

## Strategy For Institutional Capacity Building of Quality Education Program in the Indramayu Regency Government

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### Abstract

This study was motivated by the concerning phenomenon in Indramayu Regency, where the Human Development Index (HDI) ranks third from the bottom among districts in West Java Province. The average years of schooling (RLS) is only 63.4%, and the HDI remains low at 73.63, placing it as one of the three lowest in the province. Furthermore, the School Participation Rate (APS) for ages 12–17, specifically for junior high school levels, is inadequate. Despite having adequate resources to support education, the effectiveness of education quality improvement programs remains limited. There is an urgent need for the Indramayu Regency Education Office to adopt a robust institutional capacity development strategy. The study's findings indicate that institutional capacity development for improving education quality in Indramayu Regency has yet to be effective. Of the eight strategic dimensions analyzed, leadership, financial, and networking strategies were identified as suboptimal. Among the driving factors, shared commitment requires more stringent evaluation, and legal regulations are still limited to procedural standards (SOPs). The inhibiting factors include (1) inconsistent regulations that hinder the process and implementation of capacity building, and (2) budget constraints that limit the capacity-building efforts of regional work units (SKPD) in realizing established programs and activities. To enhance the effectiveness of these efforts, a SWOT analysis is needed to refine the institutional capacity development strategy, particularly in financial management, leadership, and partnership strategies among departments. Strengthening synergy among regional government organizations (OPD) is essential to support the Indramayu Regency Government's commitment to improving education quality.

**Keywords:** Capacity Development, Education Quality, Education Office.

### INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main indicators in development and the quality of human resources, so the quality of human resources is highly dependent on the quality of education. The progress of a nation can be marked and measured by the progress of its education system. When the education in a nation advances, it can be concluded that the quality of the nation is also advancing because the progress of a nation is

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directly proportional to the quality of education. Several developed countries in the world owe their nation's advancement largely to progress made in their education sector (Suti, 2011).

The quality of education in Indonesia to date is still far from satisfactory, especially when compared to neighboring countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, and other countries in Southeast Asia (Chaudhary et al., 2020). According to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) report, Indonesia ranks 69<sup>th</sup> out of 76 countries. In the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) survey, Indonesia consistently ranks at the bottom. Similarly, in the WEF (World Economic Forum) report, Indonesia ranks 69<sup>th</sup>, or the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest. The results of the TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) 2018 indicate that Indonesian students ranked 45<sup>th</sup> out of 48 countries in science and 45<sup>th</sup> out of 50 countries in mathematics (Ho & Lee, 2016).

The Education Office of Indramayu Regency has the responsibility and function of achieving the success of education development according to the vision and mission set by the Indramayu Regency Government. One of its missions is to improve the quality of education in Indramayu, as the Education Office of the Regency becomes the leading sector driving the education issues in Indramayu. The issue of education quality is not only a key issue in Indramayu but has become a national problem. Despite being a priority program in the Education Office's annual work plan for nearly 10 years, the program to improve education quality has not shown significant and optimal results.

According to Winaputra (2016), the low quality of education does not stem from education itself, but rather from the surrounding environment. This means that various factors influence each other, involving teachers, school administrators, the community, students, and especially the government as policymakers. Based on this opinion, it is clear that the issue of education quality is not solely the responsibility of one department or institution within the local government. Instead, local governments, particularly the Education Office, need to take effective and innovative steps in planning programs, realizing them, and evaluating the challenges faced in successfully implementing education quality programs in Indramayu. This research aims to analyze the strategy for developing the institutional capacity of the education quality program in Indramayu Regency.

## **METHOD**

The object of this study is the Education Office of Indramayu Regency, as the leading sector in the education quality improvement program in the Regency. The selection of Indramayu as the research object is due to its low Human Development Index (HDI), which ranks third lowest in West Java. Additionally, the dropout rate in Indramayu is relatively high, even though supporting education components, such as the teacher-to-student ratio and education facilities, are relatively

adequate. Moreover, the accessibility to central government services is not far from the region.

The approach used in this study is qualitative (Arikunto, 2004). Data collection techniques were conducted through three methods: participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document study, in line with social study traditions (Creswell, 1994). Data analysis began with formulating and explaining the problem before going into the field and continued until the research results were written. According to Sutopo (2009), in qualitative research, there are three main components in the data analysis process: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) conclusion drawing or verification. These three stages in the analysis process are interconnected and complement each other. The analysis will be carried out continuously from the beginning of the research until the end.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Educational issues must be viewed from several aspects, including Educator (Teacher), Facilities and Infrastructure, the effectiveness of supervisory officers, and the unequal accessibility of education in Indramayu Regency. In this case, once the Education Office can identify the basic educational problems, the next step is to determine a plan and strategy to address these issues. A strategy is a series of follow-up actions, as stated by Winardi (2003), where strategy is a plan or a set of directions within an organization that serves as a guideline or a group of guidelines to face a particular situation. This will then be elaborated into strategic issues as outlined below.

