An Evaluation of the National Examination Policy in the Indonesian Education System

Irfan Prasetya

Abstract

This thesis evaluates the development and implementation of the national examination policy in Indonesia. The policy has resulted in public objections and disputes between the Indonesian government and the public since it was first introduced in 2005 (Mappiasse, 2014). The disputes were caused by the multiple high-stakes purposes of the national examination and its perceived negative consequences for schooling (National Examination Victim Advocacy, 2013; Mappiasse, 2014). The national examination has been used for varying purposes—to decide student graduation and to sort students and place them in competition for entry to the next level of education, as well as for school accountability. These high-stakes purposes of the national examination produced negative consequences for schooling, for example, various reports of students cheating during the national examinations (LaForge, 2013; Mappiasse, 2014; Sembiring, 2013).

A qualitative case study was used to explore the rationale of the Indonesian government underlying the development and implementation of the national examination policy and schools' response to the policy. The use of qualitative case study aimed to represent all stakeholders in the policy in an equal way. The case study was conducted in three different institutions: a school and the Municipal Education Office (micro implementation level) as well as the Ministry of Education (macro policy level). This multi-layered exploration of the national examination policy aimed to reveal the underlying causes of the disputes between the government and the public driven by the high-stakes purposes of the national examination and its unintended consequences for schooling. The data collection phase of the study took place in 2016. Data analysis was conducted in 2017–2018. Three main data collection methods were employed: interviews, observations and document analysis.

This study employed institutional complexity theory, as proposed by Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury (2011), as a framework to evaluate the national examination policy and its implementation. The rationale of using institutional complexity theory was the development and implementation of the national examination policy involved various institutions with distinctive institutional logic dan demand. The framework's main argument is that institutions are confronted with institutional complexity when they are facing pressures or demands from external institutions to which they need to adhere in order to obtain legitimacy and the necessary resources to ensure their survival prospects (Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutions operate in a particular field, and various institutions in the field are guided by distinct and possibly conflicting institutional logics. Institutional logic is an overarching set of principles that define what constitutes the best possible means to organise institutional practices and to achieve institutional goals (Kraatz & Block, 2008).

Institutional complexity theory centres its attention on exploring how institutions experience and respond to institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011).

The results of the case study from the macro policy level showed that there were multiple rationalities or logics from various institutions that shaped the development and subsequent implementation of the national examination policy. The World Bank was a dominant institution that advocated that the Indonesian government adopt the logic of market competition in education and develop a test-based accountability policy that sought to improve the quality of education as well as the competitiveness of national workforces in the globalised economy. The World Bank's policy ideas were rationalised by the state institutions as a compelling way to improve the national economy, and thus the national examination policy was created and implemented to have multiple purposes. The multiple purposes of the national examination were enacted because of inconsistent institutional demands from the state institutions—the executive government, the legislative government, and the Ministry of Education.

The results of the case study from the micro implementation level showed that the school faced various situations of institutional complexity in responding to the national examination policy. The institutional complexities faced by the school were derived from the high-stakes purposes of the national examination and institutional demands from the school's stakeholders. The school was compelled to obtain high student national examination scores to maintain its performance and reputation in the eyes of the public in comparison to other schools. Meanwhile, parents, as well as students, competed for higher national examination scores to guarantee students admission to a high-performing school. The complexities faced by the school, parents and students led to some unintended consequences of the national examination policy, reported variously as students cheating in the national examination, an emphasis on teaching and learning in test preparation that may have limited development of students' critical thinking skills, and the existence of a "brokerage industry" in the school-admission process.

This study concludes that the national examination policy is part of a global phenomenon in education, called the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM), which holds the logic of market competition in education as manifested in the implementation and the use of national testing policies to hold schools accountable for student achievement and to increase competition among schools based on tests results (Sahlberg, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2016). The Indonesian government, which decided to adopt the logic of market competition in education, needed to make the logic work in its local context despite cultural and ideological differences. Eventually, the weak state conditions hampered the contextualisation efforts by the Indonesian government. At the macro policy level, the weak state meant a lack of capacity among the state institutions to formulate national policies

(Datta et al., 2011) together with the hierarchical structure and patrimonial culture among the various institutions (Bjork, 2005; Syahril, 2016). This condition led to complexity in the development of the national examination policy and resulted in the use of the national examination for multiple high-stakes purposes. At the micro implementation level, the weak state meant rampant corruption practices in Indonesia (Transparency International, 2016). This condition led to the prevalence of systemic corruption practices by administrators, teachers and students as an unintended consequence of the high-stakes national examination system.

This study contributes to research in Indonesia by providing an in-depth exploration on how national examination policy was developed and implemented, and why controversies over the policy emerged. The present study also contributes to institutional complexity theory by exploring institutional complexity in the context of Eastern and developing country, instead of Western developed context where most of the study of the institutional complexity theory has been done.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Background of the Study

This study evaluates the national examination policy in the Indonesian education system, commonly known in Indonesia as *Ujian Nasional* (UN). The central government introduced the national examination policy in 2005. The national examination is a final examination conducted at the end stage of schooling for primary school students (Year 6), junior secondary school students (Year 9) and senior secondary school students (Year 12). According to Law 20/2003 and Minister of Education Regulation 19/2005[1], the national examination serves multiple purposes:

1. Assess student learning achievement at the end stage of schooling;

2. Act as an important criterion to decide student graduation at the end of stage of schooling;

3. Sort students and place them for competitive entry to the next level of education based on their national examination scores;

4. Evaluate the success of the education programme (against the standard decided by the central government) at all levels—students, schools, municipal governments, national education performance;

5. Provide information for schools to evaluate and to improve teaching and learning;

6. Motivate students and teachers to work hard focusing on the national examination;

7. Provide information on different layers of education administration—schools, municipal, provincial, national—on the quality of education (OECD/ADB, 2015).

The central government emphasises the function of the national examination policy for holding schools and municipal governments accountable for student achievement, as shown through the purposes of the national examination above. This accountability mechanism aims to increase the productivity of schools and municipal governments—as the institutions directly responsible for administering schooling—to improve the quality of student achievement (OECD/ADB, 2015). As a result, students' achievements in the national examination are published publicly, to enable the public to evaluate schools' and municipalities' educational quality and performance in comparison with others. Thus, schools and municipal governments are involved in a competition to raise student

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[1] This study used non-peer reviewed sources such as the policy documents cited here. The rationale for using the policy documents was that the documents provided valuable information to understand the national examination policy itself and the rationale for the development and implementation of the national examination by the Indonesian government. The rationale for using non-peer reviewed sources in this research is described in Chapter 5 (p. 44).

achievement (Mappiasse, 2014). The central government believes the competition will lead to increased productivity in schools and municipal governments to improve the quality of educational outcomes (World Bank, 2004).

The accountability mechanism implemented by the central government in schools and municipal governments for student achievement creates significant pressures for schools and municipal governments to increase national examination scores (Mappiasse, 2014). The pressures arise since schools' and municipal governments' educational quality and performance are judged by the public based on national examination scores. For example, comparison across municipal governments' performance often appears in the national and local newspapers, such as: "10 municipalities with the highest rate of students passing the national examination" (Prawitasari, 2014) or "10 municipalities in East Nusa Tenggara achieve 100% students passing the national examination" (Suara Pembaharuan, 2014)[2]. Moreover, at the municipal level, schools are ranked by the municipal governments based on national examination scores. The school ranking plays an important role in attracting students. Parents will be reluctant to send their children to lower-ranked schools (Mappiasse, 2014).

The national examination policy has unintended consequences, forcing municipal governments, principals, teachers and students to produce high scores driven by the policy's high-stakes aims (Mappiasse, 2014; OECD/ADB, 2015). For example, some teachers have responded to this pressure by giving students the answers to the examination questions during the test (OECD/ADB, 2015). There have also been some cases of "systematic cheating" involving municipal administrators and school staff as a response to the policy (OECD/ADB, 2015). In this way, the implementation of the national examination policy has become very political—the municipal governments and school staff attempt to increase students' test scores instead of making efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning to enhance their performance (Mappiasse, 2014).

The Impetus for Studying the National Examination Policy

My curiosity in the field of educational assessment began in 2005. I was part of a small cadre as a new government officer in the Indonesian Ministry of Education. As a fresh graduate majoring in accounting and business management, I was assigned to deal with grant delivery from the Ministry of Education to the senior secondary schools across Indonesia. As a person working in the field of education, I nonetheless felt that I had limited knowledge and understanding of what education,

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[2] This study used non-peer reviewed sources, such as the newspaper reports cited. The rationale for using newspaper reports in this research was twofold. One purpose as cited here was to illustrate how schools and municipal governments responded to the national examination policy. The second purpose was to participants' specific statement related to cheating and brokerage that could be linked back to them, in order to avoid identification. The rationale for using non-peer reviewed sources in this research is described in Chapter 5 (p. 44).

curriculum and assessment were, or how students' performance was assessed. Although my job did not touch on curriculum or assessment, I was intrigued by the competition to get into prestigious schools, which is determined by students' test results in the national examination.

Through my school visits dealing with the distribution of central government grants to build school facilities, I started to observe how teachers and students responded to the national examination mandated by the Indonesian government. National examination results had become an important determining factor in deciding student graduation for middle and high school than school-based examinations. In my informal conversations with the teachers at the schools I visited, they often expressed their concerns about the national examination policy. They felt pressured to get their students to pass the test.

As a consequence, the teachers, especially those teaching 12th-grade students, used drilling techniques (i.e., answering the previous national examination materials) to ensure students passed the test. In the final semester before the national examination, classroom interaction was mostly designed just for drilling. Some of the schools provided additional lessons before or after school time to get the students to practise the test material in multiple choice formats that resembled the national examination papers.

Some of the teachers with whom I talked explained that the national examination had a negative influence on student behaviour. The availability of tutoring institutions and the pressure to pass the exams persuaded students to disregard teachers' instructions in classroom interactions and in completing homework assignments. To pass the national examination, many students attended tutoring sessions managed by private companies after school hours. They practised the test to get good results in national examinations. Students paid approximately 500,000 to 1 million rupiahs (equal to NZD 50–100) monthly for these tutoring sessions.

My interest in the national examination policy grew and I started to pay attention to issues surrounding the consequences of the national examination on students' lives. One such issue reported by Syahril (2007) showed how the national examination had negative consequences for a student's future:

> Her name is Melati Murti Pratiwi. She was a smart student in High School 6 South Jakarta. She had been awarded a scholarship to study in Germany for her bachelor's degree. She scored very well on the national examination for English and Indonesian language subject (8.2 and 7.4 out of 10). Unfortunately, her score in Maths test was not sufficient - 3.33 below the minimum threshold to graduate which was 4.26. She was not able to graduate from high

school since her score in Maths was below the minimum score stated in the policy text. (p. 9)

Similar cases appeared in some newspapers and on television. It was reported that middle and high school students had become increasingly stressed when facing the national examination. Then, I began to ask myself, is the national examination appropriate to assess student performance? Why should schooling only be aimed at achieving a good test score? Is that the appropriate way to educate our children? What is the central government rationale in enacting the policy?

I noticed how political interest influenced the enactment of national examination policy. There was a highly contested statement from the Vice-President of Indonesia, Jusuf Kalla, where he asked which the public preferred, 10 stressed students or 10 million foolish students (Aditya, 2015). He believed that national exams motivated all elements in education to improve the quality of Indonesian education and the international competitiveness of Indonesian students (Mappiasse, 2014). I got a sense that there was a strong assumption from the central government that students and teachers had not worked hard enough, and this pressure of having to perform well in the national examination would motivate them to improve their performance.

I questioned Kalla's statement. Does holding teachers and students accountable via a high-stakes test of their performance genuinely improve the quality of education? Yes, test scores might increase, but what about the teaching and learning process? Does teaching improve? Do students learn better? How about students who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds—are they able to compete with those who come from wealthier families? What does "better" mean in educational terms? Can a test serve multiple purposes simultaneously? Many questions hung in my mind; I did not know where to find the answer. There was no relevant literature or research available in the Indonesia context.

While I was still confused about finding the answer to my questions, the tension between the public and the central government around the national examination policy increased. Often, I saw rallies held against the policy. During office hours, from my workbench, I saw hundreds of teachers or university students crammed in front of our office carrying banners stating, "Stop national exam—save students," "The national exam is inhumane," "Rest in peace Indonesia education," or the worst one, "Go to hell the minister of education."

Despite heavy criticism from teachers and scholars, the central government has continued to ignore their voices. The top central government officer—Vice-President, and Minister of Education, Kalla—repeatedly insisted on the importance of the national examination as a tool to improve the quality of education. However, commentaries and critiques still fuelled the dispute between the

central government and the public with regard to the national examination policy. My decision was to conduct research and provide thorough analysis rather than engaging in the debate.

Research Question

This study aims to uncover the underlying sources of a dispute between the government and the public driven by the implementation of the national examination policy. The study also explores the national examination from the multilayer perspectives of actors at both the macro policy level and micro implementation level. Notably, the study seeks to understand how policymakers constructed the national examination policy and how school-based actors have implemented the policy. Therefore, the research questions for this study are:

1. What is the rationale of the Indonesian central government underlying the development and implementation of the national examination policy?

2. How do schools respond to the national examination policy?

Structure of the Thesis

To answer the above-mentioned research questions, the thesis consists of the following chapters. Chapter 2 reviews schooling systems in Indonesia—their historical trajectories and the current situation, as well as the socioeconomic and political circumstances that have affected the development of the education system as well as the implementation of the national examination policy. Chapter 3 discusses the literature on educational assessment policy and practice as a theoretical base for the study. Chapter 4 introduces institutional complexity theory as a theoretical lens to explain the findings of the study. Chapter 5 describes the research orientation, data collection and the procedures used to analyse the data.

Chapter 6 reports on the findings from the case study at the macro policy level—the policymakers' rationales and the circumstances that shaped the construction of the national examination policy. Chapter 7 reports on the findings from the case study at the micro implementation level—the experiences of school-based actors in responding to the national examination policy, including the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and opinions of teachers, school leaders and administrators from the municipal government.

Chapter 8 summarises the major findings analysed in Chapters 6 and 7 and discusses these with respect to the use of national testing as a policy tool to reform the education system. The chapter concludes with the theoretical and practical contributions of the study.

Chapter 2. The Context of the Study: The Indonesian Education System

Introduction

This chapter overviews the history and development of the Indonesian education system. It also highlights the relationships among historical perspectives, cultural values, socioeconomic conditions and political interests that have shaped the construction of the national examination policy and practice. The chapter begins with a discussion of some basic facts about Indonesia. Next, it presents the history and development of the Indonesian education system before national independence. The current context of the Indonesian education system is elaborated in the following section. Last, the background of the implementation of the national examination policy is described.

Introduction to the Indonesian Context

Indonesia is the fourth-most populous nation in the world—250 million people in 2014—located in the Southeast Asian region. The country comprises 17,000 islands with only around 6,000 of them inhabited. Indonesia is on the equator, extending from the Indian to the Pacific Oceans across a length of 5,110 kilometres (3,997 miles). The total area of Indonesia is nearly two million square kilometres, 81% of it is sea and the rest land. It has a diverse geography, ranging from swamp and tropical rainforest to high mountains (Sumintono, 2006).

Indonesia is rich in natural resources (oil, timber and natural gas), crops (rice, palm oil, coffee and cocoa) and spices (nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves). These resources have made Indonesia the 16th largest economy in the world and the largest economy in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN; OECD/ADB, 2015). Nonetheless, 28 million Indonesians live below the poverty line (Aji, 2015), with a 5.3% unemployment rate. The unemployment rate is susceptible to increase since around 30.6% of the workers are in insecure employment (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2017).

Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim nation—88% of the total population are Muslim. There are also other religions, such as Christianity (8%), Hinduism (2%), Buddhism (1%), and others (1%); (Sumintono, 2006). The majority of Indonesian people live in Java. There are two major ethnic groups in Java—the Javanese, who live Central and East Java (over 70 million people), and the Sundanese (more than 40 million), who live in West Java (Clark et al., 1998, cited in Sumintono, 2006). The remaining population lives in other islands and comprises hundreds of other ethnicities, with diverse local languages and cultures.

The socioeconomic conditions above, together with cultural values and the political interests of national leaders, have shaped the development of the Indonesian education system, along with the construction of national education policies, including the national examination policy. There have been substantial changes in the governance of the education system from Indonesia's independence until the recent development. The following sections describe the development of the Indonesian education system, across three sequences in time—before national independence, after national independence, and the current situation.

Education in Indonesia: Historical Trajectories

An overview of the historical trajectories of the Indonesian education system provides an understanding of some issues, problems and weaknesses in the Indonesian education system, which continue. The root of the problems is not always educational but has been shaped by the socioeconomic and political condition of the nation which has resulted in complexity in the development of the Indonesian education system.

Education in Indonesia: Prior to national independence.

The Indonesian education system had a long history of centralisation, from before national independence up until the "New Order" era. The New Order era refers to the government administration under Indonesia's second president, Suharto (1966–1998). The central government employed a top-down approach to guiding the national education system. The way a nation governs its education system is shaped by the political interest of those who wield authority (Apple, 1982; Tilaar, 2004). The challenge for the Indonesian central government has been to maintain the nation's unity and to oversee its economic development (Bjork, 2005; Leigh, 1999).

Before national independence, under 350 years of Dutch colonialisation, education was segregated. Only a few Indonesians were educated at the Dutch schools, based on descent and social status. This system aimed to maintain political control as well as to obtain cheap labour to support the colonial regime's interests in harvesting natural resources (Purwadi & Muljoatmodjo, 2000). The colonial regime designed the schooling system in a centralised and bureaucratic manner in order to maintain Dutch control of the nation (Sumintono, 2006).

The colonial regime introduced formal schooling in 1848 (Clark et al., 1998, cited in Sumintono, 2006). There were two types of school system developed by the Dutch: "oriental education" and "occidental education" (Djajadiningrat, 1942, cited in Rahman, 2016). Oriental education was for local people, and most of them would spend only 3 years in primary school. Only students from noble families stayed for an additional 2 years of primary school. The oriental education system was administered only until junior secondary level (another 3 years of schooling), called the MULO

(*Meet Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*). Occidental education was attended only by foreigners (the Dutch, Europeans, Arabs, Indians, Chinese). The foreigners had the opportunity for education up to senior secondary level. There were three types of school in the senior secondary level: Lyceum, HBS, and AMS. The Lyceum was a 6-year general secondary school exclusively for European students, and its curriculum prepared graduates for higher education. The HBS (*Hogere Burgelijjke School* or Citizens' High School) was like the Lyceum, but all foreign students could enrol. The AMS (*Algemene Middlebare School* or General Secondary School) provided 3 years of study for students who passed junior secondary school, which all foreign students could enter (Sumintono, 2006).

The segregation of education implemented by the Dutch raised the awareness of educated indigenous people of the need to establish education for local people. In 1912, *Muhammadiyah*, an Islamic social institution, offered education outside the Dutch system, and was followed by Ki Hadjar Dewantoro who formed a school called *Taman Siswa* or Garden of Pupils, in 1922 (Sumintono, 2006). These two institutions supplied primary and secondary schooling and teacher training (Jalal & Musthafa, 2001). The curriculum content of these schools was drawn from both European schools and Indonesian culture. The education system provided by the Dutch and indigenous people resulted in the emergence of indigenous political leaders. Since then, there have been initiatives to create Indonesia as an independent and sovereign nation.

Education in Indonesia: After national independence.

Post national independence in August 1945, under the Sukarno regime, came the "Old Order" era (1945–1966); education became a powerful tool to develop Indonesia as an independent and sovereign nation. The central government introduced the first education law—Law 4/1950—emphasising the supreme values of *Pancasila* as the national ideology and consisting of five tenets: believe in One God, just and civilised humanity, national unity, democracy, and social justice as a fundamental basis of education. The purpose of education was to develop a democratic citizen based on Pancasila values.

The education system focused on attaching the spirit of the five values of Pancasila to foster national unity, considering the diverse and geographically dispersed population, richness in ethnicities and languages. The law also incorporated egalitarian principles. The education system was centralised, and rapid development in schooling took place. The provision of school infrastructure along with private sector cooperation resulted in the availability of educational institutions from primary to tertiary level. The central government focused on providing compulsory education at the primary level. From 1945 to 1950, student enrolment in primary school more than doubled from 2.3 to 5 million students (Bjork, 2005; Sumintono, 2006; Tilaar, 1998).

The orientation toward national-character building based on democratic Pancasila and equal access to education was, however, constrained due to political turmoil and economic crisis. In 1959, driven by political conflict, the Old Order regime changed the government system from liberal democracy to "guided democracy," supported by a socialist political party. The direction of education was changed to indoctrination rather than promoting freedom of thinking. For example, the central government assessed teachers' and government officers' performance through their level of loyalty and obedience towards superiors' directives, and other ceremonial measures such as attendance at the national flag-raising ceremony or wearing the public officers' uniform (Bjork, 2005; Sumintono, 2006). The legacy of these ceremonial activities is still being practised in the contemporary school environment in Indonesia.

Eventually, unable to cope with economic and political crises, Sukarno stepped down, replaced by the "smiling general," Suharto. A new regime was born called the *New Order*[3] era (1966–1998). Learning from Sukarno's previous errors, the regime focused on maintaining sociopolitical stability and assuring economic growth. As a military general, Suharto placed military personnel at all levels of government and parliament as a strategy to maintain sociopolitical stability. This move produced a bureaucratic-authoritarian state (Nielsen, 1998). The regime still had full control to create uniformity for every single aspect of the national development sector, including the education system.

The bureaucratic-authoritarian approach, derived from a militaristic style, had the intention of maintaining national-character building, preserving sociopolitical stability and the hegemony of the New Order regime. In practice, the education system was bureaucratic and centralised while activities at the school level aimed to develop citizens loyal to the state order based on Pancasila values. The Ministry of Education administered all matters in education including appointing principals and teachers, establishing the curriculum, providing textbooks for schools, and deciding school budget allocation. In terms of schooling, some of the activities aimed to instil the values of Pancasila. The central government mandated some compulsory activities for schools, such as the flag ceremony, the subject of Pancasila moral education, an intensive induction programme of Pancasila for teachers and students, and a student uniform with a standardised design and colour.

Success in maintaining political stability gave the regime the opportunity to develop the nation's economy. Driven by the oil boom in the 1970s and foreign funding, the central government had built thousands of schools and implemented a universal education programme for primary school. In 1994, student enrolment reached 26.3 million for primary schools, 5.9 million for junior secondary schools

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[3] The New Order era refers to the government administration under Indonesia's second president, Suharto.

and 3.8 million for senior secondary schools (Tilaar, 1998). This development was what Nielsen (1998) called "rapid growth and quantitative expansion as an indicator of quality improvement" (p. 23). Even so, while rapid expansion occurred in student enrolment, teacher employment and school construction, there was still an absence of careful consideration of education quality. For example, while the central government recruited two million teachers as government employees, it did so without careful attention to the relevance of academic background to the subjects, resulting in an uneven distribution of teachers between rural and urban areas, and paying inadequate salaries (Sumintono, 2006). The school infrastructure itself was poorly constructed (Leigh, 1999).

The bureaucratic and authoritarian administrative culture was accepted without resistance. The central government employed curriculum and school rituals that stressed teachers' and students' loyalty to the state order (Bjork, 2005). Instilling those values in the daily life of society enabled the central government to develop stability and unity in the nation through conformity, even though doing so resulted in reducing individual freedom. This was "guided democracy" at work. However, success in stabilising sociopolitical circumstances provided a foundation for economic development, and enhanced Indonesia's attractiveness for foreign loans and investment as an engine of economic growth (Leigh, 1999). Hence, in the New Order era, the purpose of education continued to be preserving national unity, promoting sociopolitical stability and being a tool of economic development, considering the importance of human capital investment. Since the 1990s, the central government has continuously improved access to schooling.

Current Context of the Indonesian Education System

The Indonesian financial crisis of 1997 forced Suharto to resign. The main factors in his downfall were the collapse of the economy, eventually unpopular authoritarian government, and corruption by Suharto's large-scale family businesses. What followed is often referred as the "Reform Era" (1998–current) during which Indonesia has had five presidents: Habibie (1998–1999), Abdulrahman Wahid (1999–2001), Megawati Sukarnoputri (2001–2004), Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004–2014), and Joko Widodo (2014–current).

There was a national call for democracy and local autonomy after the failures of the bureaucratic-centralised government during the early years of the Reform Era, intensified by the financial crisis of 1997. This reform was supported by international institutions that wanted to see improvement in the accountability and transparency of public administration and private businesses. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) offered a post-crisis rescue package but required the central government to privatise its state-owned companies to secure the money. The World Bank strongly advocated for decentralisation of administration for the efficient use of resources and quality

improvement in public services (Bjork, 2004; Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006). Nonetheless, social development is still driven by authoritarian economics.

There have been major constitutions enacted regarding the decentralisation of government authority—Law 22/1999 for Regional Autonomy and Law 25/1999 for Fiscal Balance. Under these laws, the central government handed authority to district or municipal governments to manage public services. There are 34 provinces and 514 municipalities across the country. These laws represent new political principles of democracy, autonomy and public accountability (World Bank, 2004). How decentralisation is applied to the education system has been defined in Law 20/2003 and is overseen by a ministerial task-force. The law decrees that municipal governments hold the principal responsibility and authority for education while some decision-making process is transferred to individual schools under the principle of school-based management.

The role of the central government remains dominant in determining national education policy (e.g., setting national standards, curriculum and assessment systems, establishing education policies and programmes) in implementing Law 20/2003. Municipal governments are granted the authority and financial capacity to manage the daily operation of education (e.g., providing financial resources for schools, recruiting principals and teachers, forming local education policies), which was previously held by the provincial governments. The new role of the provincial government is to represent the government in the implementation of national education policies. Hence, the schooling process is guided by hierarchical layers of bureaucracy of governmental agencies.

Current education development in Indonesia is not merely aimed at student enrolment but also at the quality of learning outcomes. According to Law 20/2003, the purpose of education is to provide equal access to schooling for every Indonesian citizen, to foster democratic citizens, still based on Pancasila values, and to develop human capital investment as the foundation for future economic growth. The Law provides a platform to reform the national education system with the need to improve national competitiveness in the global knowledge economy.

With Law 20/2003, the central government has implemented a number of education reforms to change education practices at the school level. Despite rapid expansion in the number of schools and in student enrolment, the central government perceived that the education system was failing to address challenges to improve education quality. The results of the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 1999 showed that Indonesian student performance ranked in the 10 worst out of 38 countries (World Bank, 2005). Therefore, since the 2000s, there has been a drive to produce more skilled workers for economic growth. The central government attempted to reform the education system through various education and economic policies (OECD/ADB, 2015). There is a

greater focus on the educational quality of schooling, as well as its economic productivity, mostly through the application of educational standards.

Law 20/2003 determines national education standards, consisting of the standards for curriculum content, learning processes, competency of graduates, personnel in education, school facilities, school management, school funding, and learning assessment, as a reform strategy for improving the quality of education. One of the prominent parts of national education standards is student assessment. Law 20/2003 sets the standard of competency of graduates—what students need to know and be able to do. The curriculum is aligned with the standards and students are assessed in criterion reference tests to know whether the test results exceed or fall below the standard, as decided by the central government through a predetermined standard measure of student achievement in the national examination.

The National Examination Policy

The use of standardised final examinations for students, conducted at the end stage of schooling, has long been the dominant feature of educational policy in the Indonesian education system. Before 2000, during the centralised education administration, the central government implemented a final examination policy called the *Evaluasi Belajar Tahap Akhir Nasional/EBTANAS* (National Final Learning Evaluation). The central government stated that EBTANAS was used as the standard to evaluate the quality of national education, as a tool for controlling variations in the school level grading system and as a means of selecting students for progression to a higher level (Oey Gardiner, 2000). Some subjects were tested in the EBTANAS, consisting of Pancasila moral education, Indonesian language, English, mathematics, and sciences (UNESCO, 2005). With EBTANAS policy, the central government decided that student graduation should be largely in the hands of the schools. The EBTANAS scores were just part of the overall scoring components for student graduation, in addition to provincial exams and teacher assessments.

