the arena of national life in which there is competition between certain groups or groups to fight over a desired position or position with other people justify all means. Politics in the field of education exists; an example, a vocational school principal who decides the policy regarding the pattern of apprenticeships for his students, whether that decision cannot be considered a political decision. Another example is that the regulations on education that the government decides in the form of policies or guidelines are political decisions.

This is reasonable because before a regulation on education is decided, it must go through fierce discussions in the legislative and executive institutions. We still remember how Undang-Undang No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system was delayed for a long time just because one article was being debated. There was a tug of war between the various groups, which is common in the world of politics.

From the various generalizations conveyed, it appears that it was education that influenced political developments and that there was a culture that developed at that time. How important education is in political action is an interesting question. Several factors explain the importance of education for political development: (a) Education takes place in the formal, non-formal, and informal spheres. (b) Education is the background or basis for someone in political life. (c) Professional and responsible political actors can create conducive political conditions.

Talking about the relationship between education and politics, educational policies have been set from the center in formal schools, although now they have implemented educational autonomy. That is why it can be understood that education, especially schools, can be a tool for rulers to perpetuate their power and can also be a place for planting certain doctrines. Is there something wrong in our formal education so that it produces a lot of low moral politicians with indicators of corruption, collusion, nepotism, money politics, and so on.

How education can instill good values also requires the support of all parties. It is believed that moral decline is one of them due to education, but the prevailing societal and cultural factors are also decisive. There are many obstacles in instilling values in students (Bali & Ruzifah, 2021), including: *First*, values are still considered only as lessons. Students have not lived correctly that these values are inherent, not just material that can be learned and then forgotten.

Second, the community's support around the students' living is not maximized or even low. Instilling value for children in the market or terminal environment is more complicated than instilling values for children in rural areas who have not been too touched by change.

Third, teachers do not master the pattern of teaching appropriate values. Many of our teachers have not been able to place individual differences in their students as a means for learning.

Those are the obstacles that come with inculcating values for students in formal educational institutions. If this value education can take place well, then after the student or protégé will be in the community, he already has a good value pattern. This condition also applies in the political arena, where a politician with good mastery of values than in his political tradition will also carry out this good pattern.

A good education will create wise politicians or, in Mochtar Buchori's terms, wisdom that can be achieved through reflective thinking. Furthermore, Mochtar Buchori conveys the requirements for humans to be wise

(Sindhunata, 2000), namely: a) Extensive knowledge (to be learned), b) Smartness, c) Common sense, d) Insight, knowing the essence of what is known, e) Prudence, discrete, f) Understanding of truth norms, g) Ability to digest life experiences.

Wisdom and wisdom can be formed from an early age in children because of their inherent nature; the level of these two things cannot be measured but can be felt and seen in the results or products obtained. Next, when we talk about wisdom, we will talk about democracy.

The development of democracy is strongly influenced by education. Tilaar (2003) identified four periods or waves of the democratic process, namely: a) Democracy and Decentralization, b) Democracy and Participation, c) Democracy and Empowerment, d) Democracy and Good Governance.

Democracy in education is more emphasized after implementing educational autonomy as an implication of regional autonomy some time ago. The pattern of democracy in education is a form of political education wherein democracy has deliberation, mutual respect for

opinions, etc. Efforts to expand educational support for political development can be carried out in various ways, namely: a) Developing a curriculum that can comprehensively provide benefits for students in life in society and politics later, b) Creating a pattern of good relations between education and politics but in the future. The corridor of education is not just politicizing education, and c) Forming teachers who have professional abilities and a national character to become figures.

Pros and Cons of the Merdeka Belajar Policy

The four main programs proposed by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim that focus on improving human resources are not entirely accepted by the community. There are pros and cons in society regarding the Free Learning breakthrough in education.

This concept can make teachers focus on developing potential in students and avoid various pressures. Starting from administrative pressure, mastery of too many teaching materials, and other policy pressures. This concept can bring up the potential of talented teachers in teaching.

However, this also raises various questions, such as understanding the concept of *Merdeka Belajar* and the teacher's understanding of the *Merdeka Belajar*. For example, the *Merdeka Belajar* instrument abolished the National Examination. The following year, it used an assessment, what kind of assessment was used before, what type of measuring device was used for students, and what kind of character was applied. In determining the assessment, it is necessary to study because Indonesia is a multicultural society in which the character of society is different. He also said, changes in education, especially in the millennial era, are open everywhere and are expected to produce a more innovative generation.

The UN, which has been running so far, will be abolished in 2021. Nursanti said that everything has its pluses and minuses. The positive aspect of this policy lies in the efficiency and effectiveness of student product outcomes. Students motivated by their *Merdeka Belajar* policy continue to study hard to achieve the results they expect. But students who are less motivated interpret *Merdeka Belajar* as being independent of everything, so

what can be seen is the negative side, their interest in learning will decrease because of low motivation.

Some education observers say that the National Examination makes students feel depressed. The results of the National Examination are not or are not necessarily representations of students' abilities. Those who disagree with the UN say that students in Indonesia are diverse, so it is not feasible to measure with the same instrument. According to them, the implementation of the UN, which requires a large amount of money, is considered a waste. Ety Syarifah, Head of SMAN Salaman, Magelang Regency, said several parties still want the UN. The National Examination is valid for standardizing the abilities of students (Syarifah, 2020). The UN can also spur competition and competition. For teachers and students, the existence of the National Examination makes them have targets in teaching and learning activities.