From the identification of various educational problems, a number of strategic issues in education were identified by the Education Office of Indramayu Regency for the years 2016-2021. The identified strategic issues are as follows:

1. The lack of awareness and community participation regarding the importance of education, as seen from the low average years of schooling (RLS) of the people of Indramayu, which was 5.54 in 2016 and 5.97 in 2017 based on the new HDI calculation;
2. The presence of children dropping out of school at the SD/MI level by 0.11%, and at the SMP/MTs level;
3. There are still classrooms, libraries, and furniture, especially at the elementary school level, in severely damaged conditions, as well as a lack of minimal infrastructure at the kindergarten level and new classrooms for SD and SMP;
4. The low quality of educators, as evidenced by the average score of the teacher competency test (UKG) for both SD and SMP levels, which is 55.81;
5. The low quality of non-formal and informal education;
6. The suboptimal improvement in the quality and relevance of learning, which should focus on character building;
7. The suboptimal role of the Education Council and School Committees in efforts to improve the quality of education;

8. The lack of coordination and synchronization between departments and between the Indramayu Education Office and UPTD Education in implementing education policies and programs;
9. The lack of realization of regulations in education, such as the enactment of regional regulations concerning education facilities and infrastructure;
10. The ineffective development and implementation of local curriculum, especially for anti-corruption education and cultural preservation;
11. The ineffective implementation of the program to harmonize Diniyah and Salafiyah pesantren education with general education;
12. The low literacy levels and interest in reading among the population, both in school age and those who have completed their education;
13. The ineffective implementation of the 9-year basic education quality improvement program;
14. The ineffective implementation of the 2013 curriculum across various education levels and pathways;
15. The limited number of educators in special education and special services (for all education levels) in Indramayu;
16. The lack of optimal data collection on all Children with Special Needs (ABK) of school age in Indramayu, who should have access to appropriate educational services.

Based on the analysis, several strategic challenges must be addressed to improve the education system in Indramayu Regency. These challenges can be grouped into four main areas: access and equity, quality, relevance, and efficiency of education.

The first challenge lies in increasing access to and ensuring equity in education. This involves expanding school capacity by adding new classrooms and rehabilitating existing buildings that are in various states of disrepair. Efforts should also be made to provide social assistance to economically disadvantaged students, ensuring that they have the opportunity to attend school. Additionally, there is a need for the establishment of new schools in densely populated areas to ensure a more equitable distribution of educational facilities across the region.

Improving the quality of education is another critical area of focus. To enhance the quality, it is necessary to focus on improving the competence of educators through continuous professional development. Teachers need training in new teaching strategies, methods, and evaluation techniques that will contribute to the long-term improvement of student outcomes. Schools also need to be equipped with adequate learning resources and infrastructure to facilitate effective teaching and learning processes. Moreover, the performance of school supervisors, principals, and educational administrators needs to be strengthened through coordinated and well-structured policies that promote professional growth. Additionally, as the number of schools

increases, it is essential to expand the number of school supervisors to ensure that all schools receive proper guidance and oversight.

The relevance of education is another challenge that needs to be addressed. There is a need to create more opportunities for high-achieving students to showcase their talents and potential. Furthermore, the methods used to teach students need to be continuously developed and refined to ensure that they are preparing students for the demands of the modern world. Both extracurricular and intramural activities should be expanded to foster a well-rounded education for students. Additionally, closer collaboration with businesses and industries should be pursued to provide students with real-world learning opportunities, which will better prepare them for the workforce and ensure that their education aligns with industry needs.

Lastly, improving the efficiency of education requires a holistic approach to better utilize available resources. One of the key steps is to improve the managerial skills of school principals so that they can more effectively oversee educational services, ensuring that all schools benefit from strong and consistent leadership. Optimizing the roles of school principal working groups, teacher associations, and supervisory bodies will also contribute to improving teaching and learning processes. In addition, fostering a learning culture within schools by developing them as learning organizations will help address the challenges posed by local social and cultural issues. Maximizing the use of information technology and skilled human resources in the field of IT will further enhance the educational process. Strengthening the roles of School Committees and School Boards is also crucial to improving the organizational effectiveness of schools. Finally, establishing clear performance standards for individuals and institutions will ensure that goals are met and progress is continuously evaluated.