After 2000, during the decentralised education administration, a new form of nationwide standardised examination for students was implemented by the central government, replacing the EBTANAS, and called the *national examination policy*. Subjects tested in the national examination include Indonesian language, English, mathematics, and science. The nature of the national examination policy is different from EBTANAS. Student test scores in the EBTANAS were only used to determine a student's readiness to move to the next level of education (Mappiasse, 2014). In the national examination policy, student test scores function to hold schools and municipal governments accountable for student achievement (OECD/ADB, 2015). Schools and municipal governments are ranked according to national examination scores. This system results in significant pressure for schools and municipal governments to increase national examination scores, since

schools' and municipal governments' reputations very much depend on student achievement in the national examination. Furthermore, students were required to achieve a minimum threshold determined by the central government in order to graduate. Therefore, a student's failure to achieve the minimum threshold in the national examination would automatically prevent them from graduating, regardless of the student's overall performance during their school years.

There have been objections by many schools, teachers and students driven by the high-stakes goals of the national examination policy. For example, Retno (2013, cited in Natahadibrata, 2013) comments that the national examination has not played a significant role in improving education quality. Further, Sembiring (2013) reports that there have been serious concerns over the rampant practice of cheating among students, aided by "invigilating" teachers. Meanwhile, LaForge (2013) writes that, in the Indonesian education system, everybody cheats, so teachers and administrators do not deserve the brunt of the blame. Nonetheless, the central government seems to have ignored public criticisms of the national examination policy, and the policy is still being implemented currently.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the history and development of the Indonesian education system from before national independence up until recent developments. The central government employed a centralised education administration from 1945–1998. This system mainly aimed to maintain the nation's unity considering its diverse ethnic and geographically dispersed population. A rapid expansion in student enrolment took place during this period but was not matched in quality of education. After 1998, the central government changed to decentralised education administration, through which the responsibility for education was handed to municipal governments and schools. This change was driven by the downfall of Suharto's authoritarian regime. Some education reforms were conducted by the central government through the application of educational standards, aimed at improving the quality of education for the purpose of producing more skilled workers as an engine of economic growth. One of the prominent education reforms in this period was the implementation of the national examination policy. The national examination serves multiple high-stakes purposes for students and schools. However, the policy produces unintended consequences for schooling, including cheating practices conducted by teachers and students. The national examination policy also gives rise to a dispute between the central government and public driven by its unintended consequences for schooling.

The next chapter provides a literature review on educational assessment policy and practice.

Chapter 3. Literature Review on Educational Assessment Policy and Practice

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on educational assessment policy and practice to theorise the national examination policy and its implementation in the Indonesian education system. The chapter begins with a discussion of the Global Education Reform Movement as evidenced by the use of national testing as a policy tool to reform education systems, along with the logic of market competition in education underpinning the reform. It then discusses how the logic of market competition is diffused and transmitted into national education policies. The manifestation of this logic within education in the form of test-based accountability policy is elaborated in the next section, and then the rationale of national governments for implementing test-based accountability policy is discussed. Last, the implications of test-based accountability for schooling are presented.

Global Trends in Using National Testing Policy as a Tool to Reform National Education Systems

Since the beginning of the 1990s, there has been a global phenomenon of national governments embarking on large-scale education reform using national testing policies to improve the quality of educational outcomes. Sahlberg (2006, 2008, 2011, 2016) calls this phenomenon the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM). The movement originated in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) (Mundy, Green, Lingard, & Verger, 2016; Sahlberg, 2016).

In the UK, the government uses a national testing policy (i.e., Standard Attainment Tasks and Tests [SATs]) to rank schools in the league tables according to student test results (James, 2011). Schools have to compete to attract students, as school funding is linked to student enrolments, while parental choice (freedom for parents to choose a school for their children) leads to parents preferring to send their children to high-performing schools (Gregory & Clarke, 2003).

In the US, under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, the Federal Government requires state governments to develop tests to hold schools, districts and states accountable for student achievement (Flaitz, 2011). The test results compare schools' performance at a similar level across districts within states. The states' policies also put into place sanctions and incentives for schools based on their comparative performance (Flaitz, 2011).

Although the testing systems in the UK and the US differ slightly in their technical aspects, the systems have similar principles—that is, the adoption of a market competition mechanism in the governance of the education system (Ball 1998; Sahlberg, 2016). Several other large-scale school

system reforms using national testing policy, in North America, Europe and the Asia Pacific, have been inspired by the UK and US initiatives, in both technical and principle aspects (Sahlberg, 2016).

The GERM shares similar assumptions to the primary drivers for improvement in the quality of schooling outcomes (Levin & Fullan, 2008; Sahlberg, 2008, 2016), that is:

1. The belief that competition among schools would lead to better schooling outcomes.

2. Schools would need more autonomy in their administration to compete properly.

3. Parents would need to be able to choose the schools their children attended, to increase competition among schools.

4. In order to choose, parents and the public would require comparable measures of student achievement as a representation of education quality for all schools.

These principles represent the logic of market competition in the governance of education systems (Sahlberg, 2006, 2008, 2016). Therefore, the role of national governments is to enforce regulations necessary to put market competition logic into practice (Ball 1998; Sahlberg, 2016). The national testing policy, in this sense, is the instrument to perform the logic of market competition in education.

The Diffusion of the Logic of Market Competition in Education

The diffusion of the logic of market competition in education can be understood through three mechanisms: "policy borrowing," "policy entrepreneurship," and "policy sponsorship." Policy borrowing refers to the adoption of a particular policy in one country as implemented in other countries (Ball, 1998; Halpin & Troyna, 1995; Lingard, 2010). Policy entrepreneurship refers to the process through which groups and individuals prescribe or "sell" their ideas as policy input to national governments, whether in the academic (e.g., conferences, academic journals) or political (e.g., networks among politicians) marketplace (Ball, 1998; Levin, 1998). Policy sponsorship refers to the use of particular policy ideas in one country through sponsorship and, in some respects, enforcement of the policy ideas by the World Bank (Ball, 1998; Jones, 1998; Sahlberg, 2016).

The World Bank plays an influential role in the transmission of the logic of market competition in education into national education policy through policy sponsorship. The World Bank is a dominant international institution in education governance policy, especially within emerging economies and low-income countries, including Indonesia (Mundy & Verger, 2016). The World Bank uses "soft power mechanisms" (e.g., benchmarking, technical assistance) to disseminate the logic of market competition in education to national governments (Mundy & Verger, 2016; Verger, 2016). Moreover, policy ideas offered by the World Bank are perceived as scientific by national governments since the ideas are derived from evidence-based research (Mundy et al., 2016; Mundy

& Verger, 2016). Furthermore, the World Bank can provide national governments with loan funding for policy implementation (Mundy et al., 2016; Mundy & Verger, 2016). The Indonesian government has been among the fifth-largest borrowers from the World Bank to fund its education development (Mundy & Verger, 2016).

Some scholars suggest that it is important to examine the ideology that underpins the World Bank's dissemination of the logic of market competition in education (Ball 1998, 2016; Jones, 1998; Klees, 2015). Jones (1998) suggests that the World Bank's policy advocacy in education can only be understood as an ideological stance, in promoting an integrated world system along market lines. Ball (1998, 2016) and Klees (2015) argue that neoliberal ideology underpins the World Bank's policy advocacy to national governments. Ball (1998, 2016) further asserts that neoliberal ideology deems a market mechanism appropriate in education, where schools act like business entities and service providers, and competition among schools for the best educational outcome (measured in student test scores) is the most effective mechanism to improve education quality.

The World Bank's policy advocacy to national governments builds on the rhetoric of the importance of education quality in the improvement of national economies (Ball, 1998; Jones, 1997, 1998; Klees, 2015; Mundy & Verger, 2016). Economic globalisation demands that national governments increase labour productivity to promote economic growth in competition with other countries (Jones, 1998; Sahlberg, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2016). The World Bank prescribes particular ways for national governments to reform their education systems, comprising standardisation of teaching and learning in schools, increased competition among schools for enrolment, and the adoption of "test-based accountability" policies that hold teachers and schools to account for student achievement (Ball, 1998; Sahlberg, 2007, 2016).

The Manifestation of the Logic of Market Competition in Education

The manifestation of the logic of market competition in education disseminated by the World Bank takes place in three forms of education policy by national governments, as highlighted above: developing standards of teaching/learning in schools; introducing national testing to measure student achievement as well as school performance; and increasing competition among schools for enrolment. Each of these education policies is described below.

The standardisation of teaching and learning occurs through the implementation of national curricula along with the presence of clear and high-targeted performance standards to be achieved by schools, teachers and students, aimed at improving the quality of schooling outcomes (Sahlberg, 2007, 2016). The standardisation of teaching and learning has been a standard feature in education policy and reform strategy implemented by national governments (Sahlberg, 2007). The policy is derived from

an assumption that all students can be educated with similar curricula, and predetermined (often ambitious) learning targets can be achieved for all students, which in turn leads to the homogenisation of curriculum policy worldwide (Sahlberg, 2016).

Educational assessment plays an important function in measuring school and teacher performance and student learning achievement against the targeted performance standard. This notion is noticeable with the implementation of test-based accountability policy by national governments to hold teachers and schools to account for student achievement, using standardised national tests (Carnoy, 2016; Sahlberg 2007, 2016). In this sense, school performance, measured in the form of student test scores, is closely linked to processes of evaluating, promoting, inspecting, and ultimately rewarding schools and teachers (Ball, 2016; Sahlberg, 2007). Therefore, the success or failure of schools, teachers and students is often determined by the standardised national test results, for example, in the form of school league tables that are published publicly and show schools' performance relative to one another as the accountability mechanism for schools, teachers and students (Sahlberg, 2016).

School league tables are the policy mechanism implemented by national governments to increase competition among schools for enrolment (Sahlberg, 2016). The policy is derived from the assumption that parental school choice (the market mechanism in education) would generate competition among schools as they tried to attract students, with school funding linked to the number of students enrolled. Hence, the policy is expected to increase the effectiveness of schools to improve their quality of teaching and learning outcomes as measured by test results (Dearden & Vignoles, 2011; Griffin, 2014). In many Asian countries, such policy also results in stronger pressure for students to perform better than their peers, due to stiff competition to get into the best high schools and universities, that is driven by school entry tests to sort students based on their test results (Dang & Halsey Rogers, 2008).

Based on the argument above, as a result of the diffusion of the logic of market competition in education, the educational assessment policies implemented by national governments are characterised by the use of test-based accountability policy as the essential policy tool to assess how well student performance meets a prescribed set of content standards (Sahlberg 2007, 2016). The scope of standardised national testing policy in this sense, including large-scale externally developed and mandated tests, uniformly administered and scored, comprise an evaluation of student learning with associated consequences for students, teachers and schools (Wang, Beckett, & Brown 2006). The norm-referenced national tests, as a result of those consequences, are called "high-stakes tests" (Popham, 1987) because so many of schools', teachers', and students' decisions depend on the tests results.

National Government Rationale for the Enactment of Test-Based Accountability Policy

The implementation by national governments of test-based accountability policy along with school league tables to increase competition among schools is aimed at improving the quality of schooling outcomes for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and skills needed to increase national economic competitiveness in the context of global economic competition (Ball, 1998; Sahlberg, 2006). Global economic competition (e.g., a reduction in barriers to the free flow of goods, workers, investments across countries) encourages national governments to increase the quality of national human capital in order to promote economic development in competition with other countries based on a "knowledge-based economy" (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Sahlberg, 2006, 2008). The knowledge-based economy is defined as production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advancement. The essential feature of a knowledge-based economy is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical input or natural resources (Powell & Snellman, 2004). In this sense, national governments see education quality as a critical driving factor in increasing the productivity of the national workforce along with national economic competitiveness (Sahlberg, 2006).

A country's performance in international test comparisons have become influential on policymakers' decisions to implement test-based accountability policy. A country's poor performance in international testing such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), in comparison with other countries, encourages national governments to reform their education systems using test-based accountability policy, to fix deficiencies in the quality of national education systems (Sahlberg, 2007, 2008, 2016; Schleicher & Zoido, 2016). Examples are the *A Nation at Risk* report in the US (Gardner, Larsen, Baker, & Campbell, 1983) and reports of "PISA Shock" in Germany (Grek, 2009: Waldow, 2009). These reports provide evidence of nations' responses to perceived "deficiencies." The PISA test assesses the extent to which students near the end of compulsory education have acquired fundamental knowledge and skills that are essential for full participation in modern societies (Breakspear, 2012). The PISA test, which focuses on reading, mathematics and sciences, does not only ascertain whether students can reproduce knowledge, but also examines how well students can extrapolate from what they have learned and apply that knowledge in unfamiliar settings, both inside and outside schools (Breakspear, 2012).

The assumption underpinning the enactment of test-based accountability policy is that educational assessment can play an important role, not just as means of obtaining information about the performance of the education system, but also as a compelling driver for reforming the education system (Linn, 1995; Popham, 1987). Test-based accountability policy, in this sense, functions to tighten the connection of knowledge and skills, in the form of competencies to be taught and tested,

needed by a nation's workers to increase their productivity (Ball, 1998; Sahlberg, 2007; Supovitz, 2009). Furthermore, the powerful influence of test-based accountability policy, in the form of the consequences for schools, teachers and students, on teaching and learning in specified content areas has been seen as a cost-effective way to improve student learning and education quality, compared with other education policies that address fundamental educational changes (i.e., reducing class size, providing professional development for teachers; Linn, 1995, 2000).

The reasoning for employing test-based accountability policy to reform a national education system can also be understood by policymakers' perception about the effectiveness of the policy to improve the quality of education. Ball (1998) described the notion of "performativity" which underpins the implementation of test-based accountability policy. In his view, the policy is designed to enable policymakers to steer schooling from a distance, thus replacing government intervention with target-setting (in the form of competencies to be achieved by students and schools and tested through national tests). In this sense, the test-based accountability policy functions as the schooling-outcomes target. The test results, along with pressures on schools from the market (i.e., parental choice) and competition are aimed at productively improving school quality and performance on the one hand, while reducing government spending on education, by limiting government intervention in schooling, on the other hand (Ball, 1998). Moreover, Linn (2000) explains that, compared with other education policies, test-based accountability policy can be implemented easily and quickly (to and by schools and municipal or district governments) to effect improvements in student and teacher behaviour in classroom learning.

The Implications of Test-Based Accountability Policy for Schooling

The implementation of test-based accountability policy, along with increased competition among schools for enrolment can have implications counterproductive to the enhancement of schooling outcomes needed for economic competition based on a knowledge-based economy (Sahlberg, 2006), due to an incompatibility between teachers' values in their teaching and the values derived from the policy (Sahlberg, 2008). Most teachers value teaching based on a moral purpose (noble motive), that is, to educate students for learning and to promote students' personal development and growth (Lortie, 1975; Sahlberg, 2008). In contrast, the policy emphasises higher productivity and better efficiency in teaching and learning, that is, measurable schooling outcomes, higher test scores, and a better position in school league tables (Sahlberg, 2006, 2008). This incompatibility, between the values of teachers and a market-based policy, forces teachers to focus their teaching on a teacher-centred instruction to increase student achievement, which potentially leads to rote learning, rather than a student-centred pedagogy to promote "deep learning" for students (problem-solving, critical

thinking skills). These types of deep learning are arguably more compatible with the needs of the knowledge-based economy to increase national economic competitiveness (Sahlberg, 2006).

In addition, the implementation of test-based accountability policy can produce negative consequences on schooling due to the nature of high-stakes testing. Sahlberg (2006, 2008, 2016), Nichols, Glass, and Berliner (2006), Nichols and Berliner (2007), and Hargreaves and Shirley (2008) all contend that high-stakes test-based accountability policy will not improve the quality of schools, teaching or learning, but rather can create adverse effects on schooling. Numerous educational researchers have shown high-stakes test-based accountability policy to have unintended consequences in score inflation with only ambiguous improvements in student learning (Morgan, 2016; Rotberg, 1995; Shepard, 1990). By narrowing teaching down to test preparation, and ignoring students' critical thinking (Au, 2007, 2011; Berliner, 2011; Connell, 2013; Madaus & Russell, 2010), this approach reduces the teacher's sense of professionalism (Mathison & Freeman, 2003; Morgan, 2016). Moreover, there is increased pressure on both teachers and students for students to score well on the test (Connell, 2013; Koretz, Barron, Mitchell, & Stecher, 1996; Taylor, Shepard, Kinner, & Rosenthal, 2003) and high-stakes tests can encourage teachers and students to engage in adverse action (e.g., cheating, peer-to-peer competition) to produce good test scores (Klenowski & Wyatt-Smith, 2012; Koretz, McCaffery, & Hamilton, 2001). Some researchers have questioned the validity of aggregating individual test results to measure the performance of a school or, much less, a school system (Haladyna & Downing, 2004; Koretz, Linn, Dunbar, & Shepard, 1991; Moller, 2008; Nichols & Berliner, 2007).

Nichols and Berliner (2007) describe the depressing implications of the high-stakes test-based accountability policy in terms of corrupt practices among teachers and students, referring to Campbell's law. Campbell (1976) states that "the more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor" (p. 49). Nichols and Berliner (2007) report that over-reliance on high-stakes test-based accountability policy encourages administrators, teachers and students to do whatever it takes to raise test scores. Systemic corruption practices are already found in many schools and districts as their responses to the high-stakes consequences of such policy. For example, teachers share answers with students, administrators exclude "score suppressors," like English-language learners and students with special needs, from the testing pool, while "score increasers" have taken a high-stakes test more than once to inflate their school's scores (Nichols & Berliner, 2007, p. 68).

Despite heavy criticism, high-stakes test-based accountability policy remains a primary measure of student achievement, school effectiveness and national education performance in many countries.

In understanding the prevalence of the high-stakes test-based accountability policy, Steadman (2011) suggests taking a look at the larger political context rather than merely pedagogical endeavour. The result of high-stakes testing is perceived to be a more objective and fair measure of educational attainment compared with school-based assessments (Airasian, 1998; Au, 2013). This notion is appealing for policy actors as a political strategy to engage the public regarding the accountability of teaching and learning quality (Supovitz, 2009). Airasian (1998) articulates this strategy as a symbolisation of order and control based on legitimate authority to achieve desired educational outcomes (e.g., competence based on academic standards).

The political ideology of meritocracy has also driven the persistence of high-stakes test-based accountability policy. A belief of policy actors is often that high-stakes testing will provide equal opportunity for all students, based on their effort and hard work, irrespective of socioeconomic and cultural differences (Au, 2013). Moses and Nanna (2007) concluded that high-stakes test-based accountability is driven by political motivation by those in authority rather than by educational purposes. Furthermore, setting targeted outcomes in the PISA test leads to persistence in using the high-stakes test-based accountability policy to achieve their political objective (Breakspear, 2012; Schleicher & Zoido, 2016).

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the global phenomenon of the use of test-based accountability policy by national governments as an education reform strategy intended to improve the quality of national education systems. The World Bank is an influential international institution disseminating the logic of market competition in education as the ideology underpinning its policy advocacy, especially to emerging economies and low-income countries. The World Bank's policy advocacy encourages national governments to implement test-based accountability policy. National governments believe that the policy provides the most effective and efficient reform strategy to increase the quality of national education and to provide the knowledge and skills needed to increase national economic competitiveness. Nonetheless, the policy has proved counterproductive, with little evidence to suggest it has contributed to the enhancement of education quality due to the pressure on teachers and students to focus on increasing student test scores, which can lead to rote learning instead of deep learning for students. Moreover, the policy produces negative consequences on schooling, including corrupt practices conducted by teachers and students to increase test results.

In the next chapter, institutional complexity theory is discussed as a theoretical framework.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework of Institutional Complexity Theory

Introduction

This chapter introduces institutional complexity as a theoretical lens through which to explain key features of the Indonesian national examination policy and practices in the Indonesian education system. The chapter begins with a discussion of the history and development of institutional complexity theory. Next, it presents a description of the dimensions of institutional complexity theory. Last, the purposes of employing institutional complexity theory in the present research context are elaborated.

The History and Development of Institutional Complexity Theory

Institutional complexity refers to circumstances where institutions are confronted with incompatible prescriptions or competing demands from external institutions that they need to satisfy in order for their institution to be successful (Greenwood et al., 2011; Smith & Tracey, 2016). This definition is based on the assumption that firstly institutions operate in a particular field, and different institutions in the field are guided by various (and sometimes conflicting) institutional logics (Kraatz & Block, 2008) Institutional logic is an overarching set of principles that defines what constitutes the best possible means to organise institutional practices and to achieve institutional goals (Thornton, 2004), and there may be multiple institutional logics operating within an institution and across institutions. The interaction between institutions within a field enables institutional demands to be imposed from one institution to another (Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2008). In this sense, institutions prescribe diverse and possibly contradictory sets of expectations or demands derived from their prevailing institutional logic (Pache & Santos, 2010). This notion gives rise to the existence of competing institutional demands and results in the occurrence of particular circumstances, referred to as institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010).

The seeds of institutional complexity theory were sown in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The work of Meyer and Rowan (1977) and DiMaggio and Powell (1983) began to draw on new institutional theory. New institutional theory posits that institutions become similar over their forms and structures (isomorphic), not through rationalisation (increased efficiency in the institutional process to achieve maximum results), which leads to bureaucratisation (increased bureaucratic management in which institutions become authoritative and rigid in their formal structures; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Instead, institutions become isomorphic through the adoption of a prevailing logic from their external institutional referents and become institutionalised as an effective means to accomplishing institutional goals (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

In the language of new institutional theory, the survival prospect of institutions does not merely depend on their effectiveness to achieve institutional goals but is primarily influenced by managing demands from both internal and external institutional referents (Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2008; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Institutions operate within an institutional field, and the diffusion of principles and norms (i.e., logic) takes place through the institutional field. An institutional field may contain different logics from various institutions that operate in that field. As a result, there are prevailing logics that are generated by some institutional practices (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). These logics are viewed as legitimate by institutions, whether through coercive pressures (i.e., rules and regulations) or normative pressures (i.e., considered as an appropriate set of practices; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Institutions adopt logics from their external institutional referents into their formal structures to gain legitimacy and essential resources, which ensures their survival, and in the long term become institutionalised in their practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

A lens to explore a complex institutional interaction in an institutional field is thus required to examine the engagement of various institutions that hold incompatible logics. The next section outlines institutional complexity theory.

The Dimensions of Institutional Complexity Theory

Institutional complexity theory provides a lens to explore the interactions among institutions with multiple and potentially incompatible logics that can give rise to competing institutional demands faced by institutions. Greenwood et al. (2011) view the dimensions of institutional complexity theory as a framework to explore competing institutional demands (i.e., institutional complexity) and how institutions respond to the complexity they encounter. The key dimensions of institutional complexity theory are institutional pluralism, field structure, institutional complexity, organisational attributes as filters to institutional complexity, and institutional responses to complexity. Each of these dimensions is elaborated below (Figure 4.1).
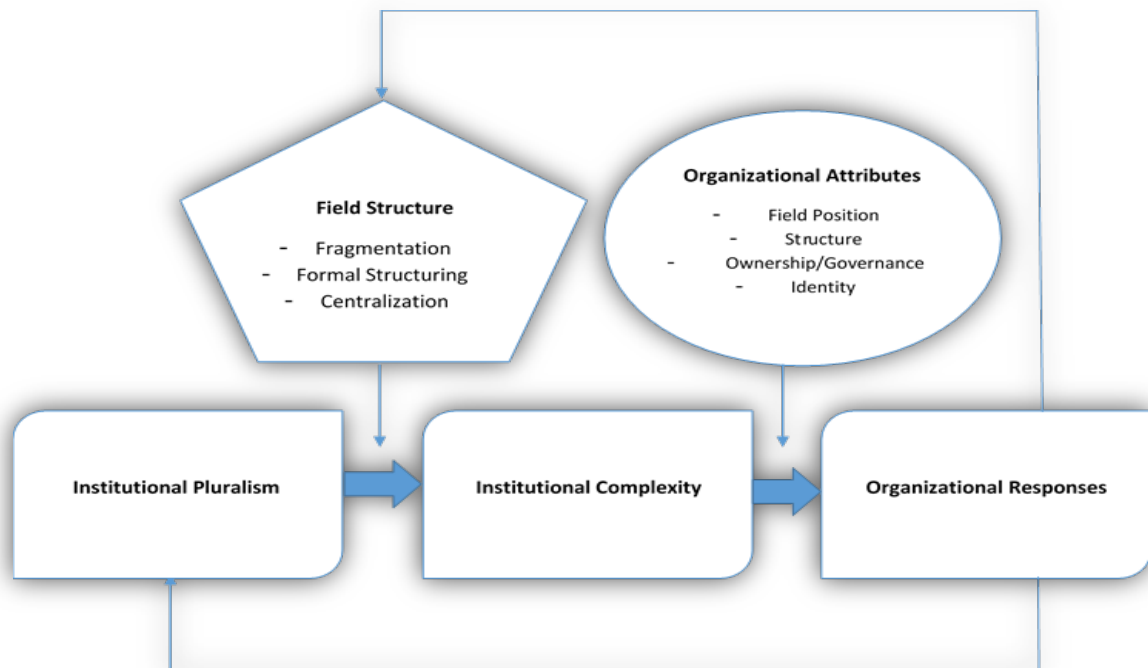
Figure 4.1. The dimensions of institutional complexity theory adapted from Greenwood et al. (2011).[4]

Institutional pluralism.

Institutional pluralism is the presence of multiple logics in institutional fields or institutional environments which generate "rules of the game" that legitimate an institution's actions, as well as directing and circumscribing an institution's practices (Kraatz & Blocks, 2008). Institutional logic is defined as "the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values and beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008, p. 4). This definition implies that the interests, identities, values and assumptions of institutions are embedded within their prevailing logics (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). Furthermore, institutional logics have both material and symbolic elements, which means that they provide formal and informal rules of action, interaction and interpretation that guide institutional practices (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Moreover, institutional logics are historically contingent; that is, while institutional logics are influential in shaping institutional practices, the degree of influence is changeable over a period based on the economic, political, structural and normative conditions affecting institutions (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012).

In short, institutional logics are an overarching set of principles that prescribe how to interpret institutional reality and define what constitutes appropriate institutional practices and how to

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[4] In this research the terms *institutional attributes* and *institutional responses* are used to refer to organisational attributes and organisational responses respectively, as written in the figure.

succeed (Thornton, 2004). Institutional logics represent 'rules of the games,' generated from institutional fields (i.e., external institutional referents) or from within internal institutions, and thus function as a set of expectations and shape institutional practices (Thornton & Ocasio, 2012).

The coexistence of multiple logics (i.e., institutional pluralism) provides challenges and opportunities for institutions. Institutions need to adhere to logics from their internal and external institutional referents to show commitment and conformity in order to obtain legitimacy and necessary resources (Kraatz & Block, 2008). The challenges emerge when institutions' adherence to a particular logic from their external institutional referents may contradict the logic from other institutions (Kraatz & Block, 2008). Furthermore, actors within institutions (i.e., internal institutions) might hold differing logics (Glynn, 2000). These notions contribute to the existence of different criteria of appropriateness in defining what constitutes appropriate institutional practices, which then shape institutions' actions when they attempt to gain commitment and conformity to institutional demands from internal institutions and external institutional referents (Glynn, 2000; Kraatz & Block 2008). Conversely, institutional pluralism may render opportunities for constructive institutional changes, although incompatible, where logic can be combined and tailored to create coherent prescriptions for prolific institutional practices (Greenwood et al., 2011). Hence, to succeed in the institutional pluralism circumstance, institutions need to maintain the coexistence of logic between the institutions themselves and their external institutional referents (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Institutional-field structure.

