



Curriculum Relevance to Employment in Indonesia

Bustan Bustan¹, Wahira Wahira²

¹ Universitas Negeri Makassar; Indonesia

² Universitas Negeri Makassar; Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Curriculum;
Employment;
Indonesia;

Article history:

Received 2024-08-14
Revised 2024-09-12
Accepted 2024-09-30

ABSTRACT

Quality, relevance and competence are three aspects of higher education that are interrelated and have a direct contribution to increasing the nation's competitiveness in the field of human resources. This study uses qualitative research methods. The increasingly fierce competition for job seekers from higher education graduates in Indonesia demands the attention of higher education providers to always make adjustments to the curriculum. Increasing the relevance of this education should be the target of continuous quality improvement as part of an overall higher education quality assurance system.

Corresponding Author:

Bustan, Bustan

Universitas Negeri Makassar; Indonesia e-mail: bustan@unm.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

The problem of unemployment is one of the most significant challenges in employment, along with the condition of the labor force and the nature of employment. Economically speaking, unemployment results from the labor market's incapacity to utilize the available labor force. There aren't enough jobs to accommodate the relatively restricted number of job seekers, which rises annually in tandem with population growth. In addition to causing economic issues, a high unemployment rate also contributes to a number of social issues, including social insecurity and poverty (Adesina, 2013).

Data on the employment situation is one of the main data that can describe the economic, social, and even welfare conditions of the population in a region and at a certain time or period of time. The issue of labor involves many aspects and is comprehensive in nature, and is a national issue that has policy implications. Data reported by BPS in February 2009 showed that the number of unemployed people among the educated up to February 2009 had reached 1,113,020 people. This means that there has been an almost twofold increase from the 2004 figure of 585,358 people (Muhson, Wahyuni, Supriyanto, & Mulyani, 2012).

The percentage of unemployed among the educated has also increased dramatically. Educated unemployment was recorded at 12.0 percent in February 2009, which is also double the percentage in 2004 which was only 5.7 percent (Maria & Sony, 2013). Ironically, the increase in educated unemployment occurred at a time when the overall number of unemployed people was declining, both in percentage and absolute terms. BPS shows that the percentage of unemployment continued to

<http://journal.umg.ac.id/index.php/didaktika>

decline from 9.86 percent of the labor force in 2004 to 8.14 percent of the labor force in 2009. Similarly, in absolute terms, the number of unemployed people fell from 10,251,351 people in 2004 to 9,258,964 million people in 2009 (Muhdar, 2015)., (Permana & Arianti, 2012).

According to Rhiza S. Sadjad, "Relevance is the most important component because it is a factor that determines the existence of the educational institution concerned". A higher education institution is said to be relevant to its existence if all or at least most of its graduates can be quickly absorbed by the workforce in accordance with their field and level, both at the local, national and international levels. Of course, the level of absorption by the workforce is highly dependent on the quality of graduates, which is built on the high integration of the elements of skills, knowledge and abilities of the graduates themselves. In many cases, the quality component of relevance is often interpreted inappropriately by measuring the level of public demand for certain types of education (Sadjad & IX, 2002).

Schultz's human capital theory emphasizes the importance of education in improving labor productivity. However, if the curriculum is not relevant to the needs of the working world, then investment in education will be wasted. The existing curriculum is considered too theoretical and lacks opportunities for students to develop practical skills. The curriculum is also often difficult to adapt to rapid changes in the world of work (Roseno & Wibowo, 2019)., (Irianto, 2017).

METHODS

This research is qualitative research with a participatory approach. Qualitative methods with a participatory approach are usually used to see phenomena in more depth about how things happen and develop in the social situation that will be faced when studying a phenomenon; David Williams defines research with qualitative methods as data collection in a natural setting using natural methods (Gerring, 2017).

The data for this study was collected through participatory observation, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). In addition, secondary data was collected through analyzing data from relevant research and documentation from various relevant journal sources. The interview process began by asking questions that could change according to the interview standards. Observation, which is conducted to obtain more complete data and reach the stage where the researcher understands the meaning of data presentation. At this stage, the data that has been reduced is presented in a narrative, graph, or so on, so that the reader can decide whether the conclusion is correct or needs to do more analysis (Sofaer, 1999).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Education Issues

Education issues are complex and interrelated. For example, the quantity and quality of teaching staff is still questionable. I think it is reasonable to question this, because the quality of our teaching staff still needs to be improved. At least according to the author's analysis, our nation today needs quality more than quantity. Why have a lot of teaching staff but low quality. Therefore, the government should be selective in recruiting teachers to become civil servants (Jacob, 2007).