One of the four policies submitted by the Minister of Education and Culture implemented is the PPDB Zoning System. Admittedly or not, there is caste in our secondary education, and there is a stigma of only and unseeded

schools. Excellent schools will become favorite schools in great demand and chosen by the community. So that excellent schools will be flooded with applicants while schools that are not superior will be less attractive so that there is a lack of quota. The existence of a favorite school image causes homogeneity in students' academic backgrounds. To avoid the destructive impact of school homogeneity labeled as superior, the government applies Zoning in PPDB. This policy is regulated by Permendikbud RI No. 17 of 2017. Zoning is not a new system. Since a few years ago, many regions have implemented a zoning system that allows quota sharing (Wibowo, 2017).

The zoning system reflects equity in ease of access and quality of education. The zoning system can make schools active in learning because they do not understand the stigma that their students are not brilliant (Ahmadi, 2017). Because of the positive side, the Minister of Education and Culture has included the PPDB zoning system in the Free Learning policy. So far, the zoning system is constantly undergoing improvements and updates. Zoning can improve the quality of education must

be implemented consistently. Those who disagree with the Zoning system are already familiar with the competition system.

Freedom to learn was born from the evaluation of the educational system and process going on so far. The goal is simple so that students, teachers, and even parents are actively involved in fun learning activities; Be part of a happy educational process. Because, in essence, education is not a burden. The burden of students who are crammed with various subjects and the highest grades can kill their creativity. The commitment of teachers who are more involved in administrative matters and even ranks is why they are not free to move into the classroom. The "Merdeka Belajar" policy is a momentum to return educational literacy to khittah. The teaching of education should 1) free teachers in teaching and 2) provide space for students' creativity in learning to create a pleasant learning atmosphere. Because in essence, educational literacy always invites curiosity, there is dialogic communication, there is room for creativity, and we can collaborate to gain self-confidence. Educational literacy is essential and goes

beyond the educational process itself (Yunus, 2019).

Determination of Minimum Learning Criteria (KBM) makes teachers not free to give assessments to students. But it is coercion because it provides a value that does not match reality. The breadth of material that must be conveyed causes the RPP to be too large and seems to be pursuing material, not quality. The quality of learning is not seen from the thickness of the lesson plan but from the seriousness of implementing the teaching itself (Budiarti, 2020).

Implementation of Merdeka Belajar in the Era of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Pamekasan

Implementing the independent learning program requires process and time, requires readiness, requires agreement and solidarity. Because this policy is something new, students and teachers must prepare themselves and motivate each other. With this paradigm shift, to advance education, teachers must master IT. It is hoped that the first generation of teachers can adapt and be alongside the current generation of teachers (Nursanti, 2020).

The independent learning program that is an educational reform will get encouraging results if executed thoughtfully. The government must remove policies that are not appropriate and burden teachers. Develop new approaches that are regulated and implemented in education. If this is followed up, it is not impossible to achieve an independent learning program that will make teachers and students genuinely independent in learning so that a superior young generation is produced. In other words, the demographic bonus can be utilized and achieved by the Indonesian people.

One of the independent learning programs proposed by Nadiem Makarim that has already been implemented and is running is the more flexible PPDB Zoning system. It must be admitted that the existence of a zoning system that applies makes prospective students who excel cannot get the opportunity to choose the school they are interested in because it has a long distance between the school and their place of residence. But with the flexibility in the zoning system, the local government can make new rules related to the zoning system. The new rules

are in the form of various paths that prospective students can take to enroll in schools of interest. These routes include; Pure zoning path, achievement path, Affirmation path, and Mutation path.

Freedom to learn in the industrial era 4.0 is learning carried out based on IT. The role of the teacher is to prepare so that students exist to face the 4.0 revolution era (Bali & Hajriyah, 2020). With IT, students can freely seek information from anywhere. However, the role of the teacher will never be replaced. The role of the teacher that cannot be replaced by IT is the task of educating in instilling norms, ethics, and compassion.

The independent learning program launched by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim is to improve the education system in Indonesia. The independent learning program is relevant to the goal of national education, namely to form a young generation who is not only intellectually intelligent but also has good character traits such as responsibility, discipline, honesty, can think critically and analytically, and become independent human beings so that they can express their

opinions without feeling afraid.

Conclusion

Education is not a political tool, but politics is education, and vice versa education that cannot choose is not education that is following the needs of the state (voting, in this case, is policies that are appropriate or beneficial for individual citizens). On the other hand, the rule of law can be achieved through education, political education. The goal of the Indonesian state is to create a society with a political system that is sovereign by the people. The diversity of Indonesian culture is the formation of an academic community that already has a broad view (mainly in the city) shaped by education and opportunity. Education lies in the political order.

Meanwhile, centralism/centralized power creates group domination, the impact of which is impoverishment due to control not on the broader community so that the ruler becomes unreachable by law. Education is the most fundamental method of social progress and reform. Forced reforms will fail. Education is a means of growing

democracy; for example A sustainable reform movement can only be implemented if there is continuity between the current generation and the next generation (only through education).

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