The second dimension is the institutional-field structure. Institutional-field structure refers to the diverse designs of institutional arrangements—that is, fragmented, rationalised and centralised—within an institutional field (Greenwood et al., 2011). An institutional field or institutional environment is a site through which interactions among institutions with a multiplicity of logics take place (Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). Scott (1995) defines the institutional field as "a community of institutions that partake of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field" (p. 56). Institutional field refers to inter-institutional networks through which institutions operate within formal relationship structures (i.e., regulations and requirements), together with cultural cognitive (values, beliefs, assumptions) and normative (norms) rules that give a collective meaning to what constitutes appropriate institutional actions (Scott, 1995). It is at this level that institutional logics are delivered and later become encoded in the institutions and manifested in mundane institutional practices (Greenwood et al., 2011).

A fragmented institutional-field structure refers to the coexistence of various institutional logics and the range of demands pressing upon institutions (Greenwood et al., 2011). In a highly fragmented

field, institutions rely on and are responsive to multiple institutional demands by uncoordinated external institutional referents (Pache & Santos, 2010). Those multiple demands, which emerge from fragmented fields and are enforced on institutions, will most likely lead to the increased complexity encountered by institutions, as each of the external institutional referents favours disparate interests (Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010). For example, Meyer, Scott, and Strang (1987) contended that the multiple functions and meanings attributed to education give rise to competing institutional demands—from teachers, parents, churches, states, and national government—on the school system in the United States (often reflected in boisterous school board meetings over the selection of library books or sites for new schools). However, Pache and Santos (2010) argued that fragmentation alone without rationalisation (see below) means that institutional demands are rather weak, and, when conflicted, can easily be ignored by institutions, since the external institutional referents exerting them have little authority to enforce their demands.

A rationalised institutional-field structure refers to the type of relationship between institutions and their institutional environments, and whether institutional demands are structured formally or informally (Greenwood et al., 2011). The degree of formalisation is important, as Greenwood et al. (2011) argued, because greater formalisation may sharpen the specificity of institutional demands and enable institutions to respond in a more calculable manner. They warned, however, that greater formalisation may decrease the availability of institutional discretion, make institutional demands more visible and accessible to policing and increase the pressures and complexity faced by institutions. In contrast, less formalisation may increase the flexibility for institutions to respond, but the trade-off has lowered the certainty of responses to the demands.

A centralised institutional-field structure refers to the hierarchical power structure and the presence of dominant institutions that support and enforce the prevailing institutional logics and demands to operate in a certain way (e.g., government regulations, professional associations; Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010). This type of structure potentially contributes to a lower degree of complexity encountered by institutions, because competing demands are managed at the institutional-field level by the dominant institutions, with compliance either enforced by exercising power and resource-dependence relationships, or by agreement (Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010).

A moderately centralised institutional field refers to the existence of various competing demands from different institutions whose influences are not dominant but sufficiently potent to be imposed on institutions (Pache & Santos, 2010). This type of field structure contributes to an increased degree of institutional complexity. Pache and Santos (2010) comment that the absence of a dominant institution in a particular institutional field means any demands from various institutions have

enough power to be imposed on other institutions. Accordingly, in a fragmented field-level structure that is moderately centralised, institutions are more likely to experience a higher degree of complexity compared with other field structures.

Institutional complexity.

The third dimension of institutional complexity theory is institutional complexity. Institutions deal with complexity whenever they are confronted with incompatible prescriptions (Greenwood et al., 2011) or competing demands (Smith & Tracey, 2016) from a multiplicity of logics among their external institutional referents. Institutional complexity theory views institutions as compelled to comply simultaneously with diverse institutional logics, each prescribing different and possibly contradictory sets of expectation for the best way to organise and achieve institutional goals (Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutional complexity theory centres its attention on exploring how institutions experience and respond to institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Institutional attributes as filters to complexity.

Institutional logics and demands that pass through institutional fields are filtered by various institutional attributes (Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutions are not passive recipients of institutional demands from their external referents. Rather, they engage in sense-making processes (i.e., interpreting, translating, transforming) in relation to the institutional demands, using institutional attributes that define their responses toward institutional complexity (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). Institutional-field position, ownership, governance and identity are the attributes that frame and define how institutions choose their response strategy from the repertoire of responses available to them when facing institutional complexity (discussed below).

Institutional governance.

The governance role of different positions and groups in institutions (whether inter- or intra-institution) functions as a filter of institutions' responses to institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011). Some positions and groups in institutions possess more powerful roles and authority than others in the governance of the institutions (Lounsbury, 2001). Those powerful positions and groups are more influential in institutions' decision making as well as deciding institutions' responses to demands from their external referents (Greenwood et al., 2011). Therefore, the choices of which institutional logics and demands to prioritise or ignore, and how institutions respond to complexity, are likely to be influenced by the interests of the groups that hold power in the governance of the institutions (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Institutional identity

Institutions' identities shape their responses to institutional demands from their external institutional referents. Polletta and Jasper (2001) and Thornton and Ocasio (2008) define institutional identities

as a cognitive, normative and emotional connection experienced by members of institutions, driven by a shared status with other members of institutions. Collective identities can emerge at the level of internal institutions and among the population of institutions at the level of institutional fields. As collective identities, at both internal-institution and institutional-field levels, become institutionalised, the collective identities develop institutions' behaviour (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Institutional logics that come from the institutional field can drive institutions' behaviour only when specific institutions' identities are brought into play (Kraatz & Block, 2008). Hence, institutional identities, whether at internal-institution and institutional-field level, function as a filter for institutions to interpret and respond to institutional demands from their external institutional referents (Glynn, 2008).

At the level of internal institutions, institutional identities can be defined as collective values that drive institutional behaviour and distinguish institutions from their external institutional referents (e.g., we are a school; Glynn, 2008). The internal institutional identities also provide an institution's members with criteria for the appropriateness of the institution's actions, that is, whether they are legitimate or not (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Accordingly, institutional identities at the level of internal institutions influence how institutions perceive and prioritise institutional demands from their external institutional referents, as well as defining which of the possible responses are assessed and selected (Glynn, 2008; Greenwood et al., 2011).

At the institutional-field level, institutional identities are constructed by a network of institutions in a set of claims to a social category, for example, a top-ten performing school (not lower performing schools; Glynn, 2008). The institutional identities then define a set of symbols (widely shared meanings and expectations), by which institutions choose to conform to these prevalent values, and in doing so to gain legitimacy within established institutional fields (Glynn, 2008). In other words, institutions value their identities, because they contribute to enhancing the legitimacy of the institutions or are simply taken for granted by the institutions (Greenwood et al., 2011). Therefore, institutional identities at the level of institutional fields influence how institutions perceive and prioritise institutional demands from their external institutional referents, and institutions' responses when encountering institutional complexity (Greenwood et al. 2011).

Institutional-field position.

Institutional-field position is an institutional attribute that functions as a filter to institutional complexity. Institutional-field position (often associated with institutions' age and status) might increase or decrease institutions' discretion in responding to institutional demands from their external institutional referents (Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutions' size and status are likely to intensify institutional demands from their external institutional referents because of their public

visibility and their prominence, thus limiting the availability of institutions' response options relating to institutional demands (Greenwood et al., 2011). For example, Ahmadjian and Robinson (2001) described how large and high-status business institutions in Japan were reluctant to depart from the Japanese tradition of providing lifelong employment, when facing an economic crisis in late 1990s, since permanent employment was perceived by the public (and themselves) to represent a business's superiority. However, large and high-status institutions may have the ability to deviate from the institutional demands of their external institutional referents (Greenwood et al., 2011). For example, Greenwood and Suddaby (2006) described how global business institutions in Canada were able to eschew standard practice imposed by the national regulatory body because they were beyond the control of the body. In this sense, institutions' size can provide immunity to institutional demands from their external institutional referents and increase their discretion in responding to those demands (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Institutional structure.

Institutional structure is an attribute that filters institutions' responses to institutional complexity. Institutional structure refers to the structural division of labour within institutions and is likely to differ across institutions in their awareness of and receptivity to institutional demands from external institutional referents (Delmas & Toffel, 2008). Institutional actors in the different divisions make sense of, interpret and enact institutional demands from external institutional referents to internal institutions (Greenwood et al., 2011). The process of sense making, interpreting and enacting institutional demands from a different structural division within institutions shapes how institutions respond to institutional demands from their external institutional referents (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Institutional responses to complexity.

Institutions' responses to institutional complexity vary from conforming to resistant, from impotent to influential, and from habitual to opportunistic (Olivier, 1991). The existence of multiple institutional logics and demands makes institutions seek possible alternative courses of action as to which demands to prioritise, satisfy, alter or ignore, to gain legitimacy and the resources necessary to ensure their survival (Pache & Santos, 2010). In circumstances of institutional complexity, more than one course of action is available as an appropriate response by institutions (Whittington, 1992). Thus, in this sense, institutions possess the opportunity to choose a strategy of action from their repertoire of possible responses when facing institutional complexity (Olivier, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010). To explain this notion, Olivier (1991) and Pache and Santos (2010, 2013) proposed alternative strategic responses by institutions as they faced institutional complexity, including decoupling, complying and compromising.

The decoupling response to institutional complexity.

Decoupling refers to an institution's symbolic or ceremonial compliance with institutional demands or prescribed practices by a particular logic from external institutional referents, while the institution implements practices promoted by its institutional logic (Pache & Santos, 2013). Institutions decouple if they experience conflicting demands between external institutional referents and internal institutional logic in ideological goals they deem legitimate, or due to the means of actions (technical concerns) to achieve institutional goals (Pache & Santos, 2010; Tilcsik, 2010). However, institutions can only decouple effectively from the institutional demands of their external institutional referents if they have the power to control the behaviour of their members, or when strong ideological beliefs support the institutions' action to decouple from their members (Tilscik, 2010).

Decoupling is a defensive action by institutions in response to conflicting institutional demands from their external institutional referents. Decoupling minimises the risk for institutions of losing legitimacy and necessary resources from their external institutional referents, as it prevents conflicts from being intensified between internal and external institutional referents (Pache & Santos, 2013). There are two crucial assumptions identified by Pache and Santos (2013) on how institutions execute decoupling. First, all members of the institution adhere to the same logic and are willing to protect it. Second, the institution can eschew the scrutiny of their external institutional referents. Nevertheless, decoupling may be hard to sustain by institutions over an extended period, as it is challenging to avoid scrutiny from external institutional referents (Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2008; Pache & Santos, 2013).

The complying response to institutional complexity.

Complying is described as conscious obedience by institutions to institutional demands from their external institutional referents (Olivier, 1991). Institutions deliberately choose to comply with institutional demands because the approval of external institutional referents enhances the institutions' legitimacy and supply of resources needed to conduct institutional activities (Meyer & Rowan, 1983). Meyer and Scott (1983) state that institutions' compliance with institutional demands benefits in terms of minimising vulnerability to negative assessment of their activities from external institutional referents. Although compliance could be an influential strategy for institutions to enhance their survival, the institutions may find that complying with external institutional demands is unsuitable or unworkable (Olivier, 1991). In this case, institutions are confronted with conflicting institutional demands and incompatibility between logics from external institutional referents and internal institutions, especially over the institutional goals to be achieved (Olivier, 1991). Pache and Santos (2010) point out that conflicting demands at the ideological level (institutional goals) are not easily challenged nor negotiable.

The compromising response to institutional complexity.

Compromising is a response strategy by institutions to complexity in which the institutions attempt to achieve an acceptable balance between conflicting institutional demands from their external institutional referents (Pache & Santos, 2013). The strategy may be applied by conforming to the minimum standard of what is expected, or through crafting new behaviour in institutions' practices that represent all elements of the conflicting demands, or through bargaining with external institutional referents (Olivier, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2013).

Compromising can comprise either suitable or unworkable strategy for institutions in responding to complexity (Pache & Santos, 2013). The span of interaction between institutions and their external institutional referents is vital in this sense. Pache and Santos (2013) state that compromising might allow institutions to pay attention to some extent to the conflicting demands imposed by their external institutional referents, thus reducing the risk of losing support from them. Nonetheless, over an extended period, compromising may not allow institutions to fully secure an endorsement from their external institutional referents. In this sense, compromising may ultimately fail to satisfy various enduring institutional demands from external institutional referents, because internal institutions may insist on strict adherence to their logic. In addition, compromising may not always be a workable strategy in a circumstance where institutional demands from external institutional referents are entirely incompatible with institutions' goals or practices, since agreement with conformity is barely accomplished in the internal institutions.

Employing Institutional Complexity Theory in the Research Context

As alluded to in previous chapters, the development and implementation of the national examination policy in the Indonesian education system appeared to involve various institutions with distinctive logics and competing demands that shaped the policy at the macro level and the schools' implementation at the micro level. For example, protests by some schools and communities over the national examinations suggested that they held a different institutional logic from the Indonesian government (Chapter 1). Thus, the theory is a suitable lens to explore the multiplicity of logics and competing demands from different institutions in the research context. Employing institutional complexity theory in this research is beneficial because it will provide a framework by which to:

1. Understand institutional logics and competing demands from various institutions that influenced the development and implementation of the national examination policy. Identifying the relevant institutions and their logics will form an important part of the research. Institutions which were involved in the development of the national examination policy were: the World Bank (2004), which recommended Indonesia adopt a test-based accountability policy; the Indonesian executive and legislative governments,

which were responsible for developing national policies; and the MoE, which was responsible for implementing the national examination policy, as well as schools.

2. Understand how the MoE and schools experienced and responded to institutional complexity as a result of various institutional logics and competing demands from their external institutional referents, as well as the implication of the MoE's and schools' responses to the complexity for the development and implementation of the national examination policy.

Understanding the research questions using institutional complexity theory will address a gap in the research literature on this theory. This study examines how institutions respond to institutional complexity driven by various institutional demands and plurality of institutional logics. While the extant literature has highlighted how shifts in logics or the existence of plural (usually two) logics affect organisations across a field, much less systematic attention has been paid to how individual institutions experience and respond to the complexity that arises (Greenwood et al., 2011). This study will address this gap by providing an analysis of how two institutions, at macro policy and micro implementation levels, experience and respond to institutional complexity. It will also address a second gap in the field. Most of the research on institutional complexity to date has been done in Western, developed countries (Greenwood et al., 2011). This study, undertaken in an Eastern, developing country examines the generalisation of the theory to a different context.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed institutional complexity theory as a theoretical lens to explain the use of a national examination policy in the Indonesian education system. Institutional complexity is a circumstance when institutions encounter incompatible institutional demands from their external institutional referents. Institutions must adhere to institutional demands to obtain legitimacy or necessary resources from their external institutional referents. Institutions' responses to institutional complexity give rise to changes in their formal structures (programmes, policies). The development and implementation of the national examination policy appeared to involve various institutions with competing institutional demands and logics. As a result, in Indonesia, the MoE encountered complexity in the development and implementation of the national examination policy, as did schools in responding to the policy. Therefore, institutional complexity theory is a suitable lens to explain the development and implementation of the national examination policy in Indonesia and school response to the policy.

In the next chapter, the methodology for the research is discussed.

Chapter 5. Methodology

Introduction

The chapter begins with a discussion on the use of evaluation research and qualitative method as the research approach. Next, it presents a case study method to collect data. The research procedures and method for data analysis are presented in the following two sections, and then ethical issues of this research are highlighted. Last, the trustworthiness of the research is described.

Research Approach

This research had two questions (Chapter 1, p. 4):

1. What is the rationale of the Indonesian central government underlying the development and implementation of the national examination policy?

2. How do schools respond to the national examination policy?

These questions were designed to uncover the underlying causes of a dispute between the government and the public, driven by the implementation of the policy (Chapter 1, p. 4). These questions were framed evaluatively, in that the aim of the research is to determine the merit or the worth of educational policy (Simons, 2009). There were methodological choices to make about how to determine the worth of the policy being studied (Simons, 2009). For example, is it for the researcher to decide the merit of the policy based on evidence and scientific judgement? Is it for the stakeholders who are directly responsible for implementing the policy? Is it for the wider public to facilitate their contribution to the policy debate? Due to the political nature of evaluation study (i.e., who gets what and whose interests are served?), this research follows the principle of "democratic evaluation" (MacDonald, 1976). Democratic evaluation places the judgement of the worth of the policies in the hand of the stakeholders and emphasises the impartial role of the researcher in collecting and delivering information to all stakeholders in relation to the policy, to enable them to contribute to informed policy making and policy debate (MacDonald, 1976; Simons, 2009).

Stake (2005) explains that in evaluation studies, the researcher needs to be responsive to issues identified by various stakeholders relevant to the policy being studied. This responsiveness is heightened in democratic evaluation. In this evaluation approach, the researcher takes into account the variability of human actions in institutions, the influences that determine such actions, as well as the interrelationship of acts and consequences, and the possible different perceptions of the goals of a policy held both by policymakers and the education practitioners (Simons, 2009). The most

appropriate method for such democratic evaluation is a qualitative method. Qualitative research has a focus on the interpretation of the social construction of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), and assumes that social reality is not singular or objective, but is shaped by human experiences and social contexts (ontology) and is, therefore, best studied within its sociohistoric context and by reconciling the subjective interpretations of the various participants (epistemology; Bhattacherjee, 2012). The use of the qualitative method adopted here focuses on capturing realities through the eyes of the people being studied to understand how people interpret and make sense of their experiences in the context in which they live (Heaton, 2004; Patton, 1990). It also adopts a flexible rather than structured research approach that relies on theories and concepts defined in advance (Heaton, 2004; Patton, 1990). Qualitative research also offers the advantage of understanding how the policy was implemented in the particular context of the participating institutions and capturing the complexity of the policy and its implementation (Simons, 2009).

There are many theoretical frameworks that can be applied under the broad umbrella of qualitative research, and that reflect democratic evaluation principles. In this study, institutional complexity theory is used as a framework to explain the national examination policy and its implementation. A key goal of institutional complexity theory is to understand how an institution responds to different institutional demands from its stakeholders. The institutional demands are derived from the various institutional logics of the stakeholders. This requires an interpretive stance that focuses on how an institution interprets the various logics or rationalities and demands, including its own. Institutional complexity theory was useful for this research because it provided a framework to explore various logics from different institutions along with their institutional demands that influenced the development and implementation of the national examination policy by the Indonesian government and school response to the policy.

Case study method.

This study adopted a qualitative case study approach based on democratic evaluation principles, where institutional complexity theory was the framework for analysing the case. Simons (2009) defines a case study as an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular policy in a "real-life" context. Its primary purpose is to generate an in-depth understanding of the policy, to generate knowledge, and inform policy development, professional practice, and community action. The case study method was the most appropriate for this study because it can represent multiple audiences involved in the policy, to engage them in the process of inquiry, and provide a rich and contextual picture of what happened in the field through which policymakers, practitioners and the public can learn (Simons, 2009). Case study was a natural fit for evaluation research using democratic evaluation principles (Kushner, 2000) because a case

study enabled the researcher to represent the voice of different stakeholders in the national examination policy in an equal way and integrate those voices. A case study also fits with the use of qualitative method and institutional complexity theory for this study. A case study can represent different perspectives, values, and interests of various stakeholders in the policy (Simons, 2009) by observing research participants in their real-life context or naturalistic setting (the characteristic of qualitative research) and seeking to document different logics (rationales, values, and interests) of various stakeholders in the policy (the aim of using institutional complexity theory).

Context and Participants

Context.

The research involved three different institutions: a school in the Depok municipality; the Municipal Education Office (MEO) in Depok municipality; and the Ministry of Education of Indonesia (MoE). The school and MEO case studies aimed to explore the national examination policy at the micro implementation level. Whereas, the MoE case study aimed to explore the national examination policy at the macro policy level. The municipality of Depok is located in West Java Province, the most populated island in Indonesia. Depok is considered the youngest municipality in the province. The municipality is strategically located as a neighbouring city to Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. Due to its location, Depok has become overgrown. As a result of immigration, there are increased numbers of residential areas and educational as well as commercial business institutions. Depok's population continues to grow at a high rate. In 2015, the population of the municipality was around two million people (Badan Pusat Statistik Kota Depok [BPS], 2016).

The lack of availability of high-performing schools has been a significant concern to the public and the local government as the population and economy in Depok flourish. The limited number of high schools available in the municipality and the notion of classifying schools based on national examination scores has resulted in stiff competition for students to get admitted into high-performing schools. The local government states that, in 2015, there were 182,229 students enrolled in high schools, with only 13 public schools (BPS, 2016). There were also 43 private high schools available (BPS, 2016). However, parents prefer to send their children to public schools, as tuition is free. Parents deem that public high schools offer a better quality of education services compared to private high schools. Typically, in the Indonesian context, schools are ranked by number (e.g., high school#1, high school#2, and so forth). The lower the number, the better the school's reputation.

Institution 1. The school (HS#3 Depok).

The school case study was conducted in high school number 3 (HS#3). The school was selected using purposive sampling. The choice to conduct a case study in HS#3 was based simply on the ease of access and approval from the school principal, and the school's location a short distance from the

MoE office. Hence, it provided an advantage to make communications and discussions with both school members (principal, teachers, and students) and the bureaucrats in the MoE. HS#3 is considered one of the most prestigious schools in Depok municipality. This school was founded in 1987 and has been well equipped with adequate educational facilities, such as computers, laboratories, books, a library, basketball field, mosque, cafeteria, and a school meeting hall. There are about 1,200 students in the school, divided into 11 classes in each grade (Grades 10, 11, 12). In total, there are 33 classrooms located within two-storey rectangular school buildings. Each class consists of approximately 40 students with traditional column and row seating arrangements. There are about 51 faculty members, consisting of 42 teachers, four vice-principals and five school administrators.

Institution 2: The Education Office (Depok).

The MEO is an institution within the Depok municipal government which is responsible for administering schooling in its local jurisdiction. The MEO has the authority to allocate funding for school operation, recruit and redeploy teachers and school principals from one school to another, and formulate local policies for schools. However, the MEO has a responsibility to follow and implement national education policies established by the MoE. The MEO is also responsible for evaluating and improving the quality of education in its local region.

Institution 3: The Ministry of Education.

The case study at the MoE was conducted in the Centre for Educational Assessment (*Pusat Penilaian Pendidikan*) and the National Education Standard Board (*Badan Nasional Standarisasi Pendidikan*). The Centre for Educational Assessment is a division within the Research and Development Board of the MoE that is responsible for developing examination questions and administering the implementation of the national examination. The Centre executes a challenging and demanding task in implementing the national examination, a large-scale examination involving 7.3 million ninth- and twelfth-grade students from 79,500 junior and senior secondary schools in Indonesia (Ministry of Education, 2015). There are approximately 35 million examination scripts to be distributed to 34 provincial education offices and 514 district education offices for the national examination. The Centre also coordinates with international organisations to implement international testing programmes, including the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and PISA.

The National Education Standard Board is an independent institution which functions to set up national education standards and oversee the implementation of the standards in schools. The Board consists of experts in education curriculum, education evaluation, education management, and psychometry. The Board works with the MoE to develop curricula for schools, evaluate the

implementation of the curricula in schools, and implement the national examination to assess student achievement and school performance. The Board was included in the present study because implementing the national examination is its important task and it is useful to understand the rationales underlying the development and implementation of the national examination policy.

Participants.

A snowball technique was used to recruit participants for this research from the three institutions mentioned above. Information about this research was provided to the leaders of these institutions. For example, the researcher introduced the purpose of this research, and the activities needed to gather data to the head of the Research and Development Board of the MoE, the head of the MEO, and the school principal. The leaders then shared the information among the institutions' various members or recommended directly introducing the research to the members. The leaders of the institutions above have taken responsibility for ensuring that participation of their members in the research was voluntary and would not affect their employment standing.

Following the standard research procedures in Indonesia, the head of the Research and Development Board in the MoE granted access for this research and allowed me to connect with the Centre for Educational Assessment to introduce the research and undertake interviews. An official in the Centre of Educational Assessment then advised me to have a conversation with an official in the National Education Standard Board for further interviews. These bodies are the division within the MoE directly involved in the development and implementation of the national examination policy. In addition, the official in the Centre of Educational Assessment allowed me to observe the MoE's meetings related to the implementation of the national examination. The same procedure was used at the MEO. The head of MEO gave permission to carry out the research and to connect with the division within the MEO which directly administers secondary education level.

The school principal gave consent for me to carry out the research and suggested that the vice-principal and some teachers participate in this research. The school principal introduced me to teachers who teach Grade 12 (final year) students, as research participants, since those teachers would prepare students to sit in the national examination. The principal ensured that the decisions of teachers and students to participate in the research were voluntary and would not affect their respective standing in the school. After I introduced the research, seven teachers agreed to participate. Three teachers invited me to observe their classrooms and helped me to introduce the research to their students for the purpose of recruiting them for interviews. Five students were willing to be interviewed. Moreover, the vice-principal gave consent to observe the school's environment and the school's meeting on assessment events. In total, three officials of the MoE, one official of the MEO,

seven teachers, five students, one school principal, and one vice-principal were willing to be participants in this research. Table 5.1 is a summary of the participants in this research.

Table 5.1

Research Participants

Institution	Research Participants	Total Participants	Sampling Procedure
Macro Policy Level			
The Research and Development Board	1 Participant	3	Participants were purposively selected on the basis of the role of their institutions. These institutions were responsible for developing and implementing the national examination.
The Centre for Educational Assessment	1 Participant		
The National Education Standard Board	1 Participant		
Micro School-Implementation Level			
The Municipal Education Office	1 Participant		Participants were purposively selected on the basis of the role of their institutions. These institutions implement the national examination.
The School	14 Participants	15	

Data Collection Measures

A qualitative case study allows a variety of ways of gathering the data, including open-ended interviews, observations and document analysis (Patton, 1990; Simons, 2009). This research used these three methods to gather data from the macro policy and a micro school-implementation level. The first research question aimed to describe the rationale for how the policy was developed and implemented. A case study in three divisions of the MoE—the Research and Development Board, the Centre of Educational Assessment, and the National Education Standard Board—was conducted to answer the first research question on the rationale of the Indonesian government underlying the development and implementation of the national examination policy. To do so, it was important to collect data on the policy itself, and also the rationale for its creation and implementation. The second research question aimed to understand how schools responded to the national examination policy. A case study in one school and the MEO was conducted to explore the school's response to the policy. A summary of the data collected and the rationale for each source for each research question is presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.3 below.

Table 5.2

Data Sources and Measures for the First Research Question

Data Type	Data Source	Description of Data	Reason for Using This Source
Policy document	The World Bank's policy recommendation.	Recommendation by the World Bank to the Indonesian government to implement a test-based accountability policy aimed to improve the quality of Indonesian education.	The document revealed the involvement of the World Bank in the development of the national examination policy with its policy recommendations to the Indonesian government. (As stated in Chapter 6, the World Bank's recommendation led to the birth of the national examination policy.)
	Law 20/2003 National Medium-Term Development Plan (2015–2019) National Long-Term Development Plan (2005–2025).	The underlying rationale of the Indonesian government towards education reform efforts. The education reforms aimed to improve the quality of education and human capital with the ultimate purpose of increasing national economic competitiveness.	These documents were used to understand the rationale for the education reforms.
	The Minister of Education Regulation 75/2009 about the National Examination Policy; the Minister of Education Regulation 45/2010 about the National Examination Policy; the Minister of Education Regulation 5/2015 about the National Examination Policy.	Detailed regulations of the national examination policy.	These documents described how the policy is being used. These documents also presented the changes in the regulations of the national examination policy throughout the implementation of the policy.
Interview	The head of Research and Development of the MoE. The chief of the National Education Standard Board. The head Division of the National Centre of Educational Assessment.	Reflective-dialogic interviews to understand the rationale of the Indonesian government toward the development and implementation of the national examination policy, and to understand the underlying causes of disputes between the government and the public about the national examination policy.	The interviews were used to reveal the complexity faced by the MoE in the development and implementation of the national examination policy.
Observation	National meeting involved the Minister of Education, the head of Research and Development of the MoE, the head of Provincial and Municipal Education Offices.	An observation of a meeting discussing the implementation of the national examination policy.	The meeting disclosed the reasons for the MoE proposal to the executive government to suspend the implementation of the national examination policy.

Table 5.3

Data Sources and Measures for the Second Research Question

Data Type	Data Source	Description	Reason for using this source
Interview	The school principal, vice-principal, and teachers.	Reflective-dialogic interviews to explore how the school responded to the national examination policy. The interviews sought to understand teachers' values underpinning their assessment practices.	The interviews were expected to uncover participants' views and values about education, and how they translated their values into their teaching and educating students. The interviews were used to reveal factors that shaped the responses from the school to the national examination policy.
	The MEO official.	Reflective-dialogic interview to explore how the MEO responded to the national examination policy.	The interview was used to reveal the challenges faced by the MEO and its efforts to drive schools and students to succeed in the national examination.
	Students.	Reflective-dialogic interviews explored how students prepare themselves to succeed in the national examination.	The interviews were used to reveal the challenges faced by students and their efforts to succeed in the national examination.
Observation	The school's meeting.	Two school meetings where the school leaders and teachers assessed student achievement to decide student retention or promotion to the next grade.	The observation was used to understand teachers' values underpinning their teaching and educating their students, as well as how the values shaped assessment practice.
	The school environment during the new academic year, when the school conducted student-admission process.	The observation of any activities in the school's surrounding environment relevant to the implementation of the national examination policy.	The observation was used to uncover how the school's stakeholders responded to the national examination policy.

Interview.

Interviews in this research were conducted as a reflective-dialogic approach (Denzin, 2001; Ellis & Berger, 2001). The reflective-dialogic approach meant that the interviews were conducted using conversation approach rather than a structured question-and-answer exchange. This approach emphasises participants' reflexivity to their practices and the non-judgemental engagement of the researcher collecting data (Way, Zwier, & Tracy, 2015). The use of the reflective-dialogic approach for this research was aimed at getting deep understanding of how participants made sense of and interpreted their practices, thoughts, and feelings about the national examination policy in relation to their contexts and lives, as well as to encourage the participants to evaluate and define the worth of the national examination policy from their own perspectives.

The use of a reflective-dialogic process in interviews requires a high level of trust from the participants, to make them feel safe and open to reveal their experiences, thoughts, and feelings about a case (Way et al., 2015). To ensure participants' trust, the researcher spent a considerable amount of time (months) in the school site to build relationships with the participants. Furthermore, the researcher revealed his motivation to do the research and potential contribution of the research, to encourage participants to open up in telling their experiences, thoughts, and feelings about the national examination policy. In addition, throughout the interviews, the researcher exercised good listening skills. Moreover, probing questions were also used to encourage participants to explain and reflect on their practice, and to elaborate their statements.

At the macro policy level, the policymakers were invited to reflect on the purpose of the national examination policy, the rationales of the implementation of the national examination policy, and why the national examination policy has met with public objections. Meanwhile, at the micro school-implementation level, teachers, school leaders, students, and administrators in the MEO were invited to describe the meaning of the national examination for them, how they prepared for the national examination, and the constraints they faced in responding to the national examination.

Interviews were audio-tape recorded and transcribed to allow participants to edit and change their accounts in the interviews. In total, three participants at the macro policy level and 15 participants at the micro school-implementation level were interviewed in this research. A summary is provided in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4

Interviews Conducted in This Research

Institution and Participant	Interview	Total Participants
Macro Policy Level		
The head of Research and Development Board	Two hours interviews	
The head of division of the Centre for Educational Assessment	1-hour interview.	3
The chief of National Education Standard Board	1-hour interview	
Micro School and Implementation Level		
The head division of the Municipal Education Office	1-and-a-half-hour interview	
Seven teachers	Two 1-hour interviews	
The school principal	Three 1-hour interviews	
The vice-principal	Two 1-hour interviews	15
Five students	Two rounds of interviews, each 1-and-a-half-hours	
	First round of interviews conducted with two students, and the second round conducted with three students	

Observation.

The milieu of the setting needs to be explained through observation to fully understand the nature and complexity of interactions among the various stakeholders involved in a case being studied (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972). Observations in this research were conducted to gain opportunities to explore the interactions among policymakers at the macro policy level and the public in general, as well as among school leaders and teachers with administrators in the MEO and parents, in relation to the development and implementation of the national examination policy. The observations also aimed to understand how the policymakers, the school leaders, teachers, administrators in the MEO, and students expressed their understanding about the national examination policy and practice.

At the macro policy level, two observations of ministerial meetings were conducted to understand the rationale of the development and implementation of the national examination policy. These meetings were chosen for observation because it was relevant to the research purposes. Moreover, the MoE's officials allowed the researcher to observe the meetings. What each speaker said was written verbatim as far as possible, or the key ideas summarised if there was insufficient time to record full sentences.

At the micro school level, three classroom sessions and two school meetings about assessment events were conducted to understand teachers' values underpinning their assessment practices. These values were important factors that shaped how the school responded to the national examination. The researcher's role was simply observing, mainly conducted by sitting at the back of the classrooms or in the school auditorium to observe lessons or meetings. Brief field notes were taken in these observations. In addition, observation of the interactions and communications among the school staff and stakeholders in the school environment setting were also conducted to note issues and events in the implementation of the national examination policy in the school's context. These observations were unstructured, conducted mainly in the school yard and in the teachers' office where events related to the national examination occurred. In these observations, the researcher was simply observing the events, and nonjudgemental descriptions of what was observed were written, that is, events were written descriptively rather than evaluatively (see example following Table 5.5). Each observation was followed by a short follow-up interview with teachers, which mainly aimed to clarify the information written in the notes. The observations also functioned to develop more focused interview questions with the participants in the school. A summary is provided in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5

Observations Conducted in this Research

Events	Observation	Participants
Macro Policy Level		
National meeting through which the Minister of Education explained the rationale of the MoE's proposal to the President and Vice-President to suspend the implementation of the national examination policy.	2-hour meeting	The Minister of Education, the head of Research and Development of the MoE, the head of Provincial and Municipal Education Offices.
Internal ministry meeting discussed school accreditation and quality improvement.	1-hour meeting	The head of Research and Development of the MoE, members of the National Education Standard Board, officials of the MoE.
Micro School and Implementation Level		
The school meeting to decide student promotion and retention to the next grade.	Whole day meeting (approximately seven hours).	Teachers, school principal, and vice-principal.
Observation of the school environment during the new academic year when the school conducted student-admission process.	Approximately 30 to 40 hours of observation and mainly in a daily basis during the main study.	Teachers, parents, school's stakeholders.

Field notes were taken during all observations. The approach to field notes was to document events occurring in the field in relation to national examination policy and its implementation. An example of the field notes from an observation is presented below.

Thursday, 21 July 2016

It's about twelve o'clock in the afternoon, still with two teachers at the security building. I see three men with unpleasant appearance - untidy clothes, long hair, unfriendly faces approach us at the building. They introduce themselves as a journalist from local newspapers, which is unknown, or we never heard before.

I see a tension in the conversation from the journalist and the teachers … teacher says, *I never heard about your newspaper before, what is your purpose?* And the 'brokers' reply *we want to meet the school principal … umm, maybe it's because you don't like to read anything* … in a quite high tone … the teacher then responds by saying … the school principal is away.

Document review.

The study used two types of non-peer-reviewed sources—policy documents, and newspaper reports. The rationale for reviewing policy documents was that the documents provided valuable information that supported the researcher to understand the national examination policy itself and the rationale for the development and implementation of the national examination from the Indonesian government. Relevant policy documents were selected as important data sources for this research and the rationale for inclusion is listed in Table 5.2. For example, the policy recommendation document from the World Bank was included because of the influence of the institution on the development of the national examination policy.

The study used newspaper reports for two reasons. First, the newspaper reports illustrated how schools and the municipal government responded to the national examination policy. For example, a newspaper report highlights how the top ten municipal governments with the highest rates of student passing the national examination (Prawitasari, 2014) increased the pressure for the municipal governments and schools to raise their national examination scores. Second, the newspaper reports were used to replace specific statements from participants that related to cheating or brokering that could be linked back to them or another person. This strategy aimed to avoid the identification of participants that could potentially harm them, and this strategy and its rationale is described more fully in the ethical issues section (p. 51). For example, a newspaper report about the maladministration of school admissions in Depok municipality as the highest in West Java Province (Arifianto, 2016b) was cited to replace specific participants' statements about the brokerage industry during the school admission process.

Research Procedures

Data collection for this research was conducted in two stages, the preliminary study and the field work. Each of these stages is described below.

Preliminary study.

The first phase of data collection was a preliminary study. The preliminary study was conducted from 27 July to 5 August 2015 to assist with the development of the research aim and design. The sole purpose of the preliminary study was in developing the research proposal, in particular to identify potential research participants, to understand the current issues in the national examination policy and practices, to develop the research focus, and to define the research methodology. Data obtained during the preliminary study were used solely for these purposes. Only data from the fieldwork were reported on in the Results chapters.

The HS#3 was selected using purposive sampling for this preliminary study. Three important issues were identified throughout 4 days of school observation (about four hours of observation each day) and informal conversation with two teachers and two parents. The observation was not included in the research data (see Table 5.5). The observation revealed stiff competition among parents to get their children admitted in a high-performing high school in the municipality through the use of national examination results to sort and place students in competition for entry to the next level of education. Second, the unique conception of teaching among teachers focused on developing students' morals and character, rather than achieving high results in the national examination. Third, the observations highlighted the presence of sensitive issues, such as cheating conducted by student and brokerage industry during school admission process. The identification of this issue led to several ethical processes designed to maintain the confidentiality of the participants described later in this chapter.

A policymaker in the MoE allowed the researcher to have a conversation about the potential study during the preliminary study. The policymaker raised three important issues: first, reported mass cheating as a consequence of the implementation of the national examination policy; second, the national examination is a single assessment instrument that serves multiple purposes; and third, the intention of the policymakers to increase the usefulness of the national examination for school quality improvement.

These issues were important factors in refining the subsequent research focus and methodology used for this research. The following extract shows the field notes in the left column and the emerging analysis in the right column linked to the literature. The preliminary study also helped to identify potential research participants to be approached in the later stage of this research (the fieldwork). Detailed notes from the preliminary study are attached in the appendices 4. A sample of the analysis is provided below.

Table 5.6

A Sample of Analysis of Information from the Preliminary Study

Data source: Observation in the school 31 July 2015	Analysis
They [students] *celebrated their graduation immediately after they finished their national examination 3 months ago. The boys took pictures of the girls in a sensual and sexy way as a celebration of their graduation and shared the picture through social media. Somehow, the teachers noticed the girls' pictures from the social media.* *This is negative conduct in the teachers' perspective, and contrary to school rules and regulations and moral values. As a consequence, the teachers withhold the students' high school certificate (diploma) for their misconduct.*	Tensions faced by teachers between student academic achievement versus morality, material versus spiritual goals education.

Some teachers express their disappointment for student misconduct, they say *"the actions of these students ruined the school reputation, we would prefer to have well-mannered slow-learner students than smart students with awful behaviour."* **Data source: Conversation with MoE official 3 August 2015**	This shows teachers' emphasis on developing students' morals and character.
At the higher political level, the policy makers assess the quality of education in national level, solely based on national examination and the result of international test such as PISA and TIMMS. I think that point of view is not appropriate. That is a simplified way to measure the quality of education.	This shows the belief from higher policymakers that education quality reflects tests scores.

The preliminary study was carried out in accordance with the same ethical procedures used in the main fieldwork for the research. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, the researcher made the sites and people in the preliminary study anonymous in the write-up about the preliminary study in the thesis, and to removing any potential identifiers (e.g., size of school) which could unintentionally lead to identification of the participants. The researcher also did not disclose the site for the preliminary study to anyone apart from the supervisors, nor did he disclose preliminary study participant attributes to anyone apart from the supervisors, who were supporting him to develop his research proposal. In addition, the conversations and observations during the preliminary study were all held with participants' prior consent and none of the conversations and observations were not recorded. Two specific issues requiring careful ethical consideration were uncovered during the preliminary study (e.g., reports by participants of cheating and use of brokers in relation to the national examination). The same ethical principles for confidentiality outlined earlier applied here to address confidentiality issues. The information obtained was used to solely to develop the research proposal, and all information obtained remained confidential to the researcher and his supervisors supporting him develop his research proposal. The participants remained anonymous in all reporting and the researcher did not disclose who he talked to with any other participant. In this way, the information uncovered could not be traced back to the individuals in the preliminary study. Finally, the researcher used reflexivity—to be reflective to what the researcher thought about participants' voices. This was done by writing field notes along with the researcher's interpretation of the data to make sure his interpretations accurately represented participant voices. This ensured that his understanding of the issues identified in the preliminary study (e.g., cheating) reflected participants' viewpoints.

Fieldwork.

The second phase of the data collection for this research was the fieldwork. The fieldwork started in HS#3 and lasted about four months, from June to October 2016, with an average of 4 days of school visits each week (Monday to Thursday, approximately three to five hours each day). The school case study aimed to understand in depth the nature of the school's life, its culture and the social context

of the school that shaped its assessment practices and response to the national examination policy. Throughout the research process, data were collected from interviews with teachers, the school principal, the vice-principal, and students, and from participant observations focusing on their assessment practice and their response to the national examination policy.

Information from the school case study was communicated to the MEO (Municipal Education Office) after obtaining approval from the school principal, teachers and students. This was part of democratic evaluation process which emphasises the researcher's role to disseminate data from one policy's stakeholder to another (MacDonald, 1976). The information obtained at the school level was disseminated to the MEO to enable the MEO to understand how the school responded to the national examination policy. There was one interview conducted in October with an MEO official that aimed to understand how the MEO responded to the national examination policy.

The data obtained from the school case and the MEO was also communicated to the MoE after approval from the school and the MEO. There were three interviews with policymakers in the MoE and two meeting observations. The interviews and observations were conducted from December 2016 to January 2017. The interviews aimed to communicate data from the school and the MEO, as well as to understand the rationales of the Indonesian government in the development and implementation of the national examination policy. In addition, before, during, and after the fieldwork, policy documents related to the national examination were collected and analysed. This document analysis aimed to build substantial understanding about the purposes of the national examination policy, the influence of international institutions on the development of the national examination policy, and the changes to the regulations for the national examination from time to time.

This multilayered data collection of the national examination policy and practice was consistent with democratic evaluation, that is represent various stakeholders' voice in the national examination policy in an equal way (Kushner, 2000; Simons, 2009). The multilayered data collection also enabled a thorough exploration of the national examination policy at the macro policy and micro implementation level for this research.

Data Analysis

The analysis took place in two steps: firstly, progressive focusing was used to develop a theoretical framework for analysing the data, and secondly, the data was reanalysed into the framework.

Progressive focusing.

In progressive focusing, the researcher needs to gradually refine or shift focus to reflect "what really matters" and systematically reduce the breadth of the inquiry to give more concentrated attention to

the issues emerging from the data (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972). Moreover, progressive focusing requires the researcher to be well acquainted with the complexities of the problem before going into the field, but not too committed to a study plan. It is accomplished in multiple stages: first, observation of the site; then further inquiry, beginning to focus on the relevant issues; and then seeking to explain (Stake, 1995).

The use of progressive focusing for data analysis is described as *abductive reasoning*. Abductive reasoning is a pragmatic approach which involves using existing theoretical explanations to make inferences about data and accommodate novel patterns by modifying the existing theory, with the ultimate aim of finding the most plausible way to explain (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). Therefore, the aim of progressive focusing is neither theory generation (induction), nor theory testing (deduction), but theory development or refinement (abduction; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012).

Using this approach, data from interviews, observations and policy documents were divided into two layers of analysis representing the macro policy and micro school-implementation level. The data were coded using a "constant comparative" method. The use of the constant comparative method aimed to identify concepts or key ideas that emerged from the raw data without any pre-existing theoretical expectations, and to let the data dictate the formulation of a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The data were coded according to categories (various institutions at the macro policy and micro implementation levels) and concepts (institutions' actions, values, beliefs) to understand the conditions, actions or interactions, and the outcomes of actions from different institutions at the macro and micro school-implementation level, in the case of the national examination policy and practice. Two examples of coding and analysis are presented in Tables 5.7 and 5.8.

Table 5.7

Sample of Coding and Analysis of Data from the School Case Study

Data Source: Interview 19 July 2016	Coding and Analysis
How the school sees and feels for this school comparison?	School data (VP)
I personally don't really agree with that, more to teachers' request, especially for the senior teachers, they ask me as a vice-principal for curriculum like… we should have run the school preparation program for the national exam, which in other schools those preparation programs have already been running on.	Pressures faced by the school in responding to the national examination policy. The school's action to respond to the national examination policy.
It arises in our thinking that the national exam results don't describe the quality. I think that the student learning process, the whole process of student learning and their effort in their learning which represent their character and their "struggle" or "means" for academic achievement would be more important as a preparation for their future, that the essential thing in educating our students.	A good expression here of the tension between educational "quality" as measured by a school's performance, and quality as judged by the individual student's learning and character development. School's values underpinning its practices vs the national examination's regulation.

Table 5.8

A Sample of Coding and Analysis of Data from the MoE Case Study

Data Source: Interview 28 December 2016	Coding and Analysis
This national examination policy is intricately constructed along with political content. Hence, the test functions like a monkey wrench, it could be used for adjusting screws / a screw, or as a hammer to knock and repair something, to fix the damage, though it is not precise. For me, as a person who learns assessment theory, it is not appropriate, different assessment instruments should be applied for distinct purposes, albeit inefficient in terms of cost and time. Indeed, the problem, I think, is the independence of this national Centre of Educational Assessment. Unlike similar institutions in other countries, where there is a strict rule and they can be robust to define policy considering educational assessment in academic terms, here, it is not so.	MoE data (MoE-2) The influence of other institutions outside the MoE in the development of the national examination policy. The pressures faced by the MoE in the development of the national examination policy.
The policy essentially functions as a final assessment, to measure what type of and how much of the content in the curriculum students should master.	The intention of the MoE to use the national examination to measure student mastery of the content curriculum.

The analysis of interviews and observation data from the school case study showed two salient issues. First, underpinning their teaching, teachers held a unique value to nurture students in a holistic way. This value emphasised developing students based on morals, character, and intellectual development. This value shaped how teachers assess students and define student achievement. Teachers defined student achievement and education quality more by students' morals and character development. This teachers' definition of education quality contrasted with the national examination policy. The policy measured education quality based on student academic achievement represented in their national examination results. Second, the school faced conflicting pressures in responding to the national examination policy. These pressures came from the national examination policy regulations and the school's stakeholders.

Analysis of data using institutional complexity theory.

The analysis from progressive focusing revealed that the MoE and the school faced pressures from external institutions that influenced the development of the national examination policy and how the school responded to the policy. The notion of different and conflicting pressures faced by the MoE and the school required a theoretical lens that could capture the complexity of these different pressures and how these were dealt with.

One appropriate theory is institutional complexity theory (Chapter 4). Institutional complexity theory enabled this research to explore different rationales or logics from various institutions underpinning their pressures (institutional demands) on the MoE and the school. Institutional complexity theory was also useful to explore the way the MoE and the school experienced and responded to complexity as a result of institutional demands from various institutions that shaped

the development of the national examination policy and the school's response to the policy. The theoretical framework of institutional complexity theory discussed in the previous chapter (p. 22) provided a lens through which to analyse the data and report the findings of this research. This framework enabled this research to present the findings at a deeper level of analysis, as presented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

Data obtained from the macro policy and micro implementation levels were coded according to the dimensions of institutional complexity theory. There were five steps conducted:

1. Identify institutions involved that influenced the development of the national examination policy (macro policy level) and the school's responses to the policy (micro implementation level).

2. Analyse the logic or rationale of various institutions that shaped the development of the national examination policy (macro policy level) and the school's responses to the policy (micro implementation level).

3. Analyse institutional demands on the MoE from various institutions that shaped the development of the national examination policy (macro policy level) and the school's responses to the policy (micro implementation level).

4. Analyse how the MoE and the school experienced institutional complexity as a result of institutional demands from various institutions.

5. Analyse how the MoE and the school responded to the complexity.

A sample of data analysis from the macro policy level is provided below (Table 5.9).

Table 5.9

A Sample of Coding and Analysis of Data Based on Institutional Complexity Theory

Data	Analysis
World Bank Report (2004):	
Under decentralisation, however, improving quality will mean identifying those institutional arrangements (such as standards, structures, incentives) that will improve performance and accountability. What then are the best way to raise quality in the context of local autonomy? How can performance standard can be set, measured, and monitored through the education system? (p. 6)	This is specific statement from the World Bank that shows its recommendation to the Indonesian government to implement a test-based accountability policy.
A central ministry functions to: set standards and measures performance, focus on institutions (schools), and ensure competition. (p. 15)	The emphasis is on increased competition to raise the quality of education.

Data	Analysis
Interview 28 December 2016	
The national examination policy regulation was determined by the executive and legislative government, those who hold power over governmental administration, and financial resources	This shows the involvement of various state government institutions in the development of the national examination policy.

Ethical Issues

The researcher in this study was both a student and a practitioner, holding 'insider' status as a civil servant employed in the Indonesian MoE, as well as being an 'outsider' as a researcher who comes from the University of Auckland, collecting, analysing, and interpreting information on the national examination policy at both the school and the MoE levels. Being an insider and outsider at the same time can involve advantages as well as challenges. The insider role can facilitate access to research sources more easily (Arksey & Knight, 1999) and there can be greater acceptance and willingness by the research participants to share their experiences (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). In this regard, the researcher knew and was known by policymakers in the MoE, thus allowing him access to approach and interview them. However, as an insider, the researcher's knowledge and behaviour had been shaped to some extent by the institutional culture in the MoE. This factor might reduce the willingness of the researcher to be critical of his employing organisation or to raise 'uncomfortable' but important issues.

The presence of the researcher at the school, in his role as a government official, might have been perceived by the school's staff as representative of the MoE. In the context of Indonesian education, there is a hierarchical structure between the bureaucracy and the schools. The researcher may have been seen to hold a power status in relation to the research participants. This factor could have influenced their openness in relating their experiences and stories, thus affecting the quality of the data. In this sense, the researcher's role as a government official may have prevented research participants from being open in giving their information.

The first ethical issue of this study was how to deal with the tension between the insider and outsider position of the researcher in this research. As an insider, the researcher's bias may reduce the quality of the data collection and analysis from participants. For example, an insider might be less likely to criticise his or her own organisation and instead be more critical of other organisations. However, an insider has added advantages such background knowledge of the organisation to support the development of a research question and/or greater access to potential participants. As an outsider, the researcher may be more willing and able to take a critical stance to the data, but may experience difficulties in gaining participant trust. These issues were addressed using the following strategies.

First, was the use of democratic evaluation principle (MacDonald, 1976) which required the researcher to take an impartial role in this research and to represent stakeholders in the policy in an equal way. The researcher's stance, which was communicated to the participants, was that he wanted to understand the national examination policy from the perspective of actors who were involved in the policy development and implementation. The goal of the research was to understand and accurately represent all the perspectives, not to critique each perspective. This strategy enabled the researcher to gain participants' trust even though he was a civil servant, thus addressing the tension between the researcher's insider and outsider position. This approach also meant that the research goal was to represent all stakeholders in an equal way, thus reducing any bias he might have towards his own organisation.

Second, was the use of reflexivity (Clifford, 1990) in conjunction with respondent validation (Cresswell & Miller, 2000). The reflexivity was done by writing field notes to ensure that the researcher's own subjectivity was explicit, and to then check his field notes with participants, to ensure that his interpretations of the data accurately represented participants' voices. This strategy addressed the tension caused by the researcher's insider and outsider role by managing his bias in interpreting data

Third, was the use of respondent validation (Creswell & Miller, 2000) to reduce researcher bias in interpreting the data The respondent validation was done by providing a transcription of their interview to each participants, along with the researcher's interpretation of the data (field notes), to seek their feedback and amendment as appropriate. The respondent validation aimed to ensure that the researcher's interpretation of the data was a fair representation of participants' voices. This strategy was useful to reduce the researcher's bias as well as gaining participants' trust, thus addressing the tension caused by the researcher's dual insider and outsider position. In addition, the study also addressed these ethical issues by following the procedures as approved by the University of Auckland Human Participation Ethics Committee.

The second ethical issue was how to deal with data from participants relating to cheating and other associated practices that might cause difficulties for both the researcher and the participants. This was dealt in the following way: specific statements that might be linked back to a participant (e.g., said by a participant in a particular role, or relating to information that could be linked back to another person) were described in general terms and linked back to the wider literature or publicly available sources. This process aimed to avoid identification of participants related to information they had provided on cheating, and other associated practices that could potentially harm the participants. However, the researcher ensured that information from the wider literature or publicly

available sources was used to replace the participants' information to show similar situations as articulated by the participants.

Trustworthiness

Guba and Lincoln (1989, cited in Simons, 2009) identify four criteria to support the trustworthiness of qualitative research—credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility (often described as internal validity) represents researcher effort to establish trustworthiness in the findings by conducting participant validation of researcher observation and interpretation for accuracy with participants' experiences (respondent validation) and the use of more than one kind of method of data collection to provide confirmation of the findings from the study (data triangulation). Respondent validations were conducted when the researcher summarised the interview with each respondent to seek their feedback and amendment. Another technique to facilitate credibility was by applying triangulation across different sources of data. Throughout the research process, data were triangulated from interviews, observations and documentary sources to come up with the findings. For example, data from one interview with others and between interviews and observations were compared and contrasted to examine the consistency of findings across data sources.

Transferability is the presentation of "thick description"—a rich and triangulated account that provides others with reference for making judgements to transfer the findings to another context (Geertz, 1973). The researcher applied the criteria by conducting a multilayered exploration of a case at the MoE (macro policy level) and the school (micro implementation level) to obtain multiple perspectives. This multilayered exploration enabled this research to obtain a rich description of the national examination policy and its implementation, and at the same time allow triangulation of data from macro policy and micro implementation level as well as across different sources of data from the similar level.

Dependability is the adoption of an "auditing" approach to describe in detail the methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Simons, 2009). That is, the study could be auditable to describe the situation, making it possible for another researcher to follow the study. In this research, complete data records were kept in all phases of the research process, and interviews were transcribed to create an audit trail.

Confirmability is the acknowledgement by the researcher of the implausibility of achieving complete objectivity while at the same time minimising the biases and assumptions of the researcher in interpreting the data (Simons, 2009). In this study, the researcher ensured his reflexive position primarily in conducting a multi-layered exploration of a case from different cultural backgrounds by

developing field notes and being reflexive in interpreting the information in the field notes. Data from interviews were also transcribed to allow participants to check and change their information. To conclude, applications of the four criteria above aimed to increase the trustworthiness of the research.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methodology of the study. This study was a qualitative case study, drawing on principles of democratic evaluation. Qualitative case study used in this research aimed to explore the national examination at the macro policy and micro implementation level. This study used interviews, observations and document review to collect data. The data were analysed using progressive focusing and coded based on the constant comparative method. Some ethical consideration were highlighted, focusing on maintaining confidentiality of participants, reflexivity of the researcher, and responden validation thooughout the research process.

In the next chapter, the results from the case study at a macro policy level are discussed.

Chapter 6. Findings:
The Institutional Complexity of the National Examination at a Macro Policy Level

Introduction

This chapter explores the rationale behind the enactment of the national examination policy by the government of Indonesia and aims to understand the underlying causes of the dispute, between the government and the public, over the policy. The findings reported in this chapter are based collectively on interviews, observations, and document review.