Broadly speaking, according to the author, there are three fundamental problems in our education, namely; First, the problem of facilities and infrastructure. There are still many schools that lack adequate learning systems that make these schools lag behind. As one example, schools in the city are usually much more complete in terms of facilities and infrastructure compared to schools in the region, especially in remote places. In addition, there is a concentration of teachers in developed or urban areas so that the distribution of teachers is uneven in each region. These conditions further sharpen the gap

in education. This needs to be taken seriously by the government if our education is to be equitable and advanced in the future (Day, Sammons, & Stobart, 2007).

Second, the quality of education. Talking about the quality of education, we can point out that the low quality of teaching staff as evidenced by the results of the teacher competency test is below standard, especially in South Sulawesi and Indonesia in general. This is a challenge in itself in improving our education system. In addition, there is the impression that educational institutions that are tasked with managing education issues do not think about the fate of their graduates so that quality is neglected and quantity is prioritized. Ideally, quality should come first and quantity second. The low quality of teaching staff will systematically impact on the weak competitiveness of graduates. Third, the moral crisis or character education. Honesty seems like a "diamond" that is very expensive and can be easily traded (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2006).

Education Reconstruction

As described, that the condition of our education is still lagging behind, with low quality, and the moral crisis that hit becomes "homework" and shared responsibility starting from the family environment, society, government, nation and state. To achieve equitable and better educational goals in the future, the government should improve the facilities and infrastructure supporting the education system. Likewise, the quality of teachers needs to be improved because teachers are also one of the determining indicators of success in the education system.

Another thing to be aware of is the materialism and capitalism of education. The author once heard a story from my lecturer when he was still studying in graduate school and has now been published in his autobiography with the title; *Against Destiny*, that there were three elementary school students asked by their teacher about their parents' occupations. The first student answered, My father is a pilot and has crossed five continents, thus making his teacher salute. The second student answered, my father is a cruise ship captain and my father has sailed all the seas and oceans in the world and the teacher was amazed. The third student answered, my father is just a painter, then invited laughter and ridicule from his friends. Then the third student asked his teacher, have you ever heard of the Red Sea and the Black Sea, and the teacher said of course you have. Then the third student, said the two seas, it was my father who painted them. The story is a form of materialism-oriented education, where children tend to be proud of the material accessories owned by their parents. In today's world of education, it seems difficult to avoid the flow of materialism culture along with the fast-flowing modernization of life (Morley, 2003).

If you look at our education system that still leaves educational problems that are not in line with expectations. Indonesia as a developing country to compete in an open and technological era of globalization must reconstruct our education system to improve the quality of its people and improve the quality of education.

Curriculum Change

The curriculum is a set of plans and rules regarding the content of teaching materials and methods used as guidelines for teaching and learning activities in educational institutions, especially in schools. The curriculum as a tool to achieve educational goals is expected to be able to offer programs that have a significant impact on the development of the quality of education. The success or failure of an education and whether or not students and educators are able to absorb and provide teaching is very influential on the curriculum applied in a country.

The education curriculum in Indonesia is often changed every time the Minister of Education changes, so it is possible that it will affect the quality and direction of education because the methodology should be improved, not the curriculum. In addition, the curriculum changes carried out by the government so far are still considered ineffective because until now it has not been able to meet

the expected quality standards. Since our independence, we have used different curricula several times, starting in 1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, 2013 and the Merdeka curriculum. The changes in the curriculum, according to the government, follow changes in the political, economic, socio-cultural systems, the development of science and technology and competition in the era of globalization which requires improvement so as not to be left behind by other countries (Batubara & Davala, 2023).

In the author's opinion, one of the main obstacles faced in improving the quality of education in Indonesia is not the curriculum, but the availability of educational facilities and infrastructure that are still minimal and uneven in every school. There are still many schools that are not equipped with adequate learning systems that make these schools lag behind. In comparison, schools in the city are usually much better equipped with facilities and infrastructure than schools in the region, especially in remote places. In addition, there is a concentration of teachers in developed or urban areas so that the distribution of teachers is uneven in each region. These conditions further sharpen the gap in education (Abidin et al., 2023), (Amanda, Mirza, & Qamariah, 2023)

When looking at the previous curriculum changes made by the government, it turns out that it has not been able to raise the quality of education in Indonesia. This is possible because the curriculum changes made by the government seem hasty and not accompanied by careful planning. In addition, the issue of curriculum change is often infiltrated by political elements in it. Whereas if the curriculum is designed in a structured, systematic and comprehensive manner with all the needs of the development and learning of our students, then of course the output of education will be able to realize better expectations. But if not, it is possible that failure after failure will continue in our education system.

CONCLUSION

The condition of our education which can be said to be still lagging behind, with low quality, uneven and inadequate learning systems and moral crises that hit students such as brawls, sexual behavior becomes "homework" and shared responsibility starting from the family environment, society, government, nation and state. To achieve equitable and better educational goals in the future, the government should improve the facilities and infrastructure supporting the education system. Likewise, the quality of teachers needs to be improved because teachers are also one of the determining indicators of success in the education system.

In closing, if you look at our education system, starting from the existence of Taman Siswa until now there have been many changes, starting from the teaching system, facilities and infrastructure as well as the curriculum. However, with these changes, there are still educational problems that are not in line with expectations. Hopefully, the education curriculum that will be implemented in schools will be able to answer the challenges of the times and problems in the world of education.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

The author would like to thank all those who contributed to this research. this paper was published with the efforts of the author and the support of friends in the graduate program of educational science class.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest between the author and stakeholders in the design of the education curriculum.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, D., Retnaningrum, E., Parinussa, J. D., Kuning, D. S., Manoppo, Y., & Kartika, I. M. (2023). Curriculum development in Indonesia from a historical perspective. *Journal of Education Research*, 4(2), 443–451.
- Adesina, O. S. (2013). Unemployment and security challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(7), 146–156.
- Amanda, M. T., Mirza, A. A., & Qamariah, Z. (2023). A History Of Merdeka Curriculum For English Education In Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Nasional (JIPNAS)*, 1(2), 59–67.
- Batubara, N. F., & Davala, M. (2023). Curriculum development in Indonesia: Historical study. *International Journal of Students Education*, 2(1), 29–34.
- Day, C., Sammons, P., & Stobart, G. (2007). *Teachers matter: Connecting work, lives and effectiveness*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Gerring, J. (2017). Qualitative methods. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20(1), 15–36.
- Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2006). Teacher quality. *Handbook of the Economics of Education*, 2, 1051–1078.
- Irianto, H. A. (2017). *Pendidikan sebagai investasi dalam pembangunan suatu bangsa*. Kencana.
- Jacob, B. A. (2007). The challenges of staffing urban schools with effective teachers. *The Future of Children*, 129–153.
- Maria, M., & Sony, S. (2013). TRANSFORMASI PEMBELAJARAN BERBASIS AN ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING DALAM MENINGKATKAN JIWA WIRAUSAHA MAHASISWA UNTUK MENGATASI PENGANGGURAN INTELEKTUAL. *Asian Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (AJIE)*, 2(01), 42–50.
- Morley, L. (2003). *Quality and power in higher education*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Muhdar, H. M. (2015). Potret Ketenagakerjaan, Pengangguran, Dankemiskinan di Indonesia: Masalah Dan Solusi. *Al-Buhuts*, 11(1), 42–66.
- Muhson, A., Wahyuni, D., Supriyanto, S., & Mulyani, E. (2012). Analisis relevansi lulusan perguruan tinggi dengan dunia kerja. *Jurnal Economia*, 8(1), 42–52.
- Permana, A. Y., & Arianti, F. (2012). *Analisis Pengaruh PDRB, Pengangguran, Pendidikan, dan Kesehatan Terhadap Kemiskinan di Jawa Tengah Tahun 2004-2009*. Fakultas Ekonomika dan Bisnis.
- Roseno, I., & Wibowo, U. B. (2019). Efisiensi eksternal pendidikan kejuruan di Kota Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Akuntabilitas Manajemen Pendidikan*, 7(1), 15–24.
- Sadjad, R. S., & IX, Y. B. K. K. W. (2002). Paradigma Baru Pendidikan Tinggi Untuk Menciptakan Sumber Daya Manusia Unggulan. *Makassar: Pustaka Kayutangan*.
- Sofaer, S. (1999). Qualitative methods: what are they and why use them? *Health Services Research*, 34(5 Pt 2), 1101.