By addressing these challenges and implementing targeted strategies, Indramayu Regency can make significant strides in improving the quality, accessibility, and efficiency of its education system, ultimately benefiting students and the wider community.

Indicators of quality and quality of education can be seen from accreditation. Several indicators of quality of education according to Sihombing and Indardjo, (2003:7) that the quality of education includes: (1) educational products produced in the form of a percentage of students who successfully graduate and these graduates can be absorbed by available jobs or open their own jobs, either by imitating existing ones or creating new ones; (2) the education process, concerning appropriate class management in relatively small class conditions, the use of appropriate teaching methods and a conducive community environment; and (3) the existence of control over existing educational resources.

Indramayu Regency is one of the regencies in West Java which is considered to be still considered low in terms of Human Development Index (HDI) compared to other regencies in West Java, this should be a major concern that is quite serious because it must be resolved and

encouraged with various policies that are not normatively sufficient but require creative and innovative efforts and breakthroughs from the leadership, both from the regional head in this case the executive and from the Legislative institution or the Regional People's Representative Council of Indramayu Regency.

In managing and leading the Department of Education in Indramayu, several internal and external factors must be carefully considered to ensure effective governance and decision-making. Internally, one of the key factors is the culture of competition and individual achievement among team members. This culture can drive performance but may also lead to conflicts or a lack of collaboration if not managed properly. Communication and individual capabilities are often overlooked in educational settings, yet they are essential in fostering a productive environment for research and development. Additionally, there is a noticeable disparity in authority among the staff members of the Department of Education. These differences can lead to confusion and inefficiency in carrying out tasks and responsibilities. Another internal factor is the prevailing belief that intellectual ability alone can resolve all the challenges faced, which may not always be the case when managing complex educational issues.

Externally, the Department must also navigate several factors that impact its operations. Technological advancements, both on a national and global scale, especially in information technology and services, have a significant influence on the educational sector. Global economic globalization and competition require the education system to adapt, ensuring students are prepared for a dynamic workforce. Environmental issues, such as climate change, also have an indirect effect on education, particularly in terms of curriculum changes and the sustainability of educational infrastructure. National regulations, laws, and government policies are also critical as they shape the direction and priorities of the education sector. Lastly, demographic shifts and changing societal values influence both the needs of students and the approach to education, requiring the Department to stay attuned to these evolving trends.

Achieving success and high performance in a technology-driven organization like the Department of Education requires several key factors. Strong and visionary leadership is crucial to inspire and guide the team. Effective management practices, with a focus on responsibility and accountability, are essential for ensuring that resources are used efficiently. The organization and operational structure should remain simple and clear to avoid unnecessary complexity, which could hinder progress. Efficient staffing practices, where roles are well-defined and aligned with the organization's goals, are also vital. Assigning challenging and meaningful tasks to staff can enhance motivation and commitment to the organization's objectives. Objective planning and control mechanisms help ensure that progress is monitored and goals are met. Lastly, providing specialized managerial training for staff members can further develop their skills and enable

them to manage educational initiatives more effectively.

By addressing these internal and external factors and adopting these best practices, the Department of Education in Indramayu can enhance its performance and effectiveness, ensuring that it is better equipped to face the challenges and opportunities in the education sector.

The orientation of the organizational development of the Education Office must align with the goals of the regional government programs, particularly the program for improving the quality of education, which in its implementation is closely linked to the success of the program in an effective and efficient manner. However, it must also be consistent with the metrics and objectives of organizational policies that can be understood by the individuals responsible for achieving policy objectives. The clarity of the metrics and goals of organizational policies related to the quality education program in Indramayu District requires the presence of eight strategic dimensions, which are: (1) Strategic leadership, (2) Organizational structure, (3) Human resources, (4) Financial management, (5) Infrastructure management, (6) Program and services management programs/projects, (7) Process management, and (8) Inter-organizational networks and linkages, as indicators of the success of the quality education program. This ensures that when socializing the program, it is appropriate for the implementers. Therefore, a holistic organizational development approach is required for the Education Office in Indramayu District so that each implementer can execute the quality education program in accordance with the applicable rules.

In the context of Strategic Leadership, there are several sub-parameters, including leadership itself, strategic planning, and management based on local wisdom. Leadership today is inherently a characteristic that resides within a leader, comprising attributes such as personality, ability, and capacity. Leadership is also a series of activities (activities) that cannot be separated from the position and style or behavior of the leader. Leadership is a process of interaction between the leader, followers, and the situation.

Leadership is a highly influential factor, with transformational, consultative, participative, decisive, and clear leadership being essential. Leadership, strategic planning, and management based on local wisdom are vital. In the context of current technological developments, leadership clearly plays a significant role in the success of programs, including quality education programs.

In terms of Organizational Structure, Robbins (1990) defines organizational structure as the process of how tasks are allocated, who reports to whom, and the formal coordination mechanisms and patterns of interaction involved. Sub-parameters of organizational structure include governance structure and operational structure. Based on findings from observations and interviews, the governance structure of the Education Office, as outlined in the strategic plan document, indicates that the general duties of the Education Office are

to provide services in the field of education. In the Education Office, the term “Induk” (main) is used, while outside the Education Office, the term “Non Induk” (non-main) is used.

In addition to these factors, government policies on the quality of education for educators, which are aligned with the central government through the GTK information system, including the synchronization of student data through Dapodik, positively impact service structures. However, at the level of discipline for both educators and students, it is challenging and hindered. Finding a safe point by allowing the situation to continue is one possible response, meaning discipline for students and educators is difficult.

Regarding Human Resources, the strategy for HR development includes several sub-parameters: HR planning, HR placement, HR development, evaluation and assessment, and maintaining effective HR relations.

In terms of Financial Management, sub-parameters include financial planning, financial accountability, and financial reporting systems. In financial planning, according to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), it should follow the mechanisms in place.

The expectation in financial management for the improvement of education quality seems to focus on infrastructure, while financial planning for prioritizing education quality is still lacking. Furthermore, training is often seen as a formality and does not lead to effective implementation. However, a comprehensive system that integrates all programs is needed. SIMDA (Regional Information System) should include programs for quality improvement, supported by education stakeholders who can help monitor and ensure the success of these programs. It is also necessary for all policymakers to actively participate in priority programs.

Thus, the budget should reflect the financial capacity of an organization. Hariss, R.,A., (2016) states that the budget is a supporting factor in the development of institutional capacity, alongside leadership, conducive work environments, competent human resources, and good coordination. According to Lusthaus, financial management includes planning, implementation, and monitoring financial resources within an organization.

Good financial management, particularly in budgeting, financial record-keeping, and reporting, is crucial for the overall functioning of the organization. As Berry et al. mentioned, "Good management of budgeting, financial record keeping, and reporting is essential to the overall functioning of the organization" (Lusthaus, 2002). This helps leaders make informed decisions by considering the organization's financial condition.

A healthy financial management system is a vital resource for the organization's sustainability in achieving its mission and objectives. An organization must predict operational expenses, determine the capital expenditure required, and forecast the timing and amount for carrying out its activities. Lusthaus emphasizes that, "Financial planning is the

organization's ability to forecast its future monetary needs and requirements" (Lusthaus, 2002).

This assumption is based on the idea that any organizational development with a planned program cannot be implemented effectively without comprehensive organizational capacity. Operationally, it often requires involvement from other organizations or agencies to accelerate the achievement of program goals. Particularly when the government's products directly impact public interests, such as quality education programs, support and assistance from various parties are crucial. Therefore, it can be concluded that organizational development carried out by the Education Office in Indramayu needs to be enhanced so that it can effectively address public interests, such as the quality education program, which still requires holistic organizational development policies.

Financial resources are one of the key elements in strengthening the governance of research and development (litbang). In public organizations, financial capacity is often manifested in the form of available budgets. The budget can be defined as financial planning and a list of all planned expenditures and income.

Regarding Program and Services Management (programs/projects), this study includes sub-parameters such as program planning, program implementation, and program monitoring and evaluation. In this case, the program refers to the improvement of the quality of education in Indramayu District, supporting the vision and mission of the Education Office.

A program can be defined generally as a series of activities that are carried out continuously, not just once. Specifically, a program refers to a set of activities that are the realization or implementation of a policy, which takes place in a continuous process and involves a group of people within an organization.

For Process Management, sub-parameters include problem-solving, decision-making, planning, communication, and monitoring and evaluation. Problem-solving involves finding solutions to difficulties and overcoming obstacles to achieve a goal that may not be immediately understandable.

Decision-making refers to the mental process of selecting a course of action among several available alternatives. Decision-making is influenced by various factors, including organizational environment, knowledge, competence, and motivation. It is both an art and a science of choosing alternative solutions or actions to resolve problems.

Planning is essential because it is related to coordinating activities to achieve a specific goal within a certain period. It involves testing different directions for achievement, analyzing uncertainties, assessing capacity, setting objectives, and determining steps to achieve them.

Communication is an unavoidable aspect of human interaction. As social beings, humans are destined to live in society and interact with others through communication. Studying communication means

improving communication skills (writing, speaking, etc.). It also involves analyzing communication events as social occurrences. Communication can thus be defined as the process of transferring messages from the communicator to the recipient through a channel to influence behavior.

At the Education Office, internal communication is divided into two: internal communication and communication coordination, both formal and informal, among staff within the Education Office in Indramayu District, as observed in the research data.

In organizational evaluation, the general concept of evaluation as a process includes: (1) gathering information, (2) using standards or criteria for evaluation, and (3) drawing conclusions, making decisions that are useful and applicable to all situations faced by organizational leaders. These three elements are integral to all evaluations. Evaluation helps to identify gaps between "expectations and reality." What is crucial in any evaluation activity is the accuracy and completeness of the data. Evaluation is essentially a diagnostic activity that seeks to explain the causes of problems, not just the symptoms.

Therefore, an organization's performance can be assessed by evaluating the outcomes of its efforts. High performance indicates that the organization has successfully transformed into a high-performing organization. Conversely, if the evaluation results show unsatisfactory performance, the organization must identify the factors hindering the achievement of high performance.

In evaluating organizational performance, several approaches can be used, each focusing on different aspects of how an organization achieves its goals. One common approach is the goal achievement approach, which assesses performance by comparing the outcomes or results achieved with previous outcomes and established targets. This approach is effective when the organization has clear and well-defined goals, which are reflected in its vision and mission. The goals should be identified and set in a way that is easily understood by all members, and ideally, there should be a consensus on achieving these goals. Additionally, the progress toward these goals should be measurable, allowing the organization to track its success in reaching its objectives.

Another widely used approach is the internal systems/process approach, which focuses on the internal processes that contribute to an organization's high performance. A high-performing organization must have healthy internal processes, where communication flows efficiently, employees are loyal and committed, and there is a high level of job satisfaction and trust. Minimal unnecessary conflict and the absence of damaging political maneuvering are also important factors in maintaining a healthy internal environment. This approach places greater emphasis on the methods used to achieve goals, rather than the goals themselves, recognizing that an organization is made up of interconnected parts. If one part performs poorly, it can affect the overall performance of the organization. Additionally, successful organizations must maintain strong interactions with their external environment, ensuring good relationships with customers, labor

unions, and other stakeholders. The sustainability of the organization also depends on the continuous replacement of resources, addressing staff vacancies, and anticipating changes in customer needs.

The strategic constituent satisfaction approach emphasizes the importance of meeting the needs of external stakeholders or constituents who have a significant impact on the organization's survival. These constituents could be resource providers, customers, or any other group with a vested interest in the organization's success. For an organization to perform well, it must identify its key constituents, understand their preferences, and meet their demands. In the context of government organizations, this approach is especially relevant because of the increasing demands from the public, non-governmental organizations, and legislative bodies for better services. The effectiveness of a government organization is often judged by how well it can respond to the needs and expectations of these stakeholders.

One challenge of using this approach is determining who the strategic constituents are, especially in large and rapidly changing environments. Furthermore, different parts or units within an organization may have different key constituents, making it difficult to determine which group's demands should take priority.

In the realm of inter-organizational networks, partnerships, and electronic relationships, building successful partnerships remains a cornerstone of organizational success. In the modern era, where everything can be controlled by advanced technology, creating strong partnerships is still vital for an organization's growth. Building a network or partnership involves developing communication and relationships, sharing ideas, information, and resources based on trust and mutual benefit. These partnerships are often formalized through memorandums of understanding or contracts, with the goal of achieving greater success together.

Ultimately, these approaches help organizations evaluate their performance from different angles. The goal achievement approach focuses on how well the organization reaches its objectives, the internal systems approach emphasizes the health of internal processes, and the strategic constituent satisfaction approach looks at the needs and demands of external stakeholders. Each approach provides valuable insights into organizational performance and can guide organizations toward continuous improvement.

## **CONCLUSION**

The institutional capacity building of the Education Office in Indramayu Regency to improve education quality still faces several challenges. The eight strategic dimensions—strategic leadership, organizational structure, human resources, financial management, infrastructure, program and service management, process management, and inter-organizational linkages—have not been fully effective. Key obstacles include regulatory inconsistencies and budget constraints, while supporting factors include organizational

commitment, motivational leadership, and regulatory reforms. To enhance program effectiveness, several priority strategies are needed: establishing clear regulations, strengthening organizational structures, optimizing the roles of educational institutions and related agencies, fostering inter-agency collaboration, improving organizational performance, and developing technology-driven human resources. These efforts are expected to significantly improve education quality in Indramayu Regency.

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