Managing Children Participation In Elementary Education In South Manokwari

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Abstract: As a developing country, Indonesia faces many challenges in improving education participation especially in less-developed areas. This research analyzes children participation in elementary education in South Manokwari, West Papua, a regency with low rates of children accessing school. The research was conducted using mixed methods of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The results suggest that an effective management to improve school participation should involve public, family, school's member, and children. These stakeholders should work together to improve school participation in elementary education which is essential for human development in the area.

Index Terms: educational management, elementary education, school participation, parent participation, public participation, Papua indigenous people, less-developed area education.

1 INTRODUCTION

Minimum participation of children attending elementary school is a basic educational issue in many Papua island [1],[2], including South Manokwari, West Papua, Indonesia. Attending elementary school is essential because it leads to further steps in pursuing education levels. To solve this issue, participation of all education stakeholders is required. Achieving better education has been considered national and even international issues. There are many governmental policies aimed to solve vertically and horizontally education issues, such as the Laws, Governmental Regulation of Ministry of National Education, and the Laws of Decentralization on education including procurement of special autonomy fund, school operational aid, and quality management systems. However, those policies have not optimally been applied to solve participation of children in the elementary school, mainly in South Manokwari, West Papua [3]. Initial findings from field observation reveal some reasons behind low level of participation in South Manokwari, West Papua. Budget management has not effectively determined priority policy in education. This lead to shortage of education budget. Furthermore, cultural issue also play a significant role. With high illiteracy level of citizens of South Manokwari, West Papua, attending elementary school hasn't been priority among families thus resulted in minimum participation. Economic issue also has role in minimum participation of elementary school. Many families need their children to help working to meet daily needs which in the end decrease participation in attending elementary schools [4]. This research aims to analyze participation as one of educational issues and formulate managerial approach to improve participation in South Manokwari, West Papua. It tries to formulate an effective, efficient, and accountable management system to improve public participation in education especially in elementary school. The structure of this paper can be explained as follow.

This section introduce research background and problems. Section two review previous works relevant to the topic. Section three explains research methods. Section four described results and discuss it. And section five conclude the study.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Public Participation in the Education Policy

Public participation in the education policy implies that public actively involves in any planning of education policy, including taking part in decision-making on the education policy [5], [6]. In short, public’s participation in the education is active role of public in planning, execution, output utilization, and program evaluation in the education. This implementation can be individually or in group, spontaneous or organized, sustainable or temporary. Canter and Knox [7] add that participation was feed-forward information and feedback information. It means that public’s participation is a continuous two-ways communication or dialogue. This happened between government, a policy-holder, and public, a party directly experiencing the impact of certain policy [8, p. 11]. From those arguments, public not only can give positive response, in the form of support or providing any input or suggestion, on any program or policy taken by government, but can resist also any policy implemented. The education policy taken to solve any issues dealt with public, achieve solutions of various issues in its implementation requires public’s support and participation. Public’s participation in the education comprises of role of individual, group, family, professional organization, businessman, and societal organization in any commencement and controlling quality of education service. Furthermore, public can act as source, executor, and consumer as in the Governmental Regulation No. 39 of 1992, Chapter III Article 4. Public’s participation are highly definitive that should be followed by physical substance and qualified ideas of any individual in public. A firm decision of public’s participation was directly noted in the Decree of Minister of National Education Number 044/U/2002 on the Board of Education and School Committee [9, p. 86]. The Board of Education and School Committee take part as advisory agency, in determining and implementing the education policy; supporting agency, either finances, ideas, or endeavors in the establishment of education; controlling agency, in terms of transparency and accountability of the establishment and output of education; mediator, a connector between executive and legislative with public.

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2.2 Improving Public Participation in the Education

Rusdiana and Heryati [8, p. 126] suggest some methods to improve parents and public participation in education. First, parents and public should be involved proportionally and professionally in planning, implementation, and evaluation of school program. Second, intensive communication should be maintained. Third, parents should be invited to join school committee. Fourth, regular meeting with parents and public should be held regularly. Fifth, news related to all school activities should be informed periodically. Sixth, parents should be involved in activities to develop students’ creativity and achievement. Seventh, home visit to discuss and solve any issues and develop students’ personality. Eight, activating a division of duty and responsibility of the school and parents in the development of students’ personality. Mulyasa [10, p. 150] provides another insights to improve public participation in education. School should offers reward to those who actively participate in activities. Presenting short and long-term benefits of participation can also be considered. Furthermore, using public figure with strong influence to involve actively in any school’s activities. Other method can by providing awareness to public related to participation in many school’s activities in order to realize their aspiration.

2.3 Participation of School Members

School members are any individual existing in school and surroundings related directly or indirectly to school’s management and having social awareness and influence to school [11, p. 269]. Department of National Education stated that education participation is as process of school’s members and public actively involved in either individually or collectively, directly or indirectly, in any decision-making, policy-making, planning, implementation, supervisory, or evaluating education in school. Thus, participation, consequently, is significant terms in quality development. Participation requires similar comprehension of school’s purpose by school and parents. In short, participation is comprehended by school as important part in achieving school’s success in the quality development. Achieving quality becomes harder, if there is a gap of understanding over inter-subjective (student, parents, teacher) on the basic concept of quality. On the other word, public’s participation in the quality development can be succeeded, if there is the same comprehension of inter-subjective in creating qualified students [12, p. 193]. The evaluation of school’s program implementation to know effectiveness and efficiency of education, curriculum, and assessment of school’s performance are an integral part comprehensively. Additionally, the assessment of education’s input, process, output, and outcome and school’s management, at specific time, are conducted as part of school’s accreditation [11, p. 173]. According to above review, it can be argued that school’s members act directly or indirectly in any decision-making, planning, supervisory, or evaluation of education in school. Teacher’s performance in caring children was shown in the mental and academic health [13]. Involvement pattern of parents became a reflection for teacher in teaching children during their education process [14]. Any involvement of parents in their children’s education in the school provided positive effect in children’s learning achievement. In any education level, children play greatly as actor/subject in developing self-learning methods. They are not only as passive student, but also actors in planning, implementing, and achieving output based on their creativity and participation in learning activity.

2.4 Family and Parents Participation

Parke and Buriel [15] postulated theory of family system considering family as whole, either its structure or organizational pattern, and the way of family’s members interacted with other members, within individual perspective [16, p. 78]. Family, then, is two or more people related to birth, marriage, adoption to live together with. Family, in general sense, functions as socialization or education sphere. It means that family assures values, faith, attitude, knowledge, skills, and technic for public transformed to the younger. In addition, the assignment of social role as family’s function implies that family provides descendant’s identity (race, ethnic, religion, socio-economy, and gender role), comprising attitude and responsibility. Family’s environment and parents’ treatment to their children were one of parental participation’s ways or forms in the education which could improve children’s intellectual [17], [18]. Thus, parents’ involvement was one of consistent factors in improving and refining children’s learning performance [19]. In addition, parents’ involvement also gave positive impact in children’s academic development [20].

2.5 Children’s Participation in the Education

Studying, basically, is interaction process of students and their environment. Active role and participation, consequently, of students are highly required to achieve learning outcome optimally. This involvement is highly significant then in determining learning success since students’ participation in learning is students’ role in achieving satisfying result of student’s learning. Armbruster et al. [21] emphasize participation of children need encouragement and efforts to enable them to express views on issues that affect their lives. In this participation, children require support and effort to enable them in stating their view on any issues affecting children’s life. In practice, participation means that the adult understands what their children wants through varied communication, assures children in self-expressing, and considers their views dealing with decision-making related to their life. Furthermore, this kind of participation is significantly important to create active, creative, and entertained learning atmosphere. The learning’s objectives previously well-planned, thus, can be maximally achieved. It is nonsense if there is no participation and active role of student in each learning process. When students actively study, the difference among them is only the level of activeness, for example the low, middle, and high level of activeness. Hence, necessarily, an active teacher is required in teaching student to take active role and participation in learning activity.

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This research mix methods of research i.e. qualitative and quantitative so that the data obtained in research is more comprehensive, valid, reliable, and objective. The strategy includes qualitative interviews to get adequate explanations, then followed by quantitative survey methods with a number of samples to obtain general results from a population [22, p.23]. This study uses a phased mixed technique that is by combining the data found from the qualitative collection and then refined it with data obtained by quantitative means. Sequential mixed methods, in the first stage, conducted interviews and then analyzed qualitative data in the form of descriptive details, namely knowing the management of
increasing children’s participation in participating in basic education in South Manokwari, West Papua. The second is the dissemination of scale or research instruments and analysis of quantitative data in the form of numbers to determine management of education, community participation, school participation, parent and family participation, and children’s participation. The subjects in this study were the Papuan indigenous people who had school-age children or who were taking basic education i.e. elementary school. The selection of subjects is based on the presence of inequality in educational outcomes between Papuan indigenous and non-indigenous people. In addition, there are also inequalities between urban and rural areas. Rural areas have low educational outcomes compared to urban areas.

4 Results and Discussion
Based on the result of interview done with parents, children, teacher, and principle, it was shown that the students’ level of participation considered low. In addition, the lower level of parents’ and students’ participation became an obstruction of children to go to school. According to data analyzing above, it is viewed that the contribution of children’s participation was 5.8% (low). It was the lowest contribution of four aspects of children’s participation management. Subsequently, the contribution of school’s members in encouraging children going to school was 9.10%. Specifically, both aspects, if compared with other aspects, had lower value. There were some causes affecting, which were the inability of family to send their children to school because of economic factor, encouraging children to assist their family instead of going to school, and choosing to help parents in either field or jungle. Additionally, the participation of school’s members was minor as well, obtained from interview with the principle. It was mentioned that parents always asked permission so that their children could help family and work temporarily. If it was refused, the principle was feared if the parents would be reactive and vandalistic. Accordingly, the school, represented by the principle would prefer acceptance and granting their demand. It was kind of dilemma faced by the school’s members and they did not do anything. Based on the result of analysis, it was obtained that the management of students’ participation in Province of West Papua viewed from all aspects was in good circumstance. Those aspects comprised of public’s participation, participation of school’s members, parents’ and children’s participation, which showed 50.67%. It, hence, states that the participation of parents, school’s members, parents, and children in encouraging students was considered good. However, the value did not guarantee that children’s participation in the Province of West Java was better, because 49.33% of children stated that the management of children’s participation did not run well. Therefore, it concludes that the management of children’s participation in the Province of West Papua still requires improvement, so that the children can go to school and get their right to obtain suitable education. According to data obtained from the result of quantitative analysis and combined with interview with reliable sources that some factors determining children’s participation were four aspects in the management of children’s participation consisting of, first, the aspect of public’s participation explaining the necessity of public’s participation and becoming a determining factor in the development of children’s participation going to school. Then, public’s participation aimed was in case of giving inputs in operating/running the school, providing fund and service assistance to support children’s learning activity. In addition, public could take part in assisting teacher to look for students inside and outside the school. Second, participation of school’s members (teacher, staffs, principal, and students) was another factor encouraging children’s participation. They had a tremendous role since children spent most of their time and activity inside the school’s yard and dormitory. Subsequently, teacher as the front-liner of science and values transferring had multiple role in shaping children’ personality. The principle, meanwhile, as leader became role model and public figure of all school’s members and demanded to be wise and fair. Lastly, students were demanded for their cooperation in managing school, because the learning activity would not be held if they were absent. Third, parents’ and family’s participation could act actively in directing and guiding their children to stay studying in the school. If they were busy for the sake of searching of living, other family’s members could replace their role to support their children to study. Significantly, their role, parents and family, was highly vital for children. It made them for being main concern and exist within family. Fourth, Children’s participation meant that inner support of each child was important. If they had inner awareness and belief for going to school, it would drag them to go to school. A child who had strong determination and intention added with parents’ support would move him or her to school. This firm inner voice would direct children for their brighter future.

5 Conclusion
Based on previous results and discussion it can be concluded that the level of participation of children in school is still considered low. The low participation of children in school is the basis for children being stunted to go to school. Based on the results of the statistics conducted, it was obtained information that the contribution of children’s participation was still low at 5.8%. The statistical results explained that 36.00% stated that the management of increasing child participation did not go well due to the low participation of children. Furthermore, factors that influence children’s participation in school, which consist of four, namely aspects of community participation, secondly, school participation, third, parent and family participation, and fourth, children’s participation. Based on observations, interviews and processing results are statistically explained that in South Manokwari, West Papua has not implemented the management of children’s participation in basic and well-structured education. The participation of children in participating in basic education which is realized is limited to the knowledge of children going to school, following the teaching and learning process without realizing the management aspects of children’s participation in the proper education. Management of increasing children’s participation in effective schooling is carried out in South Manokwari Regency, West Papua Province as follows: a. Conducting the Preparation of School Development Plans and Preparation of School Annual Work Plans; b. Implement Student Management; c. Implement curriculum management; d. Management of educators and education staff; e. Facilities and infrastructure management; f. Financial and financing management; g. Management of community participation; h. Supervision and Evaluation Management; and i. School leadership management.
REFERENCES


