

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION POLICY: TEACHER READINESS, SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE, AND INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AS MAJOR OBSTACLES IN IMPLEMENTING NEW POLICIES: A LITERATURE REVIEW METHOD

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse the main challenges in implementing new education policies in Indonesia, focusing on teacher readiness, limited school infrastructure, and inter-institutional coordination as the main obstacles. The method used is a systematic literature review of various journal articles, policy reports, and empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025. The results of the analysis show that teacher readiness, which includes pedagogical competence and mental preparedness, is crucial to the effectiveness of policy implementation. In addition, disparities in educational infrastructure between urban and remote areas also hinder the equitable implementation of policies. Another crucial obstacle is the weak coordination between institutions, which hinders programme synchronisation and communication, thereby affecting the smooth implementation of policies. This study concludes that education reform efforts must prioritise strengthening teacher capacity, improving the quality and equity of infrastructure, and managing cross-institutional coordination. A holistic and collaborative approach is key to the successful implementation of new education policies in Indonesia.

Keywords: education policy implementation, teacher readiness, school infrastructure, inter-institutional coordination, literature review, Indonesian education reform.

Introduction

Education is one of the main pillars in the development of quality human resources and is an important factor in driving the social, economic, and cultural progress of a country. In Indonesia, the development of education policy has undergone quite complex dynamics, following changes in global demands and national needs (Judijanto & Aslan, 2025); (Purike & Aslan, 2025); (Komari & Aslan, 2025). The government periodically issues new policies to improve the quality of education in the hope of creating an education system that is responsive and adaptive to the changing times (Wyss, 2023). However, despite the increasing number of policies issued, it is not uncommon for implementation at the field level to face various obstacles that hinder the effectiveness and achievement of the policy objectives.

The successful implementation of education policies is highly dependent on the readiness of various implementing elements, including human resources, supporting facilities, and the coordination system between the institutions involved. Teachers, as the spearhead of education, have a strategic role in realising these policies in their daily teaching practices (Sarwanto et al., 2024). Teacher readiness encompasses not only pedagogical competence, but also psychological readiness and the ability to manage the changes brought about by new policies. Without adequate teacher readiness, the successful implementation of policies will be difficult to achieve, resulting in suboptimal educational outcomes (Fiteriadi et al., 2025); (F. Firmansyah & Aslan, 2025a); (F. Firmansyah & Aslan, 2025b). In addition to educators, school infrastructure is also a major determining factor in the operationalisation of education policies. Infrastructure includes physical facilities and infrastructure that support the teaching and learning process, including classrooms, technological facilities, laboratories, and internet access. The imbalance in the distribution and quality of educational infrastructure in various regions in Indonesia remains a classic problem that often hinders the equal distribution of education quality.

Inadequate infrastructure not only hinders policy implementation but also creates disparities in access and quality of learning between regions (Sarwanto et al., 2024). Another important aspect in the implementation of education policy is effective coordination between the various institutions involved in the policy implementation chain.

Education policy in Indonesia involves not only the Ministry of Education, but also regional education agencies, schools, and various other partners and stakeholders. Obstacles to inter-institutional coordination often arise in the form of ineffective communication, overlapping authority, and differences in priorities that lead to inconsistencies in policy implementation.

This condition adds to the complexity of ensuring successful implementation at the operational level (Ravanelli, 2020). Teachers' readiness, as one of the main focuses of this study, includes the dimensions of pedagogical competence, mental readiness to accept innovation, and continuous training support.

Many studies have found that policy reforms often proceed without adequate teacher readiness, making it difficult to maximise the positive impact of the policies. Low teacher readiness not only reduces the effectiveness of policies but can also lead to resistance to change, which ultimately hinders the desired transformation of education (Darmansah, 2024). Meanwhile, school infrastructure varies significantly across Indonesia. The differences between urban and rural areas, as well as between central and remote areas, pose unique challenges in providing adequate educational facilities. Limited infrastructure not only has an impact on the decline in the quality of the learning process, but also affects students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Policies launched without considering the actual infrastructure conditions also tend to

be difficult to implement effectively (Hapinas et al., 2025); (Caroline & Aslan, 2025); (Fitriani et al., 2024).

Inter-institutional coordination is the next crucial point in the implementation of education policies. Synergy between ministries, local governments, and educational institutions must run harmoniously so that policies can be implemented smoothly. However, various bureaucratic obstacles, the lack of an integrated communication mechanism, and differences in policy interpretation often hinder the coordination process. Policy articles and reports emphasise the need for an integrative and collaborative governance model as the key to overcoming these problems.

Research Methodology

This study utilises a systematic literature review method to analyse the main challenges in the implementation of education policies, particularly those related to teacher readiness, school infrastructure, and inter-institutional coordination. Data were collected from various secondary sources such as national and international journal articles, official reports from the Ministry of Education, and empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025 (Elijah & Aslan, 2025). The analysis process included identifying and selecting relevant literature based on strict inclusion criteria, grouping key themes using thematic coding techniques, and synthesising findings to form a holistic picture of the obstacles faced in implementing new policies in the education sector. With this approach, the study aims to present a comprehensive review that not only describes the actual phenomenon but also provides a theoretical basis and practical recommendations for policy improvement (Maulina, 2021).

Results and Discussion

Teacher Readiness and School Infrastructure Limitations

Teacher readiness is a key factor that directly influences the successful implementation of new education policies. Teachers are not only policy implementers, but also agents of change who must be able to adapt to the demands of the curriculum, learning methods, and ever-evolving technology (Darmansah, 2024). In this context, teacher readiness includes pedagogical skills, psychological readiness, and technical competencies related to the use of educational technology. Without adequate readiness, teachers find it difficult to translate policies into effective learning practices, which then has a negative impact on the overall educational process and outcomes (R. Firmansyah, 2022).

Various studies show that teachers' low ability to critically read and adapt policies is one of the most significant obstacles. Many teachers have not received adequate training regarding policy changes, so they tend to carry out teaching practices according to old habits.

In addition, resistance to change is another challenge that is no less important. Uncertainty and concerns about the effectiveness of new policies can cause teachers to be reluctant to adopt the teaching methods or strategies recommended by these policies (Ameliya, 2024). Teacher training and professional development are one solution, but the implementation of these training programmes is often uneven and unsystematic.

In some cases, training is sporadic and not tailored to the real needs of teachers in the field. This results in suboptimal training outcomes and teachers still feeling unprepared when faced with the implementation of new policies (Sudarman, 2021). Therefore, improving the quality and quantity of relevant and sustainable training is an urgent need to strengthen teachers' overall readiness.

Another aspect that is no less important in relation to teacher readiness is mental and emotional readiness in facing change. The process of rapid change, which is often not accompanied by good communication, causes anxiety and stress for teachers.

This condition can reduce their motivation and enthusiasm, thereby affecting their teaching performance and openness to educational innovation. Therefore, psychological guidance and social support in the school environment must be part of the strategy to strengthen teacher readiness (Wicaksono, 2025). Meanwhile, limitations in school infrastructure are also a substantial obstacle to the implementation of new education policies.

Educational infrastructure includes not only physical buildings but also learning facilities such as libraries, laboratories, and information and communication technology devices, which are increasingly essential in the modern learning process. The imbalance in infrastructure provision between urban and rural areas means that the implementation of policies has significantly different levels of success (Yetti, 2023).

Inadequate infrastructure often makes it difficult for teachers and students to access learning resources that should support the learning process. For example, the lack of internet access or technological devices in schools in remote areas makes the implementation of technology-based learning methods very limited. As a result, innovations outlined in new education policies, such as digital learning or distance learning, cannot be implemented effectively, making it difficult to achieve the desired learning objectives (Masri, 2023).

Infrastructure constraints also have an impact on the comfort and safety of the learning environment. Cramped and poor classroom conditions, inadequate sanitation facilities, and limited sports and recreational facilities lead to a decline in the quality of the student learning experience. These factors not only affect the physical and psychological health of students, but also influence their motivation to learn and their retention in the education system.

This situation must be given serious attention in education policy planning so that the welfare of students is not neglected (Yuliah, 2020). The uneven distribution of

infrastructure also creates inequality in access to quality education. Schools in urban areas tend to have more complete facilities than schools in disadvantaged and remote areas.

This inequality creates disparities in learning outcomes and opportunities for student competency development. Therefore, infrastructure development strategies must be directed at reducing these gaps so that all students have equal opportunities to access quality education (Edward, 2022).

In this context, infrastructure limitations are not only physical problems but are often related to managerial and planning issues that are not effective. The allocation of funds and resources is often misdirected or hampered by bureaucracy, resulting in slow and suboptimal infrastructure development or repair processes. This is an important signal that education policy must be supported by a responsive management and supervision system so that resources can be used optimally and appropriately (Rosdiana, 2024).

The interaction between teacher readiness and infrastructure limitations is also important to understand in depth. Even highly competent teachers will experience difficulties if the physical and technological environment is not supportive. Conversely, complete facilities without the support of teacher readiness and competence will not have a maximum positive impact on learning. Therefore, these two factors must be viewed as complementary components in the framework of successful education policy implementation (Demboh, 2021). In addition, the need to synchronise teacher development and infrastructure improvement policies is very clear. Fragmented policies without synergy between human resources and facilities risk creating imbalances that lead to implementation failure.

A holistic and integrative approach is a necessity in designing teacher empowerment and infrastructure development programmes so that both run in parallel. Chronologically, teacher readiness and infrastructure fulfilment must begin at the policy planning stage so that obstacles can be minimised from the outset. The participation of teachers and schools in policy formulation can be a solution to ensure that policies are more in line with field conditions and able to accommodate real needs.

Similarly, infrastructure development planning based on real data on school needs must be a primary concern (Aslan & Sidabutar, 2025); (Rokhmawati et al., 2025).

Previous studies also emphasise the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation of teacher readiness and infrastructure conditions in the implementation of new policies. Good monitoring can help identify obstacles early on and enable policy adjustments or additional interventions as needed. This also includes strengthening the managerial capacity of schools to manage resources effectively so that the sustainability of policy implementation is maintained (Demboh, 2021). Teacher readiness and infrastructure limitations are interrelated with other aspects such as support from families and communities, as well as supporting policies at the local level. The

commitment of various parties is a determining factor in the success of implementation (Guberman, 2021). Therefore, building strong partnerships at all levels is an important strategy that must be integrated into the education policy implementation plan.

Overall, the various challenges experienced in relation to teacher readiness and infrastructure limitations reflect the urgent need for more inclusive, adaptive, and contextual policy strategies. Policies must be able to accommodate the diversity of school and teacher conditions and provide sustainable support mechanisms so that the objectives of education reform can be realised in a tangible and equitable manner. A multisectoral and collaborative approach is highly recommended to synergise efforts to improve the quality of human resources and educational facilities.

Inter-institutional Coordination and Implementation Management

Inter-institutional coordination is a crucial aspect of successful policy implementation in education, as such policies involve many interrelated actors and institutions, from the central to the local level. In the Indonesian context, the complexity of the education system requires strong synergy between the Ministry of Education and Culture, provincial and district/municipal education offices, school principals, teachers, and various education support partners. Without effective coordination, even well-designed policies have the potential to fail to achieve their intended objectives (Putra, 2024).

Coordination barriers often arise due to complex bureaucratic structures and overlapping authority between institutions. For example, differences in decision-making mechanisms between the central and regional levels can prevent policies from being implemented uniformly.

In addition, information and directives that are not clearly communicated can lead to different interpretations, resulting in inconsistent policy implementation. This situation makes it difficult for stakeholders in the field to align their strategies and actions (Viennet, 2017). Effective communication between institutions is the main foundation for overcoming these coordination barriers.

However, in practice, communication is often fragmented, lacking transparency, and does not involve all parties proportionally. The lack of integrated communication channels causes programme and policy information to reach the implementing level in schools late. In addition, ineffective communication also results in low participation and involvement of various parties who should support policy implementation (Airlanda, 2024).

A number of studies show that a lack of common perception and objectives among educational institutions also hinders coordination. Differences in interests and priorities between ministries, local governments, and schools can lead to unproductive internal conflicts. Therefore, a mechanism for facilitating continuous dialogue and

negotiation is needed to align the vision and mission in the implementation of education policies (Widiastuti, 2025).

A fragmented coordination system also contributes to inefficiency in resource allocation and policy implementation. For example, without proper coordination, there is duplication of programmes, waste of funds, and suboptimal utilisation of human resources. This is a serious problem that can reduce the positive impact of policies on improving the quality of education. Thus, implementation management must prioritise coordination between institutions so that all elements involved can work synergistically and results-oriented (Mawaddah, 2025).

Effective policy implementation management requires strong leadership at both the central and regional levels. Visionary and communicative leadership can foster a climate of cooperation and collaboration between institutions. Leaders must also be able to identify coordination obstacles early on and take strategic steps to overcome these problems. This includes creating an organisational structure that supports cross-sector communication and eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles (Cahyanti, 2024).

The implementation of education policies at the regional level requires strong managerial skills, especially in bridging central policies with real local conditions. This vertical coordination must ensure that policies can be adapted to regional needs and potential without compromising the essence of the main policy. A decentralised approach supported by strong horizontal coordination between education agencies, schools, and the community will accelerate policy adaptation while increasing accountability for implementation (Wyss, 2023).

Horizontal coordination between institutions is also crucial to integrate various existing education services and programmes. For example, close partnerships must be established between formal education institutions and vocational training institutions, civil society organisations, and the private sector. This cross-sector synergy can strengthen resources and improve the overall quality of education services, which will ultimately support the success of education policies (Sarwanto et al., 2024).

In practice, various case studies in Indonesia and other countries show that successful coordination between institutions is often driven by innovative communication mechanisms. The use of information technology as a medium for coordination and monitoring of implementation is considered highly effective in improving transparency and accountability. With an integrated digital communication platform, various parties can share information in real time and make adjustments to policy implementation quickly (Ravanelli, 2020).

Continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are also an important pillar in policy implementation management. This process not only serves to measure the achievement of objectives, but also to identify coordination issues that arise during implementation. Systematic evaluation can be the basis for improving coordination

strategies and encouraging policy adjustments that are responsive to dynamics in the field (Darmansah, 2024). The involvement of all stakeholders in this process is a determining factor for success. One approach that is considered effective in improving coordination between institutions is the establishment of a multi-stakeholder forum that facilitates dialogue and collaboration between various elements of education providers. This forum can be a means to exchange information, resolve problems together, and harmonise policies and programmes. With a structured discussion space, communication and coordination can run more effectively and sustainably (R. Firmansyah, 2022).

In addition, strengthening institutional capacity in terms of management and coordination is an absolute necessity. Developing the administrative and technical capabilities of officials in education agencies and schools will enable the smooth implementation of policies. Training in project management, inter-institutional communication, and the use of information technology must be part of such capacity-building programmes (Ameliya, 2024). Organisational culture and individual attitudes also contribute to barriers to inter-institutional coordination. Sectoral attitudes, sectoral egos, and a lack of enthusiasm for cooperation often hinder the implementation of policies that require cross-institutional collaboration. Therefore, a change in organisational culture that emphasises the values of collaboration, inclusiveness, and results orientation is necessary for coordination to be more effective (Ameliya, 2024).

In the context of education decentralisation in Indonesia, coordination between institutions must also take into account local wisdom and the local socio-cultural context. Each region has unique characteristics that need to be accommodated in policy implementation. Policies that are too centralised without considering the local context risk being ineffective and causing resistance. Therefore, coordination must also prioritise the principles of adaptability and regional and community participation (Sudarman, 2021).

Finally, coordination between institutions and the management of education policy implementation must be prioritised in the national education reform agenda. Without strong synergy and effective management, well-designed policies will not be optimally implemented. Therefore, efforts to develop a responsive, transparent, and accountable coordination system must be the main focus so that education reform can have a broad and sustainable positive impact.

Conclusion

The main challenges in implementing new education policies in Indonesia lie in three critical aspects, namely teacher readiness, limited school infrastructure, and inter-institutional coordination. Teacher readiness, which includes pedagogical competence, mental preparedness, and access to relevant training, is a determining factor in the

success of policy transformation into effective learning practices. Without adequate support to improve teacher capacity, education policies tend to be difficult to adopt optimally in the field.

Limitations in school infrastructure are another significant obstacle that has a direct impact on the quality of the teaching and learning process. The infrastructure gap between urban and remote areas has led to inequalities in access to and quality of education. This situation calls for planned and sustained intervention so that every educational institution is able to provide adequate support facilities in accordance with policy standards. Synergy between human resource capacity building and infrastructure strengthening must be carried out simultaneously.

In addition, weak inter-institutional coordination often hinders the smooth implementation of education policies. The complexity of bureaucracy, unintegrated communication, and differences in interests between institutions are the main causes of the lack of synergy in policy implementation. Therefore, implementation management must prioritise strengthening coordination, communication, and supervision mechanisms so that policies can be adapted appropriately and sustainably. A holistic approach to these three obstacles is essential to support the success of national education reform.

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