The national examination policy of the Indonesian education system has been controversial since its introduction in 2005, including its recent development. The main reason for the controversy is the use of national examination scores for multiple high-stakes decisions for schools and students (Mappiasse, 2014). Teachers have often expressed objections to the policy through public statements (Mappiasse, 2014). For example, the alliance of teachers has asserted their stance opposing the national examination policy, with statements such as "the national examination is useless, stop it," or "the national examination is inhumane, save students" (National Examination Victim Advocacy, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, in many cases, public discourses have been dominated by commentaries and critiques of the MoE as a central government body responsible for administering the policy (Lestarini, 2014). Nonetheless, teachers' objections and public debate prompted without a thorough understanding of the rationales behind the enactment of the policy.

The national examination policy is a test mandated by the government of Indonesia for primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools, conducted at the end of schooling year (i.e., Grades 6, 9, and 12). The government stated that national examination scores were to be used for multiple high-stakes decisions, for schools and students (Minister of Education Regulation 5/2015), for the following purposes:

1. To establish schools' accountability for student achievement and to report school performance, based on national examination scores, on school league tables;

2. To sort students based on their national examination scores and to place them, for the next level of schooling, in a particular school by the school's ranking;

3. To decide student graduation based on their national examination scores against the minimum standard scores.

The case study at the MoE revealed a pattern of competing institutional pressures or demands imposed on the MoE by the World Bank, the executive and legislative branches of government institutions, schools, and the wider public. Consequently, the MoE was compelled to adhere to multiple demands from these institutions derived from their respective logics (i.e., rationales). Furthermore, the diverse institutional demands imposed gave rise to complexities confronted by the MoE. Subsequently, the institutional complexities shaped the development of the national examination policy regulations.

Institutional Pluralism in the National Examination at a Macro Policy Level

The national examination at the macro policy level was shaped by institutional pluralism. Institutional pluralism is defined as the presence of multiple logics from various institutions which provide "rules of the game" that direct and circumscribe institutions' behaviours and actions (Kraatz & Blocks, 2008). Institutional logic is an overarching set of principles that prescribe how to interpret institutional reality and define what constitutes appropriate institutional practices and how to succeed (Thornton, 2004). The notion of institutional logic implies that the interests, goals, values, and assumptions of various institutions that interact within an institutional field are embedded within their prevailing institutional logic (Thornton et al., 2012). In the context of educational reform, Bridwell-Mitchell and Sherer (2017) posit institutional logic as the set of beliefs and practices infused into the formulation of diverse educational policies.

Institutional interactions within an institutional field compel institutions to comply with various and competing institutional logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutions prescribe different and possibly incompatible sets of expectations or conflicting institutional demands for the perceived best possible means to organise institutional practices and achieve institutional goals (Greenwood et al., 2011).

At the macro level, the primary institutions and players that impact on how the MoE developed the national examination policy were the MoE itself, the World Bank, the executive and legislative branches of the Indonesian government, and schools. These influences were identified through document analysis, and interviews. A detailed discussion about the involvement of these institutions, along with their institutional logics, in the development of the national examination policy is presented below. A summary is provided in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1

The Interplay of Institutional Logics and Demands at the Macro Policy Level that Shaped the Development of the National Examination Policy

Institutions Involved in the Development of the National Examination Policy	Institutional Logic	Institutional Demands	Institutional Complexity
(1) **The World Bank**	The logic of market competition in education	The World Bank directed the government of Indonesia to: - Implement a test-based accountability policy using national examinations; - Increase competition among schools based on student achievement in the national examinations; - Attach incentives and sanctions for students based on the minimum standard scores in the national examination (World Bank, 2004). The policy recommendations from the World Bank were regarded by various branches of governmental institutions (the executive government, the legislative government, and the MoE) as effective policy inputs to achieve the goal of improving the quality of national education.	
(2) **The executive government (i.e., President and Vice-President)**	The logic of economic development	The executive government, influenced by the World Bank, demanded the MoE use national examination scores to decide the accountability of the schools and to report school performance based on national examination scores on school league tables.	
(3) **The legislative government**	The logic of meritocracy for students based on their achievement	The legislative government required the MoE to use national examination scores to sort students based on their scores and to place them for the next level of schooling in a school in accordance with the school's ranking.	
(4) **The Ministry of Education (MoE)**	The logic of bureaucratic control for schooling outcomes	The MoE intended to decide student graduation based on their national examination scores against the minimum standard scores. The MoE, influenced by the World Bank's policy recommendations, also intended to attach incentives and sanctions for students based on their national examination scores against the minimum standard scores.	The MoE faced complexity as a result of various institutional demands (from the executive, the legislative government, and the MoE itself) for different purposes of the national examination.

Institutional logic of the World Bank

The World Bank's logic of market competition in education underpinned its involvement in the development of the policy. The World Bank's logic can be understood through its neoliberal ideological stance (Ball, 1998; Jones, 1998; Klees, 2015; Mappiasse, 2014; Mundy et al., 2016; Mundy & Verger, 2016; Sahlberg, 2016; Verger, 2016). The ideology held that market competition in education was seen as the effective mechanism to improve the quality of schooling outcomes (Ball, 1998; Mappiasse, 2014; Klees, 2015; Mundy et al., 2016; Sahlberg, 2016).

The market competition logic from the World Bank held that the role of national governments is to enact a policy mechanism through which schools function as the provider of educational services, while parents and students act as consumers (market mechanism). Competition among schools was seen as the key to educational improvement. National testing (the national examination policy in this study) functioned as a policy instrument needed by national governments to implement the market mechanism and promote competition among schools (Sahlberg, 2016). In this sense, the national testing functioned as a measure of school quality and performance, thus allowing parents to choose schools for their children based on school performance, as well as fostering competition among schools to improve student achievement. Parental choice was viewed as a way to increase school accountability for student achievement, as it gave incentives for schools to attract and admit students, while school funding was closely linked to student enrolment numbers (Ball, 1998). Therefore, schools competed to improve their performance, since high-performing schools attracted more students and hence obtained more funding as a result. Furthermore, competition among schools based on student achievement was expected to push teachers and students to work harder for good examination results (Sahlberg, 2016). Based on these notions, the national testing policy was thought by the World Bank to effectively improve the quality of national education.

The World Bank (2004) published a report entitled *Education in Indonesia: Managing the Transition to Decentralization*. The report recommended that the Indonesian government:

- Introduce test-based accountability for schools using the national examination;

- Increase competition among schools based on a comparable measure of student achievements in the national examination (i.e., in the form of school league tables). The league tables also function to provide information for the public about schools' quality and performance;

- Attach incentives and sanctions for students in achieving the predetermined standard scores in the national examination to decide student graduation.

These recommendations provided the impetus for the Indonesian government to reform its education system through the enactment of the national examination policy in 2005.

The World Bank's policy recommendations were built upon a neoclassical economic theory (Jones, 2006; Klees, 2015; Mundy & Verger, 2016; Verger, 2016). The theory proposes that there is a direct relationship between investment in education (usually measured as years of schooling or measures of schooling outcomes) and the productivity of workers as reflected both on the income of workers and in the country's economic growth (Schultz, 1971, cited in Mundy & Verger, 2016). The World Bank's rhetoric was that human capital is essential for national economic growth. Hence, the World Bank advised its national clients to reform their education systems in order to increase national economic growth and competitiveness, amid increased international competition as a result of globalisation (Mundy & Verger, 2016; Verger, 2016). In ensuring the productivity of the schooling system to achieve that goal, national governments needed to reform their education systems in specific ways, including increased accountability of and competition between schools for student achievement (Ball, 1998; Sahlberg, 2016).

The policy recommendations from the World Bank were welcomed by the Indonesian government. Through a soft power mechanism (i.e., benchmarking and technical assistance) as a way of framing and influencing, the World Bank's recommendations were influential in the decision making for national policies in Indonesia (Bayhaqi, 2006). In the case of the education policy, the World Bank's recommendations were influential in the development of the national examination policy, represented by and embedded within the respective logics of the executive, legislative branches of the Indonesian government and the MoE, shaping policy decision making (World Bank, 2004).

The executive, legislative government and the MoE held similar goals over the development of the national education system. As stated in the introduction of Law 20/2003 for the national education system, the government recognises the importance of education as an investment in the human capital formation that lays the foundation for future economic growth. Nonetheless, the interviews with the MoE's official, consistent with documents analysis, implied that each of these government institutions held a distinctive logic over the means for improving national education quality. Each institution demanded a distinctive use of national examination scores for different purposes derived from their respective institutional logic as seen on table 6.1.

Institutional logic of the executive government.

The logic of economic development underpinned the involvement of the executive government[5] in the development of the national examination policy. According to Bayhaqi (2006), in a thesis

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[5] The executive government refers to the head of the state or the President and Vice-President of Indonesia.

entitled *Education and Economic Growth in Indonesia*, the executive government believed that human capital is a prerequisite to increase the national income and to achieve sustainable economic growth. The executive government believed that competitive human capital (i.e., a more skilled and knowledgeable national workforce in comparison with other countries) would increase the opportunity for nationally manufactured goods and mining to outperform those of neighbouring countries and produce a higher national income, as Indonesia was affiliated with the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) in 2015 (National Development Board, 2005, 2015). Moreover, sustainable economic growth was seen as a panacea for resolving prominent national problems, such as the extensive rate of poverty,[6] by increasing the national leaders' legitimacy, as assessed by the public, through the stability of consumer goods prices (e.g., food, clothing, and housing), and could lead to preserving governments hegemony (National Development Board, 2005, 2015).

The national leaders considered the lag in the quality of Indonesian education, compared to neighbouring countries (e.g., Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam), as a threat to economic development (National Development Board, 2005, 2015). For example, a report of the Overseas Development Institute (Tobias, Wales, Syamsulhakim, & Suharti, 2014) highlighted that Indonesia had shown relatively poor performance in comparison to neighbouring countries in international comparisons such as TIMMS and PISA. When measured by competence in mathematics according to TIMMS, Indonesia ranked 34 out of 38 countries in 2000, and 38 out of 45 countries in 2011 (Tobias et al., 2014). Furthermore, Frankema's (2014) working paper noted that Indonesia still ranked below neighbouring countries over the years 2000 to 2012 in the PISA test, despite a steady increase in the test scores. This situation was seen by the executive government as attributable to the poor quality of teaching and learning, influencing the development of the national examination policy, as the MoE official interviewed explained:

> *I think the high level of political affairs from the national leaders contributed to the development of the national examination policy along with its problematic circumstances. Their definition of education quality, in a simplified measure, merely based on the international test results, such as PISA or TIMMS, shapes the development of the national examination policy.* (MoE-01)

The executive government's demand that the MoE develop a national examination policy was influenced by the World Bank's logic of market competition in education. The Vice-President was an actor in the executive government who consistently articulated the importance of competition

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[6] Over 28 million Indonesian people of the approximately 260 million total population were living below the poverty line in 2014 (Aji, 2015). This proportion was even higher in the 1980s, with 84 million people out of 150 million living in poverty.

among schools. For example, Mappiasse (2014) highlighted the Vice-President's statements to the public about national examination: "Without a rigorous national examination, Indonesia would be left behind by neighboring countries such as Malaysia, as they have aggressively raised their leaving school examination standards each year" (p. 131).

Furthermore, some national newspapers also reported statements from the Vice-President to the public about the importance of the national examination policy for national economic competitiveness, for example: "Increased competition was a necessary 'frame of mind' for youth to achieve progress for themselves and national development, especially amid global competitiveness and challenges" (Agriesta, 2016, p. 1).

The World Bank's and the executive government's logics held similar goals around the development of the education system—that is, to improve the quality of national education and human capital and increase economic competitiveness—as implied by the Vice-President's statements above. The World Bank's recommendations to hold schools accountable for student achievement and fostering competition among schools based on national examination results were rationalised as a cogent means to achieve the interests of the executive government through the development of the national education system. School accountability and competition based on national examination scores as a measure of a school's quality were considered by national leaders as an indispensable condition to improve schools' productivity and improve the quality of education. In this sense, the national leaders assumed that engaging schools in a competition culture would increase the opportunity for the nation to catch up on the quality of education in other countries.

The World Bank's policy idea of school accountability and competition using the national examination as the policy instrument was also institutionalised (not just rationalised) by the national leaders. The MoE's official interviewed expressed this notion:

> *I feel that the national leaders' belief over educational accountability and quality significantly shaped the national examination policy's development. For example, in press conferences, they often state that the education quality is improving, as the national examination scores have been increasing. This notion can be interpreted as, well, you can see in my era that the quality of education has improved. The statement also implies their belief about the importance of accountability for improving education quality.* (MoE-01)

In this sense, educational accountability and competition were manifested in the institutional practice of the executive government and framed its institutional demand to the MoE. As a result, the executive government has consistently demanded that the MoE implement the national

examination policy to hold schools accountable for student achievement and fostering school competition based on the national examination results.

Institutional logic of the legislative government.

The logic of meritocracy for students, based on their achievement, underpinned the involvement of the legislative government[7] in the development of the national examination policy, as articulated by the MoE official.

> *They* [the parliament members] *believe that school admission shall take into account student learning achievement, sort them as a merit for their effort. (MoE-03)*

The legislature viewed the national examination as a powerful tool for motivating students to work hard in their learning and enhance their achievement. Parliamentary members believed that an extrinsic motivation for students needed to be attached as a function of the national examination policy. In their view, high-achieving students were supposedly making more effort in their learning than lower-achieving students. Hence, they thought those who had worked hard and improved their achievements should be rewarded.

The executive government's logic of achievement-based meritocracy for students was affirmed in its demand that the MoE integrate the use of student test scores in the national examination for student selection to the next level of education (MoE-03, personal communication, January 15, 2017). The executive government's demand to a certain extent resembled the World Bank's notion of the educational market through parental choice, through which parents possess the opportunity to choose schools for their children, but with the requirement of obtaining high scores in the national examination (MoE-03, personal communication, January 15, 2017). Nonetheless, the MoE official believed that the legislature held different reasons compared to the parental-choice mechanism.

> *I get a sense that the parliament members see a huge amount of funding the national examination policy. Hence, they wanted to include the additional use of the national examination for student selection to the next level of schooling, as a merit for students' effort as well as the need to be transparent in the process of student admission conducted by schools*. (MoE-03)

The use of national examination scores for student selection to the next level of education was intended to provide transparency (for the public) in school-admission processes, to allow public scrutiny. This mechanism was perceived as a relatively simple procedure. For example, parents

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[7] The legislative government refers to the members of the House of People's Representatives (called the *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*).

could oversee the school-admission process simply by looking at minimum entry scores determined by schools based on student scores in the national examination.

Institutional logic of the Ministry of Education (MoE)

In the MoE official's view, the logic of bureaucratic control for schooling outcomes underpinned the MoE's involvement in the development of the national examination policy.

> *Why does the ministry implement the national examination policy? We need to ensure students' level of competency since almost none can guarantee the students' mastery of learning. Not so many teachers possess the ability to assess student competency objectively. Hence, for decades, school assessment practice is ambiguous. Thus, teachers might not know the actual students' skills. Most of the schools do not conduct their assessment practice properly, due to their low level of assessment literacy.* (MoE-01)

The MoE's logic was derived from its assumption about the lack of validity and reliability in teachers' assessment practices. The MoE believed that teachers possessed low literacy in their classroom assessment practice (i.e., low teacher competency in educational assessment) (MoE-01, personal communication, December 28, 2017). In this sense, teachers lacked the ability to develop reliable assessment instruments, which affected their objectivity in judging students' mastery of learning (MoE-01, personal communication, December 28, 2017). Therefore, the MoE thought that schools were failing to ensure a certain level of student learning, and that schooling outcomes were unclear. The national examination was aimed at ascertaining student competence in mastering the curriculum's content reliably at the end of the school year.

The MoE's logic of bureaucratic control for schooling outcomes drove its demand to adopt the national examination as minimum competency testing for students at the end of the school year. The MoE's official stated that the national examination was intended to ascertain the quality of teaching and learning in schools to achieve a minimum level of student learning as represented in the national examination scores.

> *The main purpose of the national examination is indeed for students' achievement test. That is, as a quality control mechanism for ascertaining schooling outcomes.* (MoE-01, MoE-02, MoE-03)

The World Bank's policy recommendations were influential in shaping the MoE's demand to use national examination scores to decide student graduation. The World Bank (2004), in its policy recommendation report, stated that the previous national testing policy was not effective in improving the quality of schooling outcomes due to the lack of either incentives for students (as well as teachers) to achieve or consequences for failure to obtain minimum scores. "The incentives for

compliance with standards are clear, as are the consequences of failing; for example, senior secondary students who do not pass the final national examination are not allowed to graduate" (p. 27). Thus, adhering to the World Bank's recommendations, the MoE demanded that student test scores in the national examination be used to decide student graduation, with attached reward and punishment for students. Students who failed to meet the minimum standard scores would not be allowed to graduate.

The Indonesian government implemented the national final-learning-evaluation policy (*evaluasi tahap akhir nasional* or *EBTANAS*) before the implementation of the national examination policy in 2005. There was a significant difference between the national final-learning-evaluation policy and the national examination policy. In the national final-learning-evaluation policy, the logic of market mechanism and competition in education was absent (Mappiasse, 2014). The final national evaluation policy was simply a leaving school examination, and decisions about student graduation were largely in the hand of schools. Students who performed poorly in the final national learning-evaluation examination were still able to graduate. The final national learning-evaluation examination scores were just part of the total scoring component to decide student graduation, in addition to the provincial examination and school grades (Syahril, 2007).

Institutional logic of schools.

The logic of holistic education underpinned the response of some schools towards the development of the national examination policy as articulated by some studies. The logic of holistic education proposes that the students' whole development, focusing on students' morals and character as well as intellectual aspects, was an overarching principle that should guide teacher and school practice. The logic of holistic education was derived from the unique conception of teaching in Indonesian culture, which defines teachers' identity and responsibility for two purposes: *mengajar*, literally translated as "to teach," or to promote students' intellectual growth; and *mendidik*, or "to educate," that is, to promote students' moral and ethical development (Bjork, 2005; Syahril, 2016). This dual concept implies that schools as institutions should be guided by the unique values of teachers' practice, which defines their distinctive understanding about the legitimate purpose of education and how to assess student achievement, compared with the ideologies of various government institutions at the macro policy level.

The institutional demand from schools was shaped by the nature of the relationship between schools and the MoE. The interaction between the MoE and schools was hierarchical. The MoE held an authoritative power over the direction and development of education, where schools were expected to adhere to and organise their behaviour in response to any directive from the executive and legislative government, represented by the MoE (Bjork, 2003, 2005). As a result, schools' logic was

not incorporated in the decision making of educational policies enacted by the MoE (Bjork, 2003). This situation led to a gap between what was expected in education policies and what occurred in schools' implementation (Bjork, 2003, 2005; Syahril, 2016).

The Institutional-Field Structure of the National Examination at a Macro Policy Level

The field of the national examination policy at a macro policy level was structured in a moderately centralised arrangement. Pache and Santos (2010) define a "moderately centralised" field structure as an institutional field that comprises various competing institutional logics and demands whose influences are not dominant but sufficiently potent to be imposed on institutions. As a result, the MoE encountered multiple complexities derived from various institutional logics with competing institutional demands from the macro policy and micro implementation level. The MoE itself aimed to use the national examination policy to decide student graduation. Meanwhile, most schools imposed their normative demands on the MoE (MoE, meeting observation, December 22, 2016). For example, there were reports of widespread cheating in national examinations. The widespread cheating was perceived by the MoE to be hazardous for the moral development of young citizens and the future of the nation (MoE, meeting observation, December 22, 2016; see description of multiple complexities encountered by the MoE in the next section).

The moderately centralised field structure of the national examination at a macro policy level produced a high degree of institutional complexity. Institutional demands imposed on the MoE from the legislative and executive government were incompatible with implementation at the functional level. In this sense, the executive and legislative government institutions and the MoE held a similar goal, to improve the quality of schooling outcomes aimed to increase national economic competitiveness (National Development Board, 2005, 2015). However, the institutional demands conflicted over the means of achieving this goal, through the national examination, as they demanded distinctive uses of national examination scores for different reasons. The incompatibility over the functional level (how to achieve institutions' goals) was potentially flexible and negotiable to resolve (Pache & Santos, 2010).

Nonetheless, the institutional demands from schools were incompatible at the ideological level. The executive and legislative government, as well as the MoE, emphasised the goal of education for economic purposes—how a more educated labour force could contribute even more to the economy. Meanwhile, the school focused on the goal of education for students' holistic development— fostering students' character and moral, as well as intellectual, development. As a result, the MoE was confronted with tensions and dilemmas in the development of the national examination policy, especially driven by the incompatibilities of institutional demands between the executive and legislative government on the one hand and schools on the other.

Institutional Complexity Confronted by the Ministry of Education

The MoE was confronted with institutional complexity throughout the development of the national examination policy. The complexity arose from competing demands across multiple institutions (Greenwood et al., 2011). A description follows of how the MoE experienced the institutional complexity.

> **Institutional complexity confronted by the Ministry of Education Over the purpose of the national examination policy.**

The MoE was confronted with complexity as a result of institutional demands from the executive and legislative government over the purpose of the national examination policy. The MoE official articulated this issue.

> *The national examination policy is mainly intended for students' achievement test in the final year of schooling* [the minimum competency testing]. *Nonetheless, the policy's construction was intricately constructed along with political contents, and the policy regulations were substantially determined by the executive and legislative government.* (MoE-01)

The complexity resulted in the MoE facing tension concerning the function of the national examination—that is, whether the appropriate function of the national examination to achieve the goal of improving the quality of education should follow the MoE's logic or the logics of other government institutions. In this sense, the MoE aimed to use national examination scores to decide student graduation. However, the executive government, influenced by the World Bank, demanded the MoE use national examination scores to hold schools accountable for student achievement and increase competition among schools based on student examination scores (MoE-01, personal communication, December 28, 2016). Simultaneously, the legislative government demanded the MoE use the national examination scores for student selection to the next level of education (MoE-03, personal communication, January 15, 2017).

> **Institutional complexity confronted by the Ministry of Education during the implementation of the national examination policy.**

The findings suggest that, from 2005 to 2015, the MoE was confronted with complexity as a result of institutional demands from the executive government, at the macro policy level, and institutional demand from schools, at the micro implementation level, after the enactment of the national examination policy. The multiple uses of national examination scores for high-stakes decisions for schools and students resulted in most schools conducting what it called the academic dishonesty practice. For example, LaForge (2013) reported that most students cheated during the national examinations. Moreover, Mappiasse (2014) described student cheating occurred through answers to

national examination leaked by teachers or through tutoring agencies. The MoE also recognised the issue of students cheating. The Minister of Education commented that the MoE was troubled by widespread reports of cheating practice which were having a demoralising impact on students' development, as well as on the development of the national education system and future of the nation (MoE, meeting observation, December 22, 2016).

The complexity above resulted in the MoE facing tension concerning whether the national examination policy was an effective reform strategy for improving not only the quality of schooling outcomes, but also the development of national education generally.

Institutional complexity confronted by the Ministry of Education after its decision to eliminate the use of national examination scores for deciding student graduation.

The MoE was confronted with another instance of institutional complexity after its 2015 decision to eliminate the policy regulation to decide student graduation. The MoE responded to institutional complexity during the implementation of the national examination policy with a decision to eliminate the national examination for deciding student graduation (MoE Regulation 5/2015). According to the MoE official interviewed, this proposal resulted in a dilemma faced by the MoE about whether to continue or to abolish the national examination policy.

> *I feel that the decision was sacrificing the main function of the national examination policy. It would be better to abolish the policy. If the national examination does not function to determine student graduation, then for what? It is a waste of money, as it costs hundreds of billion rupiahs.* (MoE-01)

The dilemma emerged since the MoE's demand to use national examination scores for student graduation failed to be manifested in the policy. However, the executive government's demand to use national examination scores for school competition and accountability, and the legislative government's demand to use national examination scores for student selection for the next level of schooling, were consistently enacted in the policy regulation.

The Ministry of Education's Attributes as a Filter to Institutional Complexity

The MoE official reported that the MoE's responses to various institutional demands from the executive and legislative government were filtered by institutional ownership and governance. The MoE official, in interview, stated that the executive and legislative government who hold power and resources determined the development of the national examination policy (MoE-01, personal communication, December 28, 2016). The institutional attribute of ownership and governance refers to the interaction of power between dominant and less powerful positions or groups across institutional networks, whether inter-institution or intra-institution (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Institutions' responses to complexity are influenced by powerful positions and groups in their governance bodies who determine which institutional demands will be prioritised or ignored (Greenwood et al., 2011).

The MoE official's view was that decisions about whether to prioritise or ignore institutional demands from the executive and the legislative government were filtered by the formal relationship rules among these institutions which strongly influenced the governance of the MoE. The presidential system in Indonesia provides the executive government with the right to appoint the Minister of Education. Furthermore, the nature of the relationship between the executive government and the MoE is hierarchical; the executive government holds the authority to influence the MoE's actions (Bjork, 2005; Sopantini, 2014). As a result, the legitimacy (i.e., the appropriateness of actions) of the MoE will be judged by the executive government based on the MoE's compliance with any mandates from the executive government. Therefore, any resistance by the MoE towards the executive government's demands might result in the removal of the Minister of Education from his position (Datta et al., 2011). Meanwhile, the legislative government holds authority over determining statutory powers and funding allocation for the implementation of proposed policies by the executive government and the MoE (Datta et al., 2011). This formal relationship structure means that the resources needed by the MoE for the national examination policy implementation depend on the consent of the legislative government.

The Ministry of Education's Responses to Institutional Complexity

The MoE constructed a range of strategies in response to the multiple complexities encountered. Institutions are aware of the existence of multiple demands from both internal institutions and their external institutional referents. In responding to complexities, institution members scrutinise which institutional demands to prioritise, accept, modify, or ignore (Pache & Santos, 2010). Moreover, when facing institutional complexity, more than one course of action may be available and considered as an appropriate response (Whittington, 1992). In this sense, institutions possess the opportunity to choose a response strategy from their repertoire of the responses available to them when facing competing institutional demands or institutional complexities (Olivier, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010).

Olivier (1991), Pache and Santos (2010, 2013), have all proposed typologies of institutions' responses when facing institutional complexities, as in complying, compromising, and decoupling. Complying refers here to conscious obedience by an institution to multiple demands from its external institutional referents (Olivier, 1991). In contrast, compromising refers to an institution's attempts to enact an acceptable balance to multiple external demands (Pache & Santos, 2013). Decoupling refers to symbolic or ceremonial compliance by an institution to multiple demands while the

institution simultaneously implements practices promoted by another institutional logic (Pache & Santos, 2013). The description below portrays how the MoE responded to the different circumstances of institutional complexities throughout the development of the national examination policy.

The Ministry of Education's response to institutional complexity over the purposes of the national examination policy.

The MoE responded to complexity around the purposes of the national examination policy with a compliance response (Olivier, 1991).

> *Eventually, the executive and legislative government determined the national examination policy regulations. Those who hold power over the governmental administration, and financial resources. Hence, the examination functions like a monkey wrench, could be used for adjusting screws or a hammer to knock and repair something, though it is not precise.* (MoE-01)

The MoE's compliance with coercive demands from the executive and legislative government was driven by the need to retain legitimacy and the resources needed to implement the policy. The MoE's adherence to the executive government's demands ensured its legitimacy, while conformity to the demands of the legislative government ensured the availability of funding for policy implementation. In this sense, the MoE had no choice but to comply with the institutional demands from the executive and legislative government for the construction of the national examination policy. The MoE's compliance response to the complexity over the purpose of the national examination policy explained why the national examination was a single assessment tool serving multiple purposes.

The Ministry of Education's response to institutional complexity during the implementation of the national examination policy.

Documents demonstrate that the MoE responded to the complexity during the implementation of the national examination policy with a compromise response (Pache & Santos, 2013), by changing the national examination policy regulation concerning the minimum standard scores in the national examination to decide student graduation. There were three major changes:

1. From 2005–2009, national examination scores were used as the sole criteria to decide student graduation at the end of the school year. Students who were unable to pass the minimum standard scores in the national examination were not eligible to graduate (Minister of Education Regulation 75/2009).

2. From 2010–2015, student graduation was decided by a combination of the national examination score and teacher-based assessment. Students who were unable to pass the minimum standard scores (decided by the MoE and based on average scores of national examination and school-based assessment) were not eligible to graduate (Minister of Education Regulation 45/2010).

3. Post-2015, the MoE decided to eliminate the use of national examination scores to decide student graduation. Since then, schools have the authority to decide student graduation (Minister of Education Regulation 5/2015).

These changes in the national examination policy regulation reflect the MoE's response to institutional pressures from the micro implementation level to prevent widespread cheating practices. Nonetheless, the MoE's authority in the policy decision making was limited to the use of national examination scores to decide student graduation. Meanwhile, the other domains of this policy—the use of the national examination scores for school accountability and increased competition, and selection of students for the next level of education—were under the authority of the executive and legislative governments. In this way, the MoE attempted to balance the institutional demands from the macro policy and the micro implementation levels.

The Ministry of Education's response to institutional complexity after its decision to eliminate the use of national examination scores for deciding student graduation.

After the decision to eliminate the purpose of the national examination policy to decide student graduation, the MoE responded to the complexity with a proposal to the executive government to suspend the national examination policy. A research observation revealed that the MoE raised some reasons for its proposal to postpone the national examination policy (MoE, meeting observation, December 22, 2016), as follows:

1. The national examination policy did not work to change school performance since there was no significant improvement in aggregate national examination scores over a 3-year period (2013–2015);

2. Reports of widespread cheating from students, which happened as they accessed leaked national examination answers via the tutoring agencies or teachers. The tutoring agencies wanted to recruit more students by showing their prior students' success in the examination;

3. The decrease in teachers' autonomy in educating students, as students would pay more attention to a tutoring agency's advice than teachers', especially when approaching national examination time;

4. The MoE's intention to develop students' higher order thinking (critical thinking skills) was reduced, since teachers and students focused on test preparation rather than genuine learning.

Nonetheless, the executive government declined the MoE's suspension of the national examination policy on the grounds of improved national education performance, based on increased PISA test scores and rankings over previous years. The Vice-President decided to continue the national examination policy following the OECD (2016) report which stated that if Indonesia could keep up the pace of improvement, the nation had a realistic chance of matching the performance of industrialised countries by 2030 (OECD, 2016).

Eventually, up until 2016, the national examination policy was still being implemented to hold schools accountable for student achievement and foster competition based on national examination scores, and for student selection to the next level of schooling. In this sense, the MoE was once again forced to comply with institutional demands from the executive and legislative governments, because its legitimacy and resources greatly depended on those institutions.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the institutional complexity faced by the MoE in the development of the national examination policy. The complexity was derived from the involvement of different institutions at the macro policy and micro implementation levels, along with their respective institutional logics and demands. The MoE's compliance response to the complexity resulted in the multiple uses of national examination scores for students' and schools' high-stakes decisions. This system gave rise to the underlying causes of the dispute between the government and the public concerning the national examination.

The next chapter will discuss the institutional complexity faced by one school as a result of the implementation of the national examination policy.

Chapter 7. Findings:

The Institutional Complexity at a Micro School Level Upon the Implementation of the National Examination Policy

Introduction

This chapter explores schools' responses to the implementation of the national examination policy and aims to understand the underlying causes of the negative consequences for schooling. The findings reported in this chapter are based collectively on interviews, observations, and document review.

The national examination policy of the Indonesian education system has resulted in unintended consequences for teaching and learning in most schools. For example, reports of widespread cheating have occurred through the availability of leaked examination answers, from teachers or tutoring institutions, during national examination time (LaForge, 2013; Mappiasse, 2014). Furthermore, the policy tends to encourage teachers to prepare students to succeed in the examination in a way that emphasises test preparation through rote learning, reducing the emphasis on teaching and learning to develop students' critical thinking skills (MoE, meeting observation, December 22, 2016). Driven by an interest in uncovering the underlying causes of the unintended consequences of the national examination policy at the implementation level, this chapter portrays how a school in one municipality responded to the national examination policy.

The school case study uncovered a pattern of competing pressures or demands imposed on the school by different institutions[8] as the result of multiple uses of national examination scores for different purposes. Hence, the school was compelled to adhere to multiple demands from its external institutional referents or stakeholders (i.e., the Municipal Education Office (MEO), parents, and local community members) derived from their respective interests. Furthermore, the institutional demands imposed gave rise to complexities confronted by the school and eventually led to alterations in teachers' practices at the school. The unintended consequences of the national

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[8] Institution or organisation can be defined as an entity which consists of an informal or symbolic element (i.e., normative value and cultural cognitive value) and formal or material element (i.e., as a formal entity). Both informal and formal elements give meanings, values and rules about what constitutes appropriate behaviours and actions (Scott & Meyer, 1994). By this definition, community members and parents can be considered collectively as institutions. They possess idiosyncratic normative and cultural cognitive values, as well as the formal elements of an institution. The behaviours and actions of community members and parents are guided by their formal and informal institutional elements. The terms institution and organisation are used interchangeably in this chapter.

examination policy were triggered to a significant extent by the institutional demands and complexities encountered by the school.

Institutional Pluralism of the National Examination Policy at a Micro School Level

The notion of institutional pluralism shapes the field of the national examination practice. Institutional pluralism is defined as the presence of multiple logics (rationalities) from various institutions. Institutional logics are often in conflict, that is, their respective systems of meaning and normative understanding are built into institutional practices that provide inconsistent expectations or conflicting institutional demands (Greenwood et al., 2011; Smith & Tracey, 2016).

At the micro level, the main institutions and players that impact on how schools implement the national examination are the school itself, the municipal government, parents, and brokers. The national examination is implemented by the municipal government. Law 20/2003 states that a municipal government holds the autonomy and authority to administer education in its regional area (Article 50). The MEO, parents and community members (in this case, brokers) all participate in the evaluation of school performance, including quality improvement, based on student achievement (Article 59)—in this case, on national examination scores. The multiplicity of logics from the various institutions within the field of the national examination practice is described below. A summary is contained in Table 7.1.

     Institutional logic of the school.

The institutional logic of holistic education underpinned the school's practice in educating students. Observations and interviews with teachers and school leaders revealed that education was seen as the cultivation of an individual student's potential focusing on his or her morals, character and intellectual abilities collectively.

> *In this school, we aim to cultivate the "akhlakul karimah"* [Arabic words meaning: noble, morals and character] *for students. Also, we must equip students with the academic knowledge through curriculum content… We hope when students graduate they would have achieved what we call "pasagi"* [literal translation: square]. *It is the whole aspect of student development—morals, character, and academic capabilities. Therefore, they would be able to position themselves with the dynamics of the context of their social life, and contribute productively to their future and the nation.* (SP)

> *In this school, we see education as a continuous process. We strive to develop the morals, character and academic abilities of students by considering the unique characteristics of an individual student.* (VP, T-01, T-03).

Table 7.1

The Circumstances of Institutional Complexities Faced by the School as a result of the Implementation of the National Examination Policy

The national examination policy regulations	The institutional logic determining the policy regulations	The institutional logic involved at the micro implementation level	Institutional complexity faced by the school	The school's response to institutional complexity
The use of national examination scores for school accountability and competition.	The executive government's logic to raise the quality of national human capital.	The school's logic of holistic education for students.	The school was compelled to raise student exam scores, as the school's quality was judged by the public based on the school's aggregate exam scores in comparison to other schools on a league table. Nonetheless, the school disagreed with the definition of education quality based only on student scores. The school defined quality more by evaluating students' morals and character progression.	The school compromised with the pressure from the policy regulations to raise student exam scores, since the teachers wanted to preserve the school's status as among the prestigious schools in the municipality.
The use of national examination scores for student selection to the next level of education.	The legislative government's logic to provide merit for students.	The school's stakeholders insisted on getting their children admitted to the school, although their national examination scores fell below the school's requirement score for admission.	The school was compelled to comply with its stakeholders' demands, since, for example, rejection of the demands of some Municipal Education Office members might result in the redeployment of the school's principal to a lower-achieving school. Nonetheless, the school wanted to protect its autonomy in deciding student admission by following the policy regulations.	The school ignored the demands of its stakeholders.
The use of national examination scores for deciding student graduation.	The MoE's logic to control the quality of schooling outcomes.	The school's logic of holistic education for students.	The school was compelled to comply with the policy regulations in deciding student graduation. Nonetheless, compliance with the policy regulations would violate the school's logic to educate students based on morals and character, since while some students might show fine morals and character development, they failed to obtain the scores required to graduate.	The school decoupled from the policy regulation. The school decided to allow some students to graduate, although they did not meet the required scores.

Teachers believed that schooling aims to prepare students for their future, that is, to educate students with the knowledge and skills needed for their future life and for pursuing further education in universities and the world of work, as well as contributing to the community and the nation. Teachers and school leaders perceived a holistic approach to educating students as crucial for student development. This holistic approach reflects their values in educating students and their belief that a good student is not merely academically smart but must also possess a virtuous and moral character (e.g., integrity, responsibility, tolerance). Morals and character, as well as intellectual aspects of student development, were considered indispensable in preparing students for their future. Hence, focusing on holistic education for students was viewed by teachers as a legitimate purpose of schooling.

The school's logic of holistic education was also reflected in teachers' unique identity. In interviews, teachers described the value they place on their identity not simply as educators, but more as parents for their students.

> *As a teacher, my role and responsibility are as a parent, as well as a teacher for students. Therefore, it is important for me to develop students' abilities in their academic as well as moral development, and in the process of educating and teaching, I try to understand the unique characteristics of an individual student.* (T-02)

> *At one point in my teaching career, I realised, it would be worthless to just deliver the content of math to my students. With my role as a parent for them* [students], *I emphasise my teaching in nurturing students' abilities in the domain of morality and character.* (T-01)

This conceptualisation of identity shaped how teachers viewed their role and responsibility in educating students. Teachers defined the criteria of student success not merely by student academic achievement, but as much by their morals and character development. For example, teachers indicated that they would be content to see students who were demonstrating good conduct (e.g., well-motivated, caring, respectful), even if not academically smart, rather than high-achieving students with poor social attitudes (e.g., impolite to teachers, inconsiderate towards their peers).

Teachers commented that the school's logic of holistic education shaped their assessment practices. Teachers suggested that assessment has an important function of evaluating students' development of morals and character as well as academic aspects.

> *I assess my students not merely on their academic achievement—based on their test scores and assignments. However, I consider more of their moral and character. If students are motivated and showing efforts in assignment and tests, I would then consider those aspects in assessing and evaluating student progress.* (T-04)

Assessment functions mainly to foster students' morality and character. For example, before classroom tests, I told my students that, to carry on the exam, your teachers need to spend extra efforts. I emphasise here that it is worthless for you [students], *and especially for your teachers, if your exam results come from cheating instead of from your learning process. That will not represent your learning—your real capability in the lesson.* (T-01)

Teachers used assessment for nurturing students' moral values. For example, in encouraging students' intrinsic motivation to work hard in preparing for school-based tests, and fostering values such as integrity and responsibility by setting the school's policy to prevent cheating, any cheating practice by students meant a zero-test score. Teachers also used assessment to reflect on their teaching practices and as feedback to evaluate their teaching to develop further teaching strategies.

The logic of holistic education also shaped how the school teachers defined the quality of education. Some teachers and school principals viewed the quality of education as the holistic process of an individual student's development, not merely by his or her academic achievement, but as much by their progress in morality and character.

I think education quality lies more in the whole process of students learning, their effort in learning which represents their character. That is their "struggle" or "means" for achieving goals. That would be more important as a preparation for their future and is the essential thing in educating our students. (VP)

We want to nurture values as a representation of students' character, such as patriotism, nationalism, and other soft skills like leadership, creativity, cooperation and collaboration and so forth. Student learning does not merely happen at the classroom site, not just from the content of the textbook and the stated curriculum, not always in the academic content. (SP)

Teachers translated their conception of education quality in practice through a belief that the classroom was just one site for student learning to take place. Therefore, student learning outside the classroom through extracurricular activities (e.g., student unions, Scouts, student science clubs) was equally important, especially in fostering students' morals and character. In this sense, teachers believed that extracurricular activities provide benefit in nurturing students' morals and character development.

Institutional logic of the Municipal Education Office (MEO).

According to Law 20/2003, the MEO is a local governmental body with the authority to administer education within a municipality, that is, to manage the daily operation of schooling, including providing financial resources for school operation, paying teachers' wages, recruiting principals and

teachers, and forming local education policies. Furthermore, the MEO has the right and responsibility to evaluate and improve the quality of schooling outcomes within its region (Law 34/2004). However, the MEO has the obligation to implement national education policies decided by the government of Indonesia. The government enacted the national examination policy in which national examination scores function as a proxy of education quality, both for schools and municipalities. Hence, the MEO's perceived performance would very much depend on schools' achievements in the national examination.

The MEO's logic of bureaucratic compliance with superiors underpinned its actions in responding to the policy.

> *If schools follow the Ministry of Education's regulations, and appropriately implement, for example, the national curriculum content standards, or learning process standards, I am sure there is no problem with the national examination.* (MEO-01)

> *I agree that the national examination scores function as measures of schools' and municipalities' quality. However, I disagree with the use of students' national examination scores as a single criterion in deciding student graduation. It should still consider teachers' assessment scores.* (MEO-01)

The MEO affirmed that school performance in the national examination was a legitimate measure of the quality of education, with certain underpinning reasons. National examination scores provided an objective measure of students' mastery of learning in curriculum content throughout the schooling period. Therefore, national examination scores were valid measures of the quality of teaching and learning over a schooling period.

The MEO believed that test scores in the national examination could be used to hold schools and municipalities accountable for student achievement, as a fair comparison of quality and performance across schools and municipalities, and as appropriate criteria for deciding student graduation. Nonetheless, the MEO considered the necessity of including school-based assessment in deciding student graduation.

Nonetheless, the MEO also recognised discrepancies among schools and municipalities regarding the quality and availability of the necessary resources (e.g., the discrepancy over teacher quality or the financial resources available across schools and municipalities), which may contribute significantly towards student achievement in the national examination. However, the MEO representative insisted that the national examination still constituted an appropriate policy mechanism to compare schools and municipalities' education quality and performance.

I would say that the national examination is a fair measure of schools and municipalities' quality of education, regarding the purpose for achieving the minimum standard scores determined by the Ministry of Education, irrespective of the discrepancy of resources among municipalities. For those whose performance is below the minimum standard, an evaluation should be made, what is not working properly and what aspect needs to be improved. (MEO-01)

The national examination was considered by the MEO as an essential aspect of building the municipality's reputation concerning educational performance. The institution was eager to improve national examination scores to raise the municipality's ranking.

The national examination defines both schools' and municipalities' reputations. It represents the quality of teaching and learning as well as the municipality's performance in administering education… We want to improve our performance and ranking… In achieving this purpose, we have to obtain consent from the local legislature about intervention programmes and funding. (MEO-01)

In its current circumstance, this municipality ranked well compared with other municipalities. Driven by that objective, the MEO used test scores in the national examination to evaluate school performance based on school league tables, and followed up by providing the interventions needed for lower-achieving schools in the municipality. The intervention by the MEO to improve the quality of teaching and learning itself had to go through the approval of the municipality's legislature in terms of the technical aspect of the programme of intervention for schools and their effectiveness, as well as the funding for the programme. Ultimately, the formal and informal interaction between the MEO and the municipality's legislature shaped the MEO's responses to the national examination policy.

Institutional logic of parents.

The logic of education for students' future job preparation underpinned parents' responses toward the implementation of the national examination policy and was shaped by the influence of the sociocultural situation in Indonesia.

Some parents, especially those from middle and upper social classes, have a strategy to enhance the opportunity of their kids for a better future livelihood by getting them admitted into reputable universities through invitation line[9] with additional lessons outside schooling hours, given either by the tutoring institutions or the school teachers. (T-01)

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[9] The invitation line is a system of state university admission in which schools will recommend students who gain stable or increasing achievement in all subjects based on teachers' assessment—represented in students' grade report cards. State universities will decide to accept or decline students as recommended by schools. Those who are accepted

In a country with the fourth largest population in the world, over 260 million inhabitants, but limited employment opportunities,[10] Indonesians face fierce competition in obtaining decent employment for sufficient income, and education is an important prerequisite for obtaining a respectable job (ILO, 2017).

The use of national examination scores to hold schools accountable for student achievement, along with competition among schools through the publication of school league tables, enable parents to compare schools' performance. When interviewed, the school principal noted that, as a result of the national examination policy, parents perceived national examination scores as a representation of school quality. Therefore, a school's reputation was judged by parents based on students' national examination scores.

> *Parents and society deemed that the national examination results determine the quality of the school. It is formed in the community for more than 10 years* [since the enactment of the national examination policy]*, especially when the national examination determines student graduation. It is embedded in people's minds.* (SP)

The implementation of the national examination policy resulted in stiff competition among middle school students to be admitted to prestigious high schools. There were three high schools (i.e., HS#1, HS#2 and HS#3[11]) that were regarded as prestigious high schools in the municipality. Students, as well as parents, would compete to get admitted into these high schools. A well-regarded high school would partly contribute to students' chances of entering a prestigious university, due to the availability of the "invitation line" system, as well as their opportunity for better future employment with a university degree (T-01, personal communication, August 9, 2016).

The parents' logic of education for students' future job preparation was also identified through observation. Parents strived to get their children admitted into prestigious high schools in the municipality.

> *I will do anything I can for my daughter's education. I want her to be admitted to the state university for a brighter future.* (P-01)

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will be enrolled in the universities without sitting university admission tests. The better the school's reputation, the higher the allotment of students given by the state universities.

[10] 19.4% of youth aged 15 to 24 years old—a population of about 21.8 million—are unemployed (ILO, 2017). Moreover, a high proportion of all workers are engaged in vulnerable employment (30.6% from 125 million; ILO, 2017).

[11] High School #3 is the case study site.

Nonetheless, students (i.e., middle school students who are graduating) must obtain high national examination scores in the final year of middle school to meet the required score determined by the schools for student-admission requirements.

Some parents from the elite class (i.e., municipal members of parliament, their colleagues and relatives) whose children have national examination scores below the prestigious high school requirements appeared to impose their demands either on school principals or the MEO. Some national newspapers reported this practice. For example, Arifianto (2016a)[12] writes that in some cases the elites directly lobbied school principals to get their children admitted into these prestigious high schools. Furthermore, Arifianto (2016b) records that in some cases the elites force the MEO to get their children admitted into these prestigious high schools. The MEO officials then put pressure on school principals on behalf of the elites to get their children admitted. Pressure from elites on schools and the MoE was also found during the research process (Arifianto, 2016b).

Some of the working-class parents whose children's national examination scores were below the prestigious high school requirements likewise insisted on getting their children admitted to the prestigious schools. However, they did so with a different strategy, through so-called brokers who put pressure on school principals (see also next section). Some national newspapers reported broker pressure on schools. For example, Nurdiansyah (2016) and Arifianto (2016a, 2016b) write that some parents paid brokers a considerable amount of money to put pressure on school principal to get their children admitted into prestigious high schools. Evidence of broker pressure also observed during the research process.

> *It is about 12 o'clock in the afternoon, still with two teachers at the security building, near the school's gate. I see three men with unpleasant appearance - untidy clothes, long hair, unfriendly faces approach us at the building. They introduce themselves as a journalist from newspapers like "Radar Depok" and "Media Bangsa," which are unknown. I see a tension in the conversation between the journalists and teachers... a teacher says, I never heard about your newspaper before, what is your purpose? And the "brokers" reply, we want to meet the school principal.* (HS#3, school observation, July 21, 2016)

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[12] This study used non-peer reviewed sources—the newspaper report as referred. The rationale for using the newspaper report was to replace specific statements related to cheating or brokerage from participants that could be linked back to them or another person. This strategy aimed to avoid the identification of participants that could potentially harm them.

Institutional logic of brokers.

Brokers are associated with members of non-government institutions within the municipality. Since the beginning of the decentralisation era in 2000,[13] non-government institutions (named *Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat* [LSM]) have thrived within the municipalities. The LSM functions as a "watchdog" over the delivery of public services provided by the municipal governments, as well as representing a public voice in decision making around social policies made by local governments, especially for poor and marginalised people. Most of them present themselves as journalists from local newspapers. In many instances, the interaction between the LSM and the municipal governments has been dominated by political interests for group or personal benefit, rather than for public interest (Hadiz, 2004).

The logic of the brokers was identified through school observation and informal conversation. The logic of personal economic benefit underpinned brokers' actions in responding to the implementation of the national examination policy, viewing the policy more as a business opportunity. The brokers promised some of the working-class parents they would get their children accepted into the prestigious high schools in exchange for a payment.

> *They* [the brokers] *promised parents to get their kids admitted to any high school they wanted in exchange for money, ranging from 8 million rupiahs* [about NZ$800] *to 16 million rupiahs* [NZ$1,800]. (VP)

The brokers would put pressure on school principals to admit the children from working-class parents by intimidating the schools. For example, brokers pressured school principals to open additional classes to accommodate the children, or threatened school principals with publishing disreputable news about the school (Anugrahadi, 2016).

Institutional-Field Structure of the National Examination at a Micro School Level

The institutional-field structure of the national examination practice was characterised as a moderately centralised field structure. Pache and Santos (2010) defined this structure as a field that comprised various incompatible logics and demands from different institutions whose influences were not dominant but still sufficiently potent to be imposed on an institution. The absence of a dominant institution gives other institutions the potential power to impose their demands upon an

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[13] Indonesia experienced a "big-bang" shift from a highly centralised and top-down style of government administration to devolve its authority to the municipality governments within just 2 years, from 1999 to 2001 (Hofman & Kaiser, 2002). One of the main triggers for decentralisation was the influence of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. They offered loan funding for Indonesia's government to recover from an economic crisis in 1998, but required the implementation of decentralisation in the government's administration (Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006).

institution (Pache & Santos, 2010). Pache and Santos (2010) also argued that a moderately centralised field structure was more likely to produce a high degree of institutional complexity.

School HS#3 was confronted with multiple complexities as a result of multiple demands from various institutions, both at macro policy and micro implementation levels. From the macro policy level (described in Chapter 6), the school was compelled to raise national examination scores, based on the logic of economic development, meritocracy for students based on their achievement and bureaucratic control of schooling outcomes. These logics come from the executive government, legislative government, and the MoE respectively. Meanwhile, at the micro implementation level, the school was coerced into adhering to various demands based on the logic of bureaucratic compliance from the MEO, the logic of students' futures from the parents, and the logic of personal economic benefit from the brokers (see next section).

The school also encountered problems concerning the nature of institutional demands from various institutions at the macro policy and micro implementation levels. The nature of institutional demands refers to the incompatibility of demands at the ideological level (Pache & Santos, 2010). In this sense, various institutions at the macro policy level, and the school, and institutions at the micro implementation level held divergent goals for education. The executive and legislative government, as well as the MoE, emphasised the goal of education for economic purposes—how a more educated labour force could contribute even more to the economy. Meanwhile, the school focused on the goal of education for holistic student development—fostering students' intellectual, character and moral development. Moreover, the MEO, parents and brokers stressed the goal of education for their distinctive personal purposes (e.g., students' future job, personal economic benefit). Pache and Santos (2010) view the conflicting demands at the ideological level as not easily challenged nor negotiable, as they are expressions of core values systems and references for institutional practices. Hence, due to conflicting demands at the ideological level, the school was confronted with tensions and dilemmas in responding to demands from various institutions within the context of the national examination policy and practice.

Institutional Complexities Confronted by the School

The school was confronted with institutional complexity upon the implementation of the national examination policy. The following is the description of how the school experienced institutional complexity as a result of multiple demands from various institutions at macro policy and micro implementation levels.

Institutional complexity confronted by the school as a result of the use of national examination scores for school accountability and competition.

Interviews with the school principal and a vice-principal reported that the use of national examination scores for school accountability and competition had triggered a dilemma for the school, where it was faced with a difficult choice between maintaining its performance assessed by the municipality's public, versus preserving its value of educating students holistically. The use of test scores in the national examination caused substantial pressures for the school to raise student test scores. Nonetheless, the principal and teachers held a different definition of education quality derived from the school's logic of holistic education.

> *Sometimes, it arises in our thinking that the national exam results do not describe quality. I think the quality of student learning and schools should account for the whole process of student learning. That is, their efforts, struggles, and characters and attitudes in their learning process. Those would be essential aspects of educating students in critical skills for their future life.* (VP)

> *I do not really agree if we value school quality just based on a single criterion, the national examination results… I want this school* [HS#3] *to outperform other schools in the municipality.* (SP)

Institutional complexity confronted by the school as a result of the use of national examination scores for deciding student graduation.

The school principal expressed that the use of national examination scores as important criteria to decide student graduation[14] put pressure on the school principal and teachers. Some students would, unfortunately, fail to meet the average student scores in the national examination and the school-based assessment (not lower than 5.5 out of 10 to graduate).[15] Tension emerged as the school questioned whether it was more appropriate to decide student graduation by following national examination policy regulations enacted by the MoE, or by adhering to its fundamental principle in educating students. The school's compliance with the national policy would violate its own values and beliefs. Students who failed to meet the determined standard scores for graduation might show fine character and moral development, according to teachers' judgement.

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[14] From 2010–2015, students' graduation was decided by a combination of the national examination score and teacher-based assessment. Students who were unable to pass the minimum standard scores (decided by the MoE) were not eligible to graduate (Minister of Education Regulation 45/2010).

[15] This aspect happened since teachers emphasised assessing students based on their moral and character development. Hence, students who had teacher-assessment scores below the minimum standard for promotion and retention would still be promoted to the next grade if they showed satisfactory moral and character development. Teachers conducted this by marking up students' grades to meet the minimum competency standards (HS#3, meeting observation, June 15, 2016).

The national examination provides a more valid and reliable assessment instrument compared to the school-based exam. (SP)

There should be other success criteria that determine the school's and students' performance in addition to the national exam. The process of learning and moral development and character of the students themselves should be considered as criteria for determining the success of the school and students. (SP)

Institutional complexity confronted by the school as a result of the use of national examination scores for their selection to the next level of education.

The use of national examination scores as selection criteria for the next level of education provoked a dilemma for the school. The dilemma emerged as the school was faced with a difficult choice, whether to comply with demands from some of the elite parents and working-class parents, versus protecting its independence in the process of student admissions. Rejecting the demands of some of the elite and working-class parents might result in weakening the school's image in the eyes of the public. Consistent with the research data, Arifianto (2016a, 2016b) reports that some parents from the elite class lobbied the MEO to put pressure on the school principal, or directly lobbied the school principal, to ensure their children were admitted into the school, although their scores in the national examination were below the school's passing grade for admission. Meanwhile, some parents from the working-class paid brokers to put pressure on the school's principal to get their children admitted. The brokers threatened to publish disreputable news about the school in local newspapers (Anugrahadi, 2016). In this case, although pressure from some parents was addressed to the school principal specifically, the school in its entirety (i.e., teachers and students) encountered pressure, as indicated in field notes from the school case study:

Two teachers are "guarding" the school in the school security building, near the school entrance. Teachers are worried about the pressures of the elites as well as the brokers who want to influence the school principal's decision to admit their kids to the school. Teachers would ask the school visitor to explain their purpose. If teachers think the visitor is the elites or the brokers, they would explain that the school principal is away [e.g., out of town for training]. (Excerpt from school observation, July 21, 2016)

Here in this school we are trying hard to develop integrity and honesty for our students, but our leader ruins that by giving an inappropriate example in their conduct [bending to pressure from some elite-class parents]. (T-03)

The School's Attributes as a Filter to Institutional Complexity

Institutions are not passive recipients of demands from their external institutional referents. Rather, they undertake sense making of institutional demands, which defines their responses to the complexities (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). The demands that come from their external institutional referents are filtered by the attributes of the institutions which define how they respond to such demands (Greenwood et al., 2011).

In interviews, the school principal, the vice-principal and the teachers revealed how the school responds to the complexities resulting from the implementation of the national examination policy. The school's responses to the complexities were filtered by its institutional identities (Greenwood et al., 2011), specifically the school's identity at the internal-institution level and institutional-field level. At the level of internal institutions, institutional identities can be defined as collective values that drive institutional behaviour and shape how institutions define the criteria for the appropriateness of their actions (Glynn, 2008; Greenwood et al., 2011). In this sense, the school teachers viewed their identity (as well as their role) more as parents for students (T-02, personal communication, August 1, 2016). This notion of teachers' unique identity shaped the school's logic of holistic education. Therefore, the school judged the quality of education more by assessing students' development on morals and character (VP, personal communication, July 19, 2016). The internal institution's identity influenced which institutional demands were to be prioritised or ignored in responding to the complexities (Greenwood et al., 2011). At the institutional-field level, institutional identities were constructed by a network of institutions in a set of claims to a social category in comparison to others (Glynn, 2008). In this sense, the school possessed an identity as among the most prestigious schools in the municipality, concerning its quality and performance (SP, personal communication, August 22, 2016). This external institution's identity shaped the school's legitimacy (recognition from the municipality's public) and could increase or reduce an institution's discretion when choosing which institutional demands were to be prioritised or ignored (Greenwood et al., 2011).

The School's Responses to Institutional Complexity

The principal and the vice-principal reported in interviews that the school constructed a range of response strategies when responding to the multiple complexities encountered. Institutions are aware of the existence of multiple demands from both internal institutions and their external institutional referents. In responding to complexities, institutions' members scrutinise which institutional demands to prioritise, accept, modify or ignore (Pache & Santos, 2010). Moreover, when facing institutional complexity, more than one course of action is available and may be considered an appropriate response by institutions (Whittington, 1992). In this sense, institutions possess the

opportunity to choose a response strategy from the repertoire of possible responses available to them when facing competing institutional demands or institutional complexities—complying, comprising and decoupling (Olivier, 1991; Pache & Santos, 2010).

The school's response to institutional complexity as a result of the use of national examination scores for school accountability and competition.

The school responded to complexity over the purpose of the use of national examination scores for school accountability and competition with a compromise response (Pache & Santos, 2013), as identified in an interview:

> *I would want this school to outperform the HS#2 and HS#1 in the result of the national examination. In this sense, I consider the slight gap of achievement in the national examination among HS#3, HS#2, and HS#1.* (SP)

The school principal conveyed that a need to gain legitimacy in the public domain and necessary resources for school operations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) has driven schools to compromise with policy demands to raise national examination scores, despite their disagreement with the use of the scores as a proxy of education quality. Legitimacy is defined as the appropriateness and desirability of institutions' actions judged by their external institutional referents (Suchman, 1995; cited in Deephouse & Suchman, 2008). The school enacted an acceptable balance between its internal demands from teachers to emphasise students' moral and character development, and the demand from the policy to raise national examination scores as a measure of the school's quality when competing with other schools in the municipality (SP, personal communication, August 22, 2016; T-01, personal communication, August 2, 2016) . In this sense, the public (i.e., community members, parents) and the MEO evaluated the school's quality based on national examination scores. Therefore, the school's reputation in public very much depended on the school's performance in the national examination. Furthermore, the school's reputation to some extent determined the amount of funding from the government (i.e., the MoE and the MEO) based on the number of students enrolled. In this case, the school's reputation attracted more students, and, in turn, provided a greater opportunity for receiving more funding from the government for the school's operation.

The vice-principal explained that the school's programme of "additional schooling hours" was the practice implemented by the school in its attempt to compromise with the demand from the national examination policy to raise students' scores. The additional hours were supplementary to students' core learning and conducted before the general hours of school (i.e., from 6 am to 7 am). This programme was mainly conducted with students through "drilling practice" to familiarise students with the national examination's materials and answers, aimed at students obtaining higher scores in the national examination. Students in the last year of school (Grade 12) were required by the school

to attend these additional programme hours. Nonetheless, the vice-principal disagreed with the programme, as he deemed the programme inefficient for student learning and costly in terms additional wages for teachers and learning material costs. In this sense, the school was compelled to implement the programme, since other schools had already started a similar programme so it was coerced to compete with other schools based on its performance in the national examination.

> *I do not agree with the additional schooling hour programme. The programme is driven more by teachers' request, especially the senior teachers, as well as the school principal. They asked me as the vice-principal to run the school preparation programme for the national examination, as in other schools the preparation programme has already been running.* (VP)

> *For the effectiveness of the additional schooling hours… umm… less efficient, regarding time, energy and cost. We only have 50 minutes with so much content to be covered as well as for practising the examination materials.* (VP)

The drilling practice used by schools, along with the use of national examination scores for deciding their graduation, contributed to some extent to the unintended consequences of the national examination policy. The complexity encountered by the school as a result of using national examination scores for school accountability and competition tended to encourage teachers to prepare students to succeed in the national examination in a way that emphasised teaching through rote learning in test preparations, thus reducing the emphasis on developing students' critical thinking.

Another response strategy implemented by the school to compromise on the demands of the national examination policy was to enact a school policy that forbade all extracurricular activities for final year students (students in Grade 12). The principal explained in an interview that the school's policy aimed at allowing students to focus on mastering curriculum content taught in classroom activities and prepared them to gain good scores in the national examination.

> *For students in Grade 12, we would stop extracurricular activities, to make them focus more on preparing for the national examination. However, I do not think it is appropriate if we focus more on academic achievement and get rid of achievement in non-academic activities. I think the purpose of the national examination which emphasises school accountability does not fit with the values that we attempt to nurture in this school.* (VP)

The principal and teachers were very unhappy with this policy. They preferred to balance classroom learning and extracurricular activities for students, believing that extracurricular activities are an essential aspect in developing students' morals and character. In this sense, the school was again

compelled to get students to obtain high scores in the national examination, in maintaining its reputation and performance to the municipality's public.

The school's response to institutional complexity as a result of the use of national examination scores for deciding student graduation.

The school responded to the complexity over the use of national examination scores with a decoupling response (Pache & Santos, 2013). The vice-principal illustrated how the school decoupled with the national examination policy regulation:

> *One of the things that we did, especially for a few students who had low scores on the national exam, we marked up their score in the school-based assessment. So then those students would be able to graduate, and we would get 100% of students graduating. I would say, in this case, the school's assessment did not represent student learning—merely engineering of score data.* (VP)

The school showed its commitment in following the examination regulations to decide student graduation—that is, deciding student graduation based on the average of students' examination scores and school-based assessment (i.e., not lower than 5.5 out of 10). Nonetheless, for students who failed to meet the required score, the school "marked up" grades on teacher-based assessments. Hence, the average scores between the national examination and teachers' assessment were above the average-minimum standard of graduation determined by the MoE. In this sense, the school showed symbolic compliance (Pache & Santos, 2013) to the policy regulations, while the school implemented practices that were in line with its logic of holistic education.

The teachers' identity as parents for their students drove the school's decision to decouple from the demand of the national examination policy (T-02, personal communication, August 1, 2016). This identity shaped how school teachers viewed their role and responsibilities in holistically educating students.

The outcome of the use of national examination scores for deciding graduation was that students cheated and the development of their critical thinking skills was reduced. The interviews with students found that because the national examination policy forced them to obtain high scores in the examination, many students decided to join tutoring institutions outside the school for that purpose.

> *I enrolled in tutoring institution for national examination preparation and university entrance test… I get the benefit of higher test scores from the tutoring session*. (S-01)

In some cases, the tutoring agencies were reported to provide students with leaked answers for the national examination. This notion was identified in document analysis. For example, Virdhani (2016a, 2016b) reports that the tutoring agencies did so since they wanted to recruit more students

in the future by showing their prior students' success in the examination. This practice was confirmed by students in interviews.

> *I tell you one story; my friend gave me a photo of the national examination paper, most likely coming from the tutoring agencies. She asked me to work on those examination materials.* (S-02)

Overall, the use of a national examination to decide student graduation contributed to unintended consequences. In this sense, the policy forced students to succeed in the examination by focusing on rote learning through test preparation, and in some cases encouraged them to cheat.

The school's response to institutional complexity as a result of the use of national examination scores for selection of students to the next level of education.

The school responded to the complexity over the use of national examination scores for their selection of students to the next level of education with a refusal response, as identified in an interview.

> *Last year, the school had to admit 400 more students over the capacity that the school can hold. We do not want that to happen again this year. All teachers have agreed to support the school principal to "defend" our school, by not following any pressures either from the elites or the brokers.* (VP)

The principal insisted on defending the school's independence in the student-admission process by following national examination policy regulations; that is, junior secondary students who had national examination scores below the school's passing grade were not admitted.

The decision from the principal was based on the previous year's unfavourable experience at the school. The vice-principal recounted an incident that happened a year ago, where the previous school principal complied with pressure from some elite-class parents by allowing children who were ineligible to be admitted to the school. However, the principal's decision opened further opportunities for brokers to exert pressure. As the school complied with the demands from some of the elite parents, the brokers, on the ground of "fairness," demanded a similar response from the school to their demands. Hence, the school had no choice other than to comply with the brokers' demands. As a result, the school accepted students beyond its capacity.

Ultimately, the use of national examination scores for selecting students to the next level of education led to the emergence of a "brokerage industry," derived from stiff competition for students to get admitted into a high-performing school. In this sense, parental choice (market mechanism) opened up the opportunity for the brokers and some parents from the elite class to manipulate the national examination policy to fit with their interests. The school itself can be construed as a site

where the contestation of values and interests from different institutions (i.e., parents, brokers, the school, various government institutions at macro policy and micro implementation levels), embedded in their respective logics, take place.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the institutional complexity faced by the school in the implementation of the national examination policy. The complexity was derived from the involvement of various institutions from the macro policy level—resulting in multiple uses of national examination scores for multiple high-stakes purposes for schools and students—and different institutions at the micro implementation level, with their respective institutional logics and demands. The school experienced varying circumstances of institutional complexities as a result of the implementation of the national examination policy and the multiplicity of institutional logics and demands from various institutions at the micro implementation level. The institutional complexities faced by the school resulted in an alteration of teacher practice and led to some unintended consequences of the policy on teaching and learning at the school. These included students cheating during the national examinations, and the emphasis on test preparation, which reduced the development of students' critical thinking skills.

The next chapter will discuss the practical and theoretical contributions of the research.

Chapter 8. Discussion

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the study in light of the literature on educational assessment policy and practice and institutional complexity theory, to explain the national examination policy in Indonesia. This chapter begins with a discussion about the influence of Indonesia's ideology and culture on the contextualisation of the logic of market competition in education advocated by the World Bank towards the development and implementation of the national examination policy. Next, it discusses the institutional complexities faced by the MoE and the school in the development and implementation of the national examination policy as the underlying problem that created disputes between the Indonesian government and the public around the implementation and use of a high-stakes national examination.

The Influence of a Weak State on the Contextualisation of the Global Education Reform Movement

The response from the Indonesian government to advice from the World Bank to implement a national examination is not unique; rather, it is part of a global phenomenon in education in which countries implement national testing policies used for school accountability and to increase competition among schools based on test results (Ball, 1998; Sahlberg, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2016). The phenomenon is commonly called the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM; Sahlberg, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2016). The GERM holds the logic of market competition in education as the underlying principle of education reform (Levin & Fullan, 2008; Sahlberg, 2008, 2016). The World Bank is a powerful institution which advocates for low-income countries to adopt the logic of market competition in education for improvement of the quality of schooling outcomes (Mundy & Verger, 2016). The logic of market competition in education is that school accountability and competition among schools for student achievement will effectively improve the quality of schooling outcomes, which in turn is useful to increase the quality of human capital and national economic competitiveness (Ball, 1998; Sahlberg, 2006).

The Indonesian government's response to advice from the World Bank aimed to increase the quality of education with the ultimate purpose of improving the quality of human capital and economic competitiveness. However, the response was also shaped by the monetary and reputational influence of the World Bank. Mundy et al. (2016) explain some pressures faced by developing countries, like Indonesia, that lead to the adoption of policy ideas from the World Bank. First, developing countries

often have limited choice, since aid from international institutions (e.g., the World Bank) is tied to the adoption of policies favoured by those institutions. Second, developing countries often have limited capacity to develop effective national policies, and thus have no other solution for national challenges. Third, government policymakers in developing countries perceive that using policy ideas from international institutions will increase their political credibility, even when the policies actually cannot or will not be implemented.

The arguments above are in line with what others suggest as reasons why the Indonesian government accepted the World Bank's policy ideas. Datta et al. (2011) explained the monetary and reputational influence of the World Bank that encouraged the Indonesian government to adopt the policy ideas of the World Bank. First, the World Bank could provide non-fee-paying research as the basis for its policy recommendations to the Indonesian government. Second, the World Bank's credibility for its policy recommendations was acknowledged by top-level policymakers in key institutions of the Indonesian government due to their established historical relationship. The World Bank was known as an "in-house advisor" throughout the development of national policies in Indonesia. Third, Indonesia was among the largest borrower countries funded by the World Bank for its national development (Mundy & Verger, 2016).

The Indonesian government could therefore be seen as pressured to adopt the policy logic of the World Bank and to make that logic work in its context, despite cultural and ideological differences (explained in Chapter 2, p. 6). There is a general assumption that adopting a particular policy and its underlying logic adopting from one country to another will result in the contextualising of that particular policy to local contexts. Ball (1998) argued that the adoption of the logic of market competition in education by a country would lead to contextualisation of the logic with national ideology and culture. Furthermore, Bernstein (1996) suggested that "contextualisation takes place within and between both 'official' and 'pedagogic' fields, the former created and dominated by the state and the latter consisting of 'pedagogues in schools'" (cited in Ball, 1998, p. 127). Such contextualisation is challenging and can result in disputes and conflicts at a number of levels— national, local and institutional (Ball, 1998). These challenges are compounded in countries categorised as a "weak state," A weak state is defined by a perceived inadequacy in the capacity of state institutions to provide public goods (Cárdenas, 2010) through which patrimonial and clientelist political dynamics have often prevailed over more democratic policymaking (Balarin, 2009). Indonesia is considered a weak state because of the lack of capacity of its state institutions to formulate and implement national policies, as well as the rampant corruption practices in the institutions (Wanandi, 2002).

The present study highlights the influence of a weak state in the contextualisation of the logic of market competition in education by the World Bank. At the macro policy level, the weak state meant a lack of capacity in state institutions in the Indonesian education system—the executive, legislative government, the MoE—to formulate national policies, as well as the hierarchical structure and patrimonial culture of policy decision making among these institutions. McCarthy and Ibrahim (2010) commented that the construction of education policies in Indonesia is more a subject of political bargaining, involving the executive, legislative government and the MoE, rather than a technocratic decision-making process where policies are based on knowledge and expertise in the field of education. These government institutions' capacity to generate, interpret and use analytical thinking for policy decision making was inadequate despite their high level of authority and responsibility (Datta et al., 2011). Furthermore, the culture of civil service in Indonesia is characterised by a hierarchical structure and patrimonial system. The system structure has institutions and individuals at the top level with superior power and those at the lower with less power (Syahril, 2016). In this system, loyalty is the most important norm, and the top layer of the structure expects absolute obedience from those in the lower structure (Bjork, 2005; Syahril, 2016). The executive government holds absolute authority over the decision-making process of national policies, with the President and Vice-President residing at the top of the steep inter-governmental hierarchal structures (Datta et al., 2011). The legislative government resides on the second layer of the structure followed by the MoE. Schools occupy the lowest level of the structure.

The lack of capacity of state institutions, together with the hierarchical structure and patrimonial culture of policy decision making among the institutions, hamper the contextualisation of the logic of market competition in education by the Indonesian government. This weak state condition contributed to the occurrence of institutional complexity at the macro policy level in the development and subsequent implementation of the national examination policy. The state institutions imposed conflicting institutional demands on the use of national examination scores for varying purposes. The institutional complexity resulted in the use of national examination scores for high-stakes decisions for schools and students. The weak state condition also perpetuated the implementation of the national examination policy despite its negative consequences for schooling. Thus, despite widespread cheating practices reported at the implementation of the national examination policy, the Indonesian government decided to continue to implement the policy. The MoE proposed to suspend the policy to prevent the occurrence of widespread cheating and to get rid of the emphasis of teaching and learning on test preparation, which may reduce the focus on developing students' critical thinking skills. However, the executive government was primarily responsible for this decision and instructed the MoE to continue to implement the national

examination policy. Moreover, school values were not incorporated in this decision making for the national examination policy.

At the micro implementation level, the weak state condition influenced how the school responded to the policy (Chapter 7, p. 70). The weak state condition at the micro implementation level meant rampant corruption practices in Indonesia. The contextualisation of the logic of market competition in education on schools produced complexity faced by the school, caused by a clash between the logic of market competition in education and the school's logic of holistic education for students. The logic of market competition in education supposed that educational quality should be measured in the form of predetermined student competencies to be achieved in the national examination results. This logic emphasised an increase in the efficacy of schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning outcomes through a market mechanism (parental choice) and competition among schools (comparison of schools' performance on school league tables). However, the school held a different conception of education quality. The school believed that the quality of education is a result of a holistic process of student development that could not be measured by student academic achievement alone, but also by their progress in developing morals and character. This definition of education quality was derived from the school's logic of holistic education for students. The complexity, along with the rampant corruption practices in Indonesia, shaped how teachers, students, and parents responded to the national examination policy and resulted in the prevalence of systemic corruption practices as an unintended consequence of the national examination policy.

Test-based accountability policies may tend to produce educational corruption as an unintended consequence, and not just in developing countries. Research in the US provides some evidence for educational corruption practices as responses to test-based accountability policies. Amrein and Berliner (2002) and Nichols and Berliner (2005, 2007) reported numerous cases of administrators, teachers and students cheating in various ways. For example, administrators and teachers were found to change students' answers after the examinations were officially over. Teachers were also known to hint at the right answers as students sat the examinations (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Nichols & Berliner, 2005, 2007). Furthermore, teachers tended to focus on students whom they perceived as able to boost their performance in examinations, thus obtaining increased examinations scores. This help enabled these so-called "bubble kids" to achieve higher scores through intensive examination preparation (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Booher-Jennings, 2005). As a result, teachers neglected students who were either far behind or more advanced, thus reducing the focus on developing deeper learning for all students. Administrators, teachers and students all cheated as a survival-response strategy, since teachers' and students' futures, along with schools' resources and reputations, were

all significantly determined by the examination results (Madaus & Russell, 2010; Nichols & Berliner, 2007; Sahlberg, 2008).

The national examination policy in Indonesia, like the test-based accountability policy in the US, described above, had the unintended consequence of creating systemic educational corruption that then became prevalent, driven by the potential impact of the high-stakes examination system. In this sense, administrators, teachers and students cheated in various ways as a survival response, since failure to obtain high scores in the national examination would threaten, respectively, their reputation, funding allocation, admission into high-performing schools, or graduation. The results of the present study indicated that some students were reported cheating during the examination as they received leaked answers from tutoring institutions to increase their chance of graduating and being admitted into their preferred schools. This is consistent with other studies in Indonesia which reported that student cheating was widespread in Indonesia, through leaked examination answers from either teachers or tutoring institutions (LaForge, 2013; Mappiasse, 2014; Sembiring, 2013).

The prevalence of systemic corruption practices as an unintended consequence of the national examination policy has implications for the Indonesian education system. First, the national examination, which functions to monitor the performance of the education system, was perceived by the public to have lost its validity and reliability because of the cheating practices that led to the inflation of test scores. Cannon (2009) argued that widespread cheating practices make the interpretation of national examination results invalid and meaningless because students' national examination scores are not an accurate measure of their academic achievement. The Indonesian government, in its efforts to reduce cheating, increased the number of parallel test forms, engaged more supervisors for examination invigilation, and implemented computer-based testing (OECD/ADB, 2015). These procedures aimed to increase the validity and reliability of the national examination scores so that the Indonesian government could have valid and reliable data to evaluate the quality of the education system for the further improvement of teaching and learning (MoE, 2015). However, increasing surveillance without addressing the underlying complexities that result in the cheating is unlikely to change the cheating behaviour for all the reasons relating to complexities and a weak state, described in this chapter.

Second, the national examination resulted in a focus on intensive examination preparation which could jeopardise the government's overall goal of improving national economic competitiveness. This issue is again consistent with other studies internationally. Teachers' emphasis on national examination preparation can reduce the focus on the development of students' critical thinking skills, contradicting the goal of the education system to improve national economic competitiveness in a knowledge-based economy (Law 20/2003). The knowledge-based economy requires ideas,

creativity, and ingenuity among the nation's workforce to be able to innovate to increase productivity (Sahlberg, 2008), and the national examination policy could potentially restrict students' creativity at all levels of schooling, which might hinder the national economy from becoming more competitive.

Third, the prevalence of cheating as a consequence of the national examination to some extent harmed the Indonesian government's purpose of education to promote students' moral and character development and personal growth. Moreover, widespread cheating conducted by students was perceived by the Indonesian government as encouraging corrupt practice, thus hindering government efforts to combat already high levels of corruption that put the future of the nation at risk.

Despite the unintended consequences above, the national examination policy also gave rise to a nuanced impact on how parents and students responded to a test-based accountability policy, increasing competition through the survival responses of administrators, teachers and students described earlier. In this way, parents' and students' responses to the national examination policy were shaped by the sociocultural context of Indonesia. Indonesia is viewed as one of the world's most corrupt countries (Transparency International, 2016). There is a variety of reasons why people practise corruption. Hadiz (2004), Booth (2005), Datta et al (2011) and McCormack (2014) have all concluded that, in Indonesia's context, people's intention to engage in corruption is driven by factors ranging from insufficient income and high rates of poverty to the vested interest of the elites, who hold important positions in government institutions, using their formal authority to advance their interests. This combination of factors led to the development of a brokerage industry during the period of school admission, as revealed in the present study.

The corruption culture in Indonesia contributed to the existence of this brokerage industry. As explained in Chapter 7 (p. 79), some elites pressured the school to get their children admitted, likewise some of the school's stakeholders, known as brokers, offered assistance for some parents, in exchange for money, to pressure the school to admit their children. This practice has been noted in other international studies. A similar case was illustrated by Hallak and Poisson (2007), where admission to universities in some former Soviet states was for "sale." In that case, well-connected applicants, or those who bribed or otherwise influenced the academic authorities responsible for admission, were the ones who were admitted, regardless of their test results. The risk of this corrupt practice is that admission of students to schools or universities is no longer based on merit, which endangers the credibility and usefulness of the assessment systems in place (Hallak & Poisson, 2007).

The logic of meritocracy for students based on their achievement in the Indonesian national examination contributed to the acceptance and prevalence of a brokerage industry. The logic of

meritocracy from the Indonesian government assumes that students are allowed to compete on an equal basis for their achievement regardless of their socioeconomic background. However, in reality, this has not been the case as seen by this study and others. Gipps (1999) and Wang et al. (2013) argued that using educational assessment for selection purposes (e.g., student admission) and giving merit to those who perform better result in widening the inequality between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. In this sense, students from a middle-class background can perform better because of their "cultural capital" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1976), since middle-class parents can provide their children with social competencies that will give them a higher likelihood of success at school. The Indonesian national examination policy resulted in widening the inequality in education provision for students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Students who score high on the national examination mostly come from middle-class families and are therefore more likely to secure the chance to get admitted into high-performing schools (Aditomo & Siaputra, 2016; Jalal, 2010). Meanwhile, most of the students from working-class families are more likely be admitted to schools performing to a lower standard.

Institutional Complexity Theory and its Significance in Understanding the Underlying Causes of the Dispute Between the Indonesian Government and the Public

The use of institutional complexity theory as a theoretical framework enabled this study to explore the underlying cause of the dispute between the Indonesian government and the public around the implementation and the use of high-stakes national examination policy. This theory is particularly useful in understanding the impact of a weak state on the actions of various institutions and the ensuing outcomes.

Institutional complexity at the macro level explained the underlying causes of the dispute between the Indonesian government and the public. The institutional complexity at the macro level was shaped by the power relations among state institutions of the Indonesian government—see figure 8.1. The power relations refers to the interaction of power among institutions in which the powerful institutions possess strong authority to impose their institutional demands and significantly determine the outcome of the policy relative to other institutions (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). In this sense, the executive and legislative government were the most powerful institutions that shaped the development of the national examination policy because of the weak state condition of the Indonesian government described earlier. The executive government holds absolute authority to influence the MoE's decision over the national examination policy because the institution sits at the top of the inter-governmental hierarchical structure (Datta et al., 2011). The legislative government is similarly powerful because it possesses the authority to determine the funding allocation for implementing national examination policy (Datta et al., 2011). As a result, the MoE had no other

choice rather than to comply with institutional demands from the executive and legislative government to continue implementing the national examination policy.

In addition, the MoE had a different institutional logic from the executive and legislative governments. The latter two wanted the test to serve a broader accountability purpose than what the MoE desired. The weak state coupled with the multiple inconsistent institutional logics resulted in the different government institutions in Indonesia being unable to integrate or align the differing institutional logics well. This in turn resulted in the use of multiple high-stakes purposes of the national examination, one purpose reflecting the logic of the MoE and other purposes reflecting the logic of the executive and legislative governments. Institutional demands from schools, however, were neglected and not taken into consideration in the original decision-making (Bjork, 2003, 2005). Similarly the general public's institutional logic was not considered.

As a consequence of the differing institutional logics and the weak state, the MoE's complied with institutional demands from executive and legislative government and administered the high stakes national examination with multiple purposes. Not surprisingly, given that the institutional logic of schools and the wider communities, which were not considered, implementing the national examination led to sustained protest from the public and dispute between the Indonesian government and the public (MoE-01, personal communication, December 28, 2016). Furthermore, the MoE itself had its institutional demand to use the national examination to decide student graduation, which was dropped as a result of the public's protest. The MoE still had to maintain the institutional logic of the powerful executive and legislative government and keep the national examination for the purposes that these two institutions wanted. The pressures on the MoE is summarised in the diagram below (Figure 8.1).

Institutional demand from the
executive and legislative government
to continue implementing the national
examination policy for school
accountability and student selection

↓

Institutional demand
(normative pressure) from
schools in the form of
unintended consequence of
the national examination
policy (e.g., cheating)

→

Institutional complexity faced
by the MoE

←

Institutional demand from the
public to discontinue the
implementation of the
national examination policy

↑

Institutional demand from the
MoE itself to use the national
examination to decide student
graduation

Figure 8.2. The range of institutional demands (forces) over the development and implementation
of the national examination policy

Understanding institutional complexities in the development the national examination policy offered
policymakers in the state institutions of the Indonesian government a detailed understanding of the
conditions that led to the dispute between the Indonesian government and the public. The present
study implied that the underlying cause of the dispute was driven by conflicting institutional
demands over the purposes of the national examination derived from their unique institutional logics.
This result is in contrast to what others report to be standard government approaches to
understanding the problem of policy implementation (Bjork, 2005; Syahril, 2016), which suggest
that Indonesian policymakers tend to focus on technical matters when evaluating policies'
implementation processes. The majority of sources for evaluation of the implementation of the
national examination policy came from reports published by international institutions which also
focused on technical aspects. For example, a report by USAID (2009)—entitled *An Exploratory
Study of the National Examination Policy*—and another by OECD/ADB (2015)—*Review of
National Policies for Education in Indonesia,* both focused on technical problems that occurred at
the implementation level. These reports recommended that the Indonesian government increase
teachers' professionalism and ethical standards as a strategy to avoid cheating practices and to

improve the validity and reliability of the national examination. However, as the present study shows, a focus on technical problems is misplaced and unlikely to address the issue, because it does not address the underlying issue that led to the problems with the national examination. The real issue that needs to be addressed is the mismatch between institutional logics. Moreover, focusing on technical issues can lead to blaming schools and municipalities, neither of which is helpful in solving the institutional complexities they face. The focus on technical matters in turn can lead policymakers into feeling that their responsibility in implementing policies is accomplished by focusing on the technical issues (Bjork, 2005), and that the responsibility (or lack thereof) for any action rests solely with those implementing the policy.

In sum, from the perspective of institutional complexity theory, because of the weak state, different government institutions in Indonesia were unable to adequately interpret and to analyse policy recommendation from the World Bank because there were multiple inconsistent institutional logics across institutions. These logics were not well integrated or aligned, and in turn resulted in the use of multiple high-stakes purposes for the national examination As a result, the national examination policy was protested by the public because of its unintended consequences—in particular, reported widespread cheating (Mappiasse, 2014). The public demanded that the MoE to discontinue the implementation of the national examination policy (National Examination Victim Advocacy, 2013). Nonetheless, the MoE decided to continue the implementation of the national examination policy with its high-stakes purposes, despite the public protest.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the implementation of the national examination policy by the Indonesian government in light of wider literature on educational assessment policy and practice, and the institutional complexity theory. National examination policy is part of a global phenomenon in education called the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM). The GERM holds the logic of market competition in education as manifested in the implementation and use of national testing policies to hold schools accountable for student achievement and to increase competition among schools based on tests results. The World Bank was an important international institution to advocate that developing countries, including Indonesia, adopt the logic of market competition in education and implement a test-based accountability policy. The Indonesian government needs to make the logic work in its local context despite cultural and ideological differences. Eventually, the weak state conditions hampered contextualisation efforts by the Indonesian government. At the macro policy level, the weak state meant the lack of capacity of state institutions to formulate national policies, together with the hierarchical structure and patrimonial culture among the institutions. This weak state led to complexity in the development of the national examination policy and resulted in the use

of national examination results for multiple high-stakes decisions. At the micro implementation level, the weak state meant rampant corruption practices in Indonesia. This weak state led to the prevalence of systemic corruption practices by administrators, teachers and students driven by the high-stakes national examination system.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter discusses the contribution of the study to research and policy, along with a discussion on the limitations of the study, and the next steps for future research. The chapter begins with a short summary of the key findings in this research. It then presents the implications of the study for education policy and practice in Indonesia. The contribution of the study to research in Indonesia and to institutional complexity theory is elaborated in the next section. Last, the chapter elaborates limitations of the study and some next steps for future research.

Summary of the key findings

The results of the case study at the MoE at the macro policy level showed that there were multiple rationalities or logics from various institutions that shaped the development and subsequent implementation of the national examination policy (described in Chapter 6). The World Bank was a dominant institution and advocated that the Indonesian government adopt the logic of market competition in education. The World Bank advocated for the creation and use of a test-based accountability policy that sought to improve the quality of education as well as the competitiveness of national workforces in the globalised economy. The World Bank's policy ideas were rationalised by state institutions as a compelling way to improve the national economy, and thus a national test was created and implemented that intended to have multiple purposes—to decide student graduation, to decide school accountability, and to sort students and place them in a competitive-entry process to the next level of education. These multiple purposes of the national examination were implemented because state institutions—the executive government, the legislative government, and the MoE—had varying and inconsistent uses of national examination scores. For example, the MoE intended to use the national examination to decide student graduation, while the legislative and executive government demanded the use of the national examination to decide school accountability and to sort students and place them in a competitive entry to the next level of education respectively. Those demands derived from the respective institutional logics of the various agencies. This situation created institutional complexity for the MoE in designing the national examination policy. Eventually, the MoE's response to complexity resulted in multiple uses of the national examination for high-stakes decision making by students and schools. The multiple uses of national examination scores for high-stakes decisions became the underlying causes of the dispute between the Indonesian government and the public towards the policy.

The complexity at the macro policy level cascaded down to the school implementation level. The results of the case study in the school indicated that the school faced various forms of institutional

complexity in responding to the national examination policy (described in Chapter 7). The institutional complexity faced by the school was derived from the high-stakes nature of the national examination policy and institutional demands from the school's stakeholders. The school was compelled to obtain high national examination scores to maintain its performance and reputation with the public in comparison to other schools. Meanwhile, parents, as well as students, competed for higher national examination scores to guarantee students admission to a high-performing school. The complexities faced by the school, parents and students led to some unintended consequences of the national examination policy, reported variously as students cheating during the national examination, an emphasis on teaching and learning in test preparation that may have limited development of students' critical thinking skills, and the existence of a brokerage industry in the school admission process, in which individuals acted as paid brokers for parents to get their children admitted into their preferred schools.

Contributions of the Study

The contribution of the study to research in Indonesia.

The present study makes a contribution to research on the national examination policy in the Indonesian education system. It provides nuanced and in-depth understanding of how the national examination policy was developed and implemented, and why current problems exist in the national examination policy. This analysis addresses a gap in the Indonesian literature, as previous studies about the policy tended to focus on the technical problems and impact of the implementation of the national examination policy for schools (Cannon, 2009; OECD/ADB, 2015). The result of this study implied that the problems in the implementation of the national examination policy (e.g., the report of widespread cheating conducted by students, teachers and administrators) was caused by conflicting institutional demands over the use of student national examination scores that led to the high-stakes purposes of the national examination.

The study also makes a contribution to national dialogues about the development of education policies in Indonesia. It represents a different view, value and interest from the perspectives of the Indonesian government and schools towards the development of the national education system. Previous studies about education reform in Indonesia have tended to focus on how education reform implemented by the Indonesian government, intended to support national economic development, could work effectively at the school level (Bjork, 2005; Sopantini, 2014). However, school values and interests are rarely represented in research, nor incorporated in the development and decision making of education policies, given the hierarchical structure and paternalistic culture of state institutions within the education system.

The contribution of the study to institutional complexity theory.

The present study contributes to institutional complexity theory in two ways. It provides a multi-layered exploration of a case—the development of the national examination policy at a macro and micro implementation practice level, and an exploration of institutional complexity in the context of an Eastern and developing country. The former addresses a gap in the theory, as identified by Greenwood et al.'s (2011) review on institutional complexity which showed that studies focused on shifts in logic or the existence of plural (usually two) logics affecting institutions across a field, rather than across multi-layered fields, as in the present study. The multi-layered approach used in this study has been useful because it can capture a wider picture of the existence of competing logics from various institutions that affects institutions to create institutional complexity. The present study has uncovered the existence of multiple competing institutional logics (more than two) across multi-layered fields that have produced the institutional complexity. The exploration of multiple competing institutional logics across multiple layers is thus useful in understanding and then demonstrating how institutional complexity across multiple fields influences each other and creates complexity.

Secondly, Greenwood et al.'s (2011)review showed that "much less systematic attention has been paid to how individual institutions experience and respond to the complexity that arises" (p. 357), let alone those in non-Western and developing countries. The exploration of institutional complexity in the context of an Eastern and developing country offers greater nuance in the conceptualisation of legitimacy. Institutional complexity theory has a Western view of institutional legitimacy. Fombrun (1996), Ferguson, Deephouse, and Ferguson (2000) and Rindova et al. (2005; all cited in Deephouse and Suchman, 2008) define institutional legitimacy as a generalised expectation about an institution's future behaviour and performance based on collective perceptions of past behaviour and performance. An Indonesian study, only one representative of the Eastern view, nuances what is meant by institutional legitimacy by portraying it as an institution's obedience and compliance to any demands from other institutions residing at the top of the hierarchical structure. This conception of legitimacy is derived from the culture of civil service in Indonesia which is characterised by its hierarchical structure and patrimonial culture through which institutions at the top level of the structure have superior power and expect absolute obedience from institutions at the lower level (Bjork, 2005; Syahril, 2016). So, the present study shows that even similar concepts have contextualised meanings, and those meanings need to be taken into account in future studies.

Implications of the study.

        The implication of the study to education policy in Indonesia.

This present study suggests the need to develop national education policy based on democratic decision-making across all the key institutions in Indonesia, most importantly including the logic of schools and the public in the decision-making. The study showed that the weak state condition of the Indonesian government meant that the decision-making for national education policy (including the national examination policy) was hierarchical, in which the executive and legislative government held absolute authority compared to the MoE, while schools were not involved in the decision making of the policy (Datta et al., 2011). Moreover, the decision making of national education policy in Indonesia was more a subject of political bargaining than based on knowledge and expertise in education (McCarthy and Ibrahim, 2010). This weak state condition led to institutional complexity faced by the MoE, which then resulted in multiple high-stakes purposes of the national examination policy. The high-stakes purposes of the national examination in turn had negative consequences, such as cheating and a brokerage industry around school admission, which was ineffective for teaching and learning. Enabling democratic decision-making therefore requires addressing the weak state. One way to do so is to strengthen the policy-making capabilities such that Indonesia is able to examine and then balance the tensions of various institutional logics to create a coherent policy.

        The implication of the study to education practice in Indonesia.

This present study suggests that it may be more important to build collaboration instead of competition among schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This study showed that that the national examination policy was based on the assumption that competition between school would enhance the quality of teaching and learning—that is, teachers and students would work harder to improve student achievement if schools competed against one another. However, on the response to competition was intensive examination preparation, which teachers believed reduced the development of student's critical thinking skills. Furthermore there were unintended consequences such as cheating and the use of brokers which undermined the focus on improving teaching and learning. The general public and many schools (as described in this thesis) would support a cooperative rather than competitive approach, but whether it is possible to change approaches depends on whether the institutions with power incorporate the institutional logic of schools and the public in their decision-making.

Limitations of the study and future research.

This study was conducted in one school and a single municipality. The exploration of the national examination policy in a single school and municipality makes the results of the study less generalisable as the national examination policy has been implemented in thousands of schools and hundreds of municipalities. A collective case study (Simons, 2009) in more schools and municipalities might enable future research to explore and compare the use of national examination policy and practice across diverse school settings and contexts. A comparison across several school settings and contexts might identify which aspects of the analysis are consistent across many municipalities and what might be different, and thus provide more detail on how context influences the analysis. A collective case study of this kind might derive general propositions about the national examination policy and its implementation across different school settings and contexts. The exploration of the national examination policy across multi-layared fields is a promising area for future research (Cannon, 2009; OECD/ADB, 2015) about the national examination policy and may generate a comprehensive understanding about the problems and challenges of the national examination policy at the macro policy and micro implementation level. Further research could also examine how institutional complexity theory is understood in Eastern countries beyond Indonesia given the contextualised understandings of key ideas found in this study.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethics Approval Letter

Office of the Vice-Chancellor
Finance, Ethics and Compliance

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland, New Zealand

Level 10, 49 Symonds
Street
Telephone: 64 9 373 7599
Extension: 87830 / 83761
Facsimile: 64 9 373 7432

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE (UAHPEC)

31-May-2016

MEMORANDUM TO:

Prof Saville Kushner
Critical Studies in Education

Re: Application for Ethics Approval (Our Ref. 017087): Approved

The Committee considered your application for ethics approval for your project entitled **Researching school assessment policy in Indonesia**.

We are pleased to inform you that ethics approval is granted for a period of three years. The expiry date for this approval is 31-May-2019.
If the project changes significantly, you are required to submit a new application to UAHPEC for further consideration.

If you have obtained funding other than from UniServices, send a copy of this approval letter to the Research Office, at ro-awards@auckland.ac.nz. For UniServices contracts, send a copy of the approval letter to the Contract Manager, UniServices.

In order that an up-to-date record can be maintained, you are requested to notify UAHPEC once your project is completed.

The Chair and the members of UAHPEC would be happy to discuss general matters relating to ethics approvals. If you wish to do so, please contact the UAHPEC Ethics Administrators at ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz in the first instance.

Please quote reference number: **017087** on all communication with the UAHPEC regarding this application.

(This is a computer generated letter. No signature required.)

UAHPEC Administrators University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee

c.c. Head of Department / School, Critical Studies in Education
Mr Irfan Prasetya

Additional information:

1. Do not forget to fill in the 'approval wording' on the Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms, giving the dates of approval and the reference number, before you send them out to your participants.

2. Should you need to make any changes to the project,please complete the online proposed changes and include any revised documentation.

3. At the end of three years, or if the project is completed before the expiry, please advise UAHPEC of its completion.

4. Should you require an extension, please complete the online Amendment Request form associated with this approval number giving full details along with revised documentation. An extension can be granted for up to three years, after which a new application must be submitted.

5. Please note that UAHPEC may from time to time conduct audits of approved projects to ensure that the research has been carried out according to the approval that was given.

Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
NEW ZEALAND

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK

School of Critical Studies in Education
Te Kura O te KōtuingaAkoranga Mātauranga
 Block, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Avenue, EpsomAuckland
1023, New Zealand
623 8883 (within Auckland)
0800 61 62 63 (outside Auckland)+64 9 373 7513

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

(Educational Administrators of the District and Provincial Education Office and the Ministry of Education)

Project title:

Educational Assessment in Relation to Policy and Practitioner Culture: A Policy Evaluation Study in the Indonesian Education System

Name(s) of Researcher(s):

Prasetya, Irfan, Student I. D. 6471401, PhD from the Faculty of Education and Social Work, the University of Auckland

Project description and invitation

I am a PhD student at Auckland University, New Zealand. My research will be a qualitative case study evaluation of educational assessment policy, aiming to understand educational assessment in relation to policy and practitioner culture. Specifically, the project attempts to see the complexity of the interaction among various educational stakeholders, at the Ministry of Education, the District and Provincial Education Office and School level, with educational assessment policy and practices. The result of this study will provide rich data towards understanding different views and values across a diversity of educational stakeholders.

Educational Administrators of the District and Provincial Education Office and the Ministry of Education are warmly invited to be involved in this study by participating in interviews. It is important to understand policy makers' view as they hold crucial roles in education policy and with educational assessment policy and practices, and I do hope you will be enthusiastic about participating in my research.

Project Procedures

Please accept this letter as my written request for your permission to invite you to participate in this research. The Head of your unit has made this initial approach and assures that your decision to participate or not in my research will not affect your office standing. All participation will be voluntary and you will receive a consent form. If you are interested and able to participate, could you please fill in the consent form attached.

My interviews will last for around 60 minutes. Recording might be necessary in the interviews and all the interviewees will have the opportunity to edit the account before it is used as research data. I myself will do the transcription of the recordings. You will not be identified in anything I write. In your case you will be showed the account of the interview and you will have the chance to change it.

Data storage/retention/destruction/future use

All data will be stored and destroyed in a secure and confidential manner once my thesis is completed. They will be used in Irfan Prasetya's PhD thesis and for any publications arising from it.

Right to Withdraw from Participation

Participants have the right to withdraw from participation at any time during the research.

Problems with my Research

This is a project conducted in Indonesia. Born and brought up in Indonesia, I am familiar with local culture and ethical issues. In case any unexpected adverse circumstances occur, I will seek advice from you and my supervisor. If you have any problem or issue with my research, you may raise this with me or with my supervisor.

Contact Details and Approval Wording

Researcher	:	Irfan Prasetya, the School of Critical Studies in Education (CRSTIE), Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel:+64 21 08659204 +62 2173881606 (Indonesia)
		Email: ipra311@aucklanduni.ac.nz
Supervisor	:	Professor Saville Kushner, the School of Critical Studies in Education (CRSTIE), Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel: +64 9 623 8899 Ext. 48183
		Email: s.kushner@auckland.ac.nz
		Dr. Mei Lai, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel: +64 9 373 7999 Ext. 48658
		Email: mei.lai@auckland.ac.nz
HOD	:	Associate Professor Carol Mutch, the School of Critical Studies in Education, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel: +64 9 623 8899 Ext. 48257
		Email: c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz

Chair contact details:

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair,

The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee,

The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373–7599 (extn). 87830/83761.

Email: humanethics@auckland.ac.nz

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS

COMMITTEE ON 31 May 2016 for (3) years, Reference Number 017087

School of Critical Studies in Education
Te Kura O te KōtuingaAkoranga Mātauranga
 Block, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Avenue, EpsomAuckland
1023, New Zealand
623 8883 (within Auckland)
0800 61 62 63 (outside Auckland)+64 9 373 7513

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

(School Principal)

Project title:

Educational Assessment in Relation to Policy and Practitioner Culture: A Policy Evaluation Study in the Indonesian Education System

Name(s) of Researcher(s):

Prasetya, Irfan, Student I. D. 6471401, PhD from the Faculty of Education and Social Work, the University of Auckland

Project description and invitation

I am a PhD student at Auckland University, New Zealand. My research will be a qualitative case study evaluation of educational assessment policy, aiming to understand educational assessment in relation to policy and practitioner culture. Specifically, the project attempts to see the complexity of the interaction among various educational stakeholders, at the Ministry of Education, the District and Provincial Education Office and School level, with educational assessment policy and practices. The result of this study will provide rich data towards understanding different views and values across a diversity of educational stakeholders.

The principal of High School 3 in Depok Municipality, West Java Province, Indonesia is warmly invited to be involved in the study and to allow your school to be a single case study. Ideally, I would like to study the whole life of the school so as to understand its culture, its philosophy and its practices. This will mean being in the school for a substantial amount of time – one to two months - attending events, observing school assessment practices and having conversations with staff and students. Everything I do will be by agreement – for example, I would only attend a class if I was given permission and the teacher felt comfortable; I would only interview people who have agreed to talk to me. No doubt, some people would prefer not to be involved, and I will be happy with that.

It may be easier for me to have such a presence in the school if I have a contribution to make and I am happy to talk to you about what I might do in the school to make that contribution. I would be pleased, for example, to support teachers – perhaps to take some classes or be a teaching assistant.

Project Procedures

Please accept this letter as my written request. First, I would like to ask for your permission to do my research in your school. Second, I would like to interview you as part of my research. I would also appreciate if you could assist me to make the initial approach to teachers and students. May I ask you to provide an assurance to your colleagues that their decision to participate or not in my research will in no way affect their standing in the school. All participation will be voluntary, and this will be made clear on the participant information sheet and consent form. People can withdraw from the research whenever they choose, and I will discuss what to do with their data with them. I will not identify any individual in the school in anything I write, though it may be difficult to successfully hide the identity of the school itself. You will receive a copy of the case study I will write, and I will only use it with your approval. You will have an opportunity to amend that draft for its fairness and accuracy before anyone else gets to see it.

To obtain a substantial understanding of daily life in the school, the field research will require one to two months working in the school. As a minimum I would like to interview eight teachers, two school leaders, observe six lessons or assessment events, and conduct two group discussions with students. Though the research plan is not to be making constant interventions, the researcher needs to be part of the life of the school to fulfill the task, talking to people where they have the time, observing classes when teachers are comfortable. The time the participants need to give to the research will be negotiable and entirely up to the participants. If at any time the school feels the research activities are intrusive I will leave.

Audio recording might be necessary in some interviews and all the interviewees will have the opportunity to edit the account before it is used as research data. I myself will do the transcription.

Data storage/retention/destruction/future use

All data will be stored and destroyed in a secure and confidential manner. The hard copy of data will be kept in a locked cabinet while the soft copy of data will be stored on a computer with a password protection on the University of Auckland shared drive. All data will be destroyed after six years. The collected data will be used for in my PhD thesis and for any publications arising from it.

Right to Withdraw from Participation

Participants are free to withdraw from participation at any time during the research. They also have the right to withdraw part of all their data without having to give any reason within up to two weeks after receiving the transcripts of the recordings.

Problems with my Research

This is a project conducted in Indonesia. Born and brought up in Indonesia, I am familiar with local culture and ethical issues. In case any unexpected adverse circumstances occur, I will seek advice from you and my supervisor. If you have any problem or issue with my research, you may raise this with me or with my supervisor.

Contact Details and Approval Wording

Researcher	:	Irfan Prasetya, the School of Critical Studies in Education (CRSTIE), Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel:+64 623 8899 Ext. 46303 +62 2173881606 (Indonesia)
		Email: ipra311@aucklanduni.ac.nz
Supervisor	:	Professor Saville Kushner, the School of Critical Studies in Education (CRSTIE), Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel: +64 9 623 8899 Ext. 48183
		Email: s.kushner@auckland.ac.nz
		Dr. Mei Lai, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel: +64 9 373 7999 Ext. 48658
		Email: mei.lai@auckland.ac.nz
HOD	:	Associate Professor Carol Mutch, the School of Critical Studies in Education, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
		Tel: +64 9 623 8899 Ext. 48257
		Email: c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz

Chair contact details:

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair,

The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee,

The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373–7599 (extn). 83711.

Email: ro-ethics@auckand.ac.nz

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS

COMMITTEE ON 31 May 2016 for (3) years, Reference Number 017087

Appendix 3: Consent Form

School of Critical Studies in Education
Te Kura O te KōtuingaAkoranga Mātauranga
 Block, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Avenue, EpsomAuckland
1023, New Zealand
623 8883 (within Auckland)
0800 61 62 63 (outside Auckland)+64 9 373 7513

CONSENT FORM

(The Head of Administrative Unit of the District and Provincial Education Office and the Ministry of Education)

THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6 YEARS

Project title: Educational Assessment in Relation to Policy and Practitioner Culture: A Policy Evaluation Study in Indonesian Education System

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Prasetya Irfan

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I am happy to assure my staff that their participation and non-participation in this research will have no consequences for them in their employment and standing in the institution.
- I agree / do not agree to be recorded.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw participation at any time before and during the research, and to withdraw any data traceable to me up to two weeks after receiving the transcripts of the recordings.
- I wish / do not wish to receive the summary of the findings, which can be emailed to me at this email address _____.
- I understand that the hard and soft data will be stored separately and securely for period of six years, after which they will be destroyed.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 31 May 2016 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 017087

School of Critical Studies in Education
Te Kura O te KōtuingaAkoranga Mātauranga
 Block, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Avenue, EpsomAuckland 1023,
New Zealand
623 8883 (within Auckland)
0800 61 62 63 (outside Auckland)+64 9 373 7513

CONSENT FORM (School Principal)

THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6 YEARS

Project title: Educational Assessment in Relation to Policy and Practitioner Culture: A Policy Evaluation Study in Indonesian Education System

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Prasetya Irfan

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I am happy to assure my staff that their participation and non-participation in this research will have no consequences for them in their employment and standing in the school.
- I agree / do not agree to be recorded.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw participation at any time before and during the research, and to withdraw any data traceable to me up to two weeks after receiving the transcripts of the recordings.
- I wish / do not wish to receive the summary of the findings, which can be emailed to me at this email address _____.
- I understand that the hard and soft data will be stored separately and securely for period of six years, after which they will be destroyed.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 31 May 2016 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 017087

Appendix 4: Sample of Field Notes from Pilot Research

School Observation Monday, 27 July 2015

I start to go to the school at 5.30 am from home to SMAN 3 Depok. It takes almost 1.5 hours driving to get to the school due to Jakarta traffic.

7.02 am

I arrive at the school, park my car and see Ibu D (the school principal), Ibu H (the school teacher), Pak T (the vice-principal for curriculum) in the front yard of the school. Today is a special day for the school; a new school year and Eid celebration day as well, after two-weeks of school holiday.

Ibu D talks about issues related to student admission from the middle schools. She tells her experiences about parental pressure to get their children into the school which is perceived to be of good quality. In order to get into that school, the students from middle schools need to have a particular passing score based on the results of national examinations. In case of SMAN 3 Depok, students who want to enroll must have a total score of 34.35 out of 40.00 in four subjects, which are Bahasa Indonesia, English, Mathematics, and Science (0 to 10 grade scale in each subject).

She explains further that there are some cases of bribery. Parents might offer money to principals and teachers to get their children into a high school they percieved as a good quality high school. They insist on sending their children there, even when the children's total score in the middle school national examination is below the required passing score. This case has been investigated by the district education office. It has been proven that some teachers received bribery from the parents.

At the end of the conversation, Ibu D emphasizes that such cases do not happen at SMAN 3 Depok.

7.29 am

Ibu D ask me to go to teacher's office to introduce myself to teachers. There are about 50 teachers in the office. It is about 160 square meters of office space with 25 desks and chairs on each side of the room and a walk-way in the middle.

I introduce myself as a student from the University of Auckland and as a government employee in the Directorate of Senior Secondary Education who will conduct a research in this school next year. Currently, I am doing my preliminary study to design the research protocol. There are about 50 teachers. And I managed to introduce myself to approximately 30 of them.

8.25 am

I hear an announcement from the middle yard of the school. It invites all teachers to go to the yard for a flag ceremony. The students are already there standing in row and column format, waiting for the ceremony to begin. There are about 1,200 students standing in 50 columns with 25 students standing in each column. It is a tradition in Indonesian school to do a flag ceremony on every Monday.

I go to the yard get together with teachers for the event.

The flag ceremonial begins with an opening speech from Ibu D as the principal, reading a letter form the Ministry of Education. Here is the transcript of the letter:

Today is a special day for all of us. We start our day together on this yard. We jointly carry out a flag ceremonial, sing our national anthem, raise the flag while lined up neatly as a community. Today is special because this is our first day of the academic year 2015/2016. On the first day of school always, this same ceremony is held in each school in all parts of our beloved nation. On this day we stand neatly together with your brothers and sisters from Sabang to Merauke carry out this ceremonial on the first day of the new academic year.

All neat and uniformed, honor the same flag, the bi-color, sing the national anthem Indonesia Raya. Today we are not just assembled on the field. The length of a sequence if you coupled your hands together will connect the island of Sabang to Merauke Town of We in Papua, a length of 8.514 km. Today the flag ceremony also sends a message that this huge line-up in ranks is being encouraged to move together to meet the glorious future for this country. For all students that I love and am proud of, in this new school year, improve your motivation, learn seriously, get every lesson done, get involved in extracurricular activities at the school, practice to be able to lead and to be led. You are the future owner of this beloved Republic. You are not merely the heir of the nation, but the future of this nation is in your hands. The future of this country is in your grasp. But the bright future of the nation will not come by itself, it must be earned through hard work and struggle, starting from this school. My advice is to elevate your dream, work hard, pray earnestly and then try to reach beyond your dream.

For the principals, the teachers and all educators whom I respect and am proud of. All students who gathered here follow the mandate from the parents and the nation. They put their trust in you to educate and to enlighten them. For all educators, don't let this routine Monday flag ceremony become merely ceremonial activity, but this ceremony must be a vehicle for all the citizens in all of the school to interact on a regular basis and became a vehicle for the principal to give direction for all school members regularly. Let's get together to improve the quality of our education by realizing that all educators should be and should remain to be a learner. Lets nurture our students not only to get higher grades in each subject but give them exemplary figures in terms of manners and let's cultivate their leadership character. Let us develop a school culture that fosters the ability to think critically, to communicate effectively, to work together. Starting today, let us strengthen the relationship between schools and parents through building good communication among principals, teachers, students and parents.

The Republic needs a new generation who can answer and win the challenges of the future era. Because of that, today is the right time to start a new chapter for all of us. This is the moment for us to shape the school into a "garden," into the educational ecosystem that is challenging but enjoyable for all its members. Students enjoy learning at school, teachers sincerely and happily educate and inspire the students, the head of the school eager to build a good culture at his school as well as the fostering the culture for its members. In the attempt to cultivate students' morals and character, