

THE GOVERNMENT MUST PROVIDE QUALITY EDUCATION SERVICES AND FACILITATE QUALITY EDUCATION IN INDONESIA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This study aims to further examine the role of the government in providing and facilitating quality education in Indonesia. Education is a fundamental right of citizens guaranteed by the constitution, but reality shows that there are still gaps in quality and unequal access between regions. Through a *Systematic Literature Review* approach, this study analyses various policies, studies, and empirical reports over the past ten years. The results of the study show that in its role as a provider, the government has sought to improve the quality of education through the development of a national curriculum, teacher certification, infrastructure development, and quality assurance. Meanwhile, the government's role as a facilitator is realised through education financing programmes (BOS, KIP, LPDP), affirmation for 3T regions, digitalisation of learning, inclusive education, and cross-sector collaboration. Although these policies have shown progress, challenges such as quality disparities, limited resource distribution, and the digital divide still hinder the achievement of quality education across the board. This study emphasises that the success of education provision and facilitation will determine the emergence of competitive global human resources while ensuring social justice in education.

Keywords: quality education, government, service provision, education facilitation, literature review, Indonesia

Introduction

Education is the main foundation for the development of a nation and state. No country can survive and develop towards an advanced civilisation without making education a national priority. In the context of Indonesia, education is even constitutionally guaranteed as the right of every citizen as stated in Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution, which emphasises that every citizen has the right to education and that the government is obliged to finance basic education (Judijanto & Aslan, 2025); (Purike & Aslan, 2025). With this strong legal basis, it is clear that the responsibility for providing quality education services and facilitating sustainable access to education lies with the state. However, the implementation of this role is still a subject of lengthy discussion, especially when faced with the reality of disparities in the quality of education and the uneven availability of services across Indonesia (Clark, 2023b).

The government should not only act as a regulator or policy maker, but also as an executor of services that ensure that every child of the nation, regardless of social, economic, or geographical background, receives a proper education. The reality shows that the quality of education in major cities is relatively better than in rural areas or 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) regions (Figueiredo, 2025b) . This raises a fundamental question: has the government truly fulfilled its constitutional mandate to provide and facilitate quality education for all Indonesians, or are existing policies merely a formality without maximum implementation? (Gindo, 2020)

Globalisation and technological developments have made education the key to a nation's competitiveness in the era of global competition. Countries with large investments in education have proven to be able to drive innovation-based economic transformation. Indonesia faces the same challenge, namely the need for superior human resources capable of competing across countries (Firmansyah & Aslan, 2025a) ; (Firmansyah & Aslan, 2025b) . In this context, the government plays a strategic role in ensuring that education is not only available but also of high quality so that it can prepare the golden generation. However, challenges such as low teacher competence, limited infrastructure, and digital inequality mean that the hope of providing quality education services still faces many structural obstacles (Gindo, 2020) .

Talking about "quality education" is not enough just by building school buildings or providing chairs and tables for students. Quality education includes a relevant curriculum, competent teaching staff, innovative learning processes, modern supporting facilities, and an evaluation system that is in line with the needs of the times. This is where the role of the government is tested: to what extent can the policies formulated shape an adaptive and productive education ecosystem? Curriculum reforms such as the 2013 Curriculum and Merdeka Belajar (Freedom of Learning) are some of the efforts made by the government, but there are still pros and cons regarding their effectiveness at the grassroots level (Paik, 2015b) .

In addition to being a provider, the government also has a heavier responsibility as an education facilitator. Facilitation means that the government must be able to bridge the disparity in learning opportunities so that all citizens, from Sabang to Merauke, have fair access. This facilitation includes funding through programmes such as School Operational Assistance (BOS), the Indonesia Smart Card (KIP), and LPDP scholarships for those who wish to pursue higher education. However, a big question arises: do these programmes truly optimally address educational disparities, or are they still limited to the surface without touching the root of the problem? (Andriyani et al., 2021)

A report by UNESCO and the World Bank shows that the quality of education is often measured by three things: the relevance of the curriculum to the needs of the job market, the quality of teachers as the main drivers of learning, and equal access as a form of social justice. Referring to these indicators, it appears that the Indonesian

government still faces serious challenges in fully achieving them (Alifah, 2021) . The number of certified teachers is unevenly distributed, the use of educational technology is still constrained in many regions, and the distribution of facilities and infrastructure is still uneven. These conditions make literature analysis important: to investigate how previous studies assess the role of the government in providing and facilitating quality education (Caroline & Aslan, 2025) ; (Aslan & Sidabutar, 2025) .

Education is also multidimensional. On the one hand, it is a fundamental right of citizens; on the other hand, it is a long-term investment by the government to improve the quality of human resources. This means that when the government fails to properly perform its function of providing and facilitating education, the consequences are not only public dissatisfaction but also a major risk to national competitiveness (Cahyono & Aslan, 2025) . Many studies emphasise that educational inequality will ultimately widen socio-economic inequality. Therefore, the government's role in ensuring quality education services is a strategic investment to break the chain of social injustice in the future (Alifah, 2021) .

There is also debate regarding the extent to which the government should be fully involved in providing education or give more space to the private sector. Some argue that private involvement can accelerate quality improvement and diversification of educational services. However, the literature also warns that allowing the private sector to operate without strict regulations has the potential to commercialise education and exacerbate inequality. This is where the government's challenge proves to be very complex: not only providing education, but also ensuring that it remains a public right, not just a luxury that can only be accessed by certain groups (Wahyudi, 2022) .

Inclusive education is another aspect that is no less important. Indonesia has a diverse population, including children with special needs, indigenous peoples, and minority groups. The government not only needs to build schools but also facilitate inclusive education models so that all levels of society feel they have equal learning opportunities. Literature on inclusive education emphasises that countries that fail to incorporate an inclusive perspective into their education systems will lag behind in their efforts to build social cohesion (Grecic, 2024) . In addition to internal problems, Indonesia also faces external pressure in the form of universally applicable international standards, such as the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), particularly goal 4: ensuring inclusive and quality education for all. The Indonesian government needs to ensure that national education policies do not merely "meet administrative targets" but actually produce transformational impacts. Access to education that is only viewed in terms of the number of students enrolled without considering the quality of the learning process will not be sufficient to respond to the challenges of globalisation (Eiras, 2024) .

The difference in readiness levels between schools in urban and rural areas further highlights the need for government facilitation. The digitisation of education through online platforms is a step forward, but do all students in remote areas have access to the internet and adequate devices? Literature and field research show that without affirmative policies, digitisation can reinforce inequality. A small example is when the COVID-19 pandemic forced online learning, many students in remote areas were left behind due to limited networks and devices. This reflects that facilitation policies must be sensitive to socio-geographical disparities (Fomba, 2022) . Apart from infrastructure, the role of teachers remains a key factor. Teachers are at the forefront of education, but their quality is greatly influenced by government policies on recruitment, training, and welfare. When teachers do not receive adequate support, it is difficult to provide quality education services, even if schools have modern facilities. Recent literature confirms that improving teacher quality has an even greater impact than physical school development in improving the quality of education (Paik, 2015a) . This means that if the government is serious about providing quality education services, the main focus must be on strengthening the capacity of human resources in education.

Research Method

The research method used in this study is a *Systematic Literature Review (SLR)*, which is a research approach that systematically identifies, selects, evaluates, and synthesises the results of previous studies relevant to the topic of the provision and facilitation of quality education by the government in Indonesia. The data used consisted of national and international journal articles, official reports from government agencies such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the National Development Planning Agency, as well as publications from international organisations such as UNESCO and the World Bank over the last ten years (Elijah & Aslan, 2025) . The research process was conducted through literature searches in indexed databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Garuda, using the keywords "quality education", "role of the government", "facilitation of education", and "Indonesia". The methodological stages included literature identification, feasibility testing using inclusion and exclusion criteria, data extraction from relevant publications, and thematic analysis to identify patterns and narrative synthesis. This approach was chosen so that the research could provide a comprehensive picture of the government's contributions, challenges, and achievements in the two main areas studied, thereby producing valid findings that could be used as a basis for future academic and educational policy (Munn et al., 2020) .

Results and Discussion

The Government as a Provider of Quality Education Services

The Indonesian government's responsibility in the field of education is normatively stipulated in Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution, which emphasises that every citizen has the right to education, and the government is obliged to fund basic education regardless of social or economic background. This constitutional basis shows that the state's position is not only as a regulator but also as a provider of education services for all citizens (Paik, 2015a) . Thus, as a provider, the government must ensure the availability, affordability, and quality of education in accordance with national and international standards. This basic principle is important because without the active involvement of the government, the right to education will only be a political slogan that is difficult to realise in practice.

In the framework of education provision, the government plays a direct role through the development and administration of public schools, from primary to secondary level and even public universities. The greater number of public schools compared to private schools in a number of regions proves the government's dominance in ensuring that education services remain available. However, the problem lies in the distribution and quality of these services (Asadullah, 2025a) . Many reports show that public schools in big cities have complete facilities and competent teaching staff, while public schools in rural areas and 3T areas still experience limitations in terms of facilities, infrastructure, and teaching staff. This shows that although the government has played a role as a provider, the quality of services is not yet fully equitable (Aslan, 2019) ; (Aslan & Hifza, 2020) .

Providing quality education is not enough just by building schools or establishing educational institutions. The government must ensure the existence of *National Education Standards* (SNP) that emphasise eight quality components, including content, process, graduate competencies, educators and educational staff, facilities and infrastructure, management, financing, and educational assessment. SNP is a fundamental instrument to ensure that the provision of education is not only quantitative but also qualitative. With these standards in place, the government has clear parameters for measuring the success of the provision of education services (Asadullah, 2025b) .

One of the government's concrete efforts to provide quality education is through curriculum reform. The curriculum is not just a list of subjects, but the direction of a nation's education. The change from the 2006 Curriculum (KTSP) to the 2013 Curriculum, and now to the Merdeka Curriculum, is proof that the government is trying to adapt education to the demands of the times. However, the success of this new curriculum is often hampered by uneven implementation, particularly in terms of teacher readiness and facilities in various schools (Zhao, 2022b) . This means that even though the government has provided a curriculum framework, its quality is not

necessarily guaranteed without the support of implementing factors. In addition, the government is also trying to ensure the quality of educators through teacher certification policies, Teacher Professional Education (PPG), and competency improvement through training and workshops. This step is important because the quality of education will be largely determined by the capacity of teachers to manage the learning process. However, the literature shows that there is still a competency gap between teachers in urban and rural areas. Many teachers in areas that do not yet have sufficient access to training or supporting facilities, making it difficult to improve the quality of learning evenly (Donkoh, 2023c).

The provision of educational facilities and infrastructure is also the direct responsibility of the government as the service provider. Programmes to build new classrooms, renovate damaged schools, and provide laboratories and libraries are concrete examples of policies in the field of educational infrastructure. Although development progress has been significant, data from the Ministry of Education and Culture still shows that thousands of primary schools in various provinces are in moderate to severe disrepair. This is a major challenge because without a proper learning environment, it is difficult to achieve quality education even if the curriculum and teachers are well prepared (Angrist, 2025).

The government, in its role as a provider of quality education, must also pay attention to the aspect of equitable financing. The constitutional mandate stipulating a minimum of 20% of the state budget for the education sector is one of the efforts to ensure the availability of funds for educational services. However, the problem is how the budget allocation can be effectively distributed to the lowest level of education. Many studies show that there are leaks in the use of the budget or misdirected distribution, so that the effectiveness of the provision of educational services is often questioned (Donkoh, 2023b). In addition to physical infrastructure, the government is now required to provide digital technology-based educational facilities. The digital era requires schools to have adequate ICT equipment to improve the quality of learning. The Ministry of Education has launched various school digitisation programmes, including online learning applications. However, challenges arise because not all schools have access to stable electricity and internet. As a result, the provision of technology-based services has the potential to widen the gap between schools in big cities and remote areas (Clark, 2023a).

The government also plays a role in providing evaluation and quality assurance systems for education through school and university accreditation institutions. Accreditation is an important instrument to ensure that educational institutions meet minimum service quality standards. This accreditation system also serves as a reference for the public in choosing educational institutions. However, a common challenge is the existence of administrative formalities in assessments without accompanying real improvements in the learning process. In other words, the government must ensure

that quality evaluation is not limited to *compliance*, but is a substantive effort to improve quality (Donkoh, 2023a).

The government's role as a provider is also realised in the implementation of vocational education. Vocational education is seen as a strategic pathway to produce a workforce that is ready to work and relevant to the needs of industry. The government has established vocational high schools (SMK), polytechnics, and link and match programmes with the business world. However, criticism of the quality of vocational graduates, which is still not in line with market needs, continues to arise, indicating that the provision of vocational education by the government is not yet optimal in terms of output quality (Zhao, 2022a). In addition to vocational pathways, the government also provides access to state universities (PTN) throughout Indonesia. PTNs are a symbol of the government's dominance in providing quality higher education. However, the limited capacity of PTNs has led to fierce competition and unequal access. Many high school graduates with good grades find it difficult to enter PTNs due to limited quotas, while private universities are often considered an alternative option that is sometimes not of equal quality. This highlights one of the limitations of the government as an education provider (Gauttam, 2024b).

On the other hand, the government as a service provider must also ensure inclusive education for all, including children with special needs. The existence of special schools (SLB) and inclusive education programmes are forms of service provision for marginalised groups. However, the literature highlights that the facilities and teaching staff prepared to support children with special needs are still very limited. This means that the provision of inclusive education has not yet reached the expected quality standards (Gauttam, 2024a).

The government's responsibility as an education service provider is also related to emergency response. Situations such as natural disasters, social conflicts, or pandemics test whether the government is capable of providing quality education in times of crisis. The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic shows that government-managed online learning services still face major obstacles, both in terms of equipment provision and teacher readiness. This shows that the role of service provision must be designed to be more adaptive to various emergency conditions and not only applicable in normal situations (Aslan et al., 2020).

Overall, the role of the government as a provider of quality education services in Indonesia still faces duality. On the one hand, a strong legal basis and various strategic policies have been formulated to guarantee the provision of education for all citizens. However, on the other hand, disparities in quality, limited implementation capacity, and distribution challenges show that there is still much work to be done. This reality proves that the government's role in providing education is not merely about providing physical facilities, but involves comprehensive efforts that touch on aspects of

curriculum, teachers, technological facilities, quality management, and sustainability in crisis situations.

Thus, the provision of quality education by the government requires a comprehensive approach, not a partial one. The government must combine regulatory aspects, field implementation, and continuous evaluation to ensure that every citizen receives education services in accordance with their rights. Without a strong and consistent commitment to provision, the equal distribution of quality education will only remain a political discourse, not a reality felt by the community.

The Government as a Facilitator of Quality Education

The role of the government as a facilitator of quality education means more than just a provider of formal services. Facilitation means that the government must be a bridge that opens up access as widely as possible for all citizens, while preventing discrimination in opportunities to obtain education. In practice, this facilitation requires policy interventions that not only address legal aspects but also support mechanisms that enable quality education to be accessible to people from diverse backgrounds, including those who are economically and geographically disadvantaged (Figueiredo, 2025a).

One concrete form of government facilitation is the education financing programme. The School Operational Assistance (BOS) programme is the main instrument designed to ease the burden of school fees, ensuring that students are not burdened with basic operational costs. In addition, the Indonesia Smart Card (KIP) programme provides direct support to students from underprivileged families so that they have the opportunity to complete their education. These two programmes are clear examples of how the government acts as a facilitator of equitable access to quality education through financial intervention (Annisa et al., 2016).

Apart from financing, the government also strives to be a facilitator in providing scholarship opportunities for further education. The LPDP scholarship programme is clear evidence of the government's commitment to bridging the gap for the younger generation so that they can pursue education at an international level. With this facilitation, it is hoped that the nation will produce leaders who are not only academically intelligent but also able to compete on a global scale. However, challenges arise in the context of equity: do scholarship opportunities such as LPDP truly reach people from disadvantaged areas or are they only enjoyed by groups from large cities (Satria, 2025).

Facilitating quality education also means providing affirmative policies for 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) regions. The government must ensure that children in Papua, NTT, Maluku, and other remote areas are not left behind compared to students in Java or metropolitan cities. This facilitation can take the form of sending teachers, providing special incentives, building affordable integrated schools, and

providing educational transportation facilities. Literature reviews have emphasised that without affirmative policies, the educational gap between regions will continue to widen, and this can hinder national integration (Sugiardi & Aslan, 2025).

In the digital era, government facilitation in the field of technology is also crucial. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us an important lesson that access to online-based education cannot run optimally if digital infrastructure is not evenly distributed. Therefore, government facilitation should not only provide online learning platforms, but also enable rural communities to enjoy cheap or free internet access to ensure equal access. School digitisation programmes and the provision of free internet quotas during the pandemic are initial steps, although they still need to be improved to reach remote areas that were previously unconnected (Nugraheni, 2024).

The role of facilitation also includes providing inclusive education that can embrace all children, including those with special needs. In this case, the government must provide policies, regulations, and resources that support the creation of inclusive schools. Inclusive schools are schools that accept all children regardless of their physical abilities, social conditions, or cultural backgrounds. The government can facilitate this in two ways: by improving the qualifications of teachers to teach in inclusive classrooms and by providing learning tools that are friendly to children with special needs. In this way, quality education can truly be experienced inclusively by all levels of society (Clark, 2023b).

Government facilitation policies are also evident in the form of cross-sectoral cooperation. The government cannot work alone but must open up opportunities for collaboration with the private sector, international institutions, and civil society. An example is the cooperation of the business world in the *link and match* vocational education programme so that graduates can be more easily absorbed into the world of work (Figueiredo, 2025b). Similarly, facilitation with international organisations such as UNICEF or UNESCO can bring technical support and a global perspective. By maintaining these networks, the government ensures that education in Indonesia is not isolated but open to good practices from abroad (Gindo, 2020).

In addition to collaboration, government facilitation must also take the form of oversight. Much literature highlights the commercialisation of private education, which is becoming increasingly expensive, thereby closing access for lower-middle-class communities. In this context, facilitation means that the government ensures that private education remains within the regulatory corridor that upholds accessibility. Regulations on admission fees, quality standards, and consistent accreditation mechanisms are ways in which the government facilitates private education services to contribute positively to the quality of national education without eliminating the principle of social justice (Paik, 2015b).

Facilitation also has a cultural dimension. Indonesia is a nation with ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity. The government is required to facilitate education that

emphasises not only academic aspects but also tolerance, multicultural values, and character building (Andriyani et al., 2021) . Curricula and learning strategies must be facilitated so that students from various cultural backgrounds feel accommodated. In many studies, multicultural education is believed to be one of the keys to preventing social conflict and strengthening unity. Therefore, government facilitation must include the design of an education system that respects the nation's socio-cultural diversity (Alifah, 2021) .

The literature also shows that the facilitation of quality education is highly dependent on consistent monitoring and evaluation. The government needs to conduct regular monitoring of the effectiveness of the BOS and KIP programmes, teacher distribution, and school digitisation. Without solid evaluation, facilitation will only be a short-term project that will not last long. Therefore, educational facilitation must be viewed as a continuous process in which the government constantly improves policies based on field data, not just administrative reports (Wahyudi, 2022) .

Quality educational facilitation must also not overlook the dimension of gender equality. Many studies show that access to education for girls in remote areas still faces socio-cultural barriers. The government must facilitate the removal of these barriers, for example through awareness programmes, the provision of special scholarships for girls, and the guarantee of a safe school environment for them. Through this facilitation, the government can ensure that gender equality is guaranteed and that quality education is truly gender-inclusive (Grecic, 2024) .

Overall, the government's role as a facilitator of quality education is a commitment to bridge all barriers that may prevent the community from obtaining education. Facilitation encompasses the dimensions of financing, digitalisation, inclusion, collaboration, and continuous evaluation. This is not merely a technical role, but a strategic one to ensure that education in Indonesia becomes a medium for equal opportunities and improving the quality of the nation. By acting as a facilitator, the government is not only fulfilling its constitutional mandate but also ensuring that the ideal of social justice in education can be realised in practice.

Conclusion

The government has two fundamental and strategic roles in the field of education, namely as a provider of quality education services and as a facilitator of fair and inclusive access to education. As a provider, the government's role is realised through curriculum policy, teacher quality improvement, infrastructure development, and the implementation of a quality assurance system oriented towards National Education Standards. However, disparities in quality between regions, limited teacher capacity, and unequal infrastructure show that this role still faces serious challenges. Meanwhile, as a facilitator, the government seeks to bridge socio-economic and geographical gaps through education financing (BOS, KIP, LPDP), affirmation for 3T

regions, education digitalisation, and strengthening inclusive education. Although these measures are already in place, their effectiveness is still uneven due to structural and cultural barriers and limited cross-sector coordination.

Therefore, fulfilling quality education in Indonesia requires consistent government commitment in both roles simultaneously. The government should not only focus on providing facilities and policies but also ensure facilitation mechanisms that are responsive to real disparities in the field. Quality education can only be realised through a combination of providing quality services and facilitating fair access, so that all citizens—without exception—can enjoy their fundamental rights. By optimally performing this dual role, the government is not only upholding the mandate of the constitution, but also preparing excellent human resources as national assets to face global challenges in the future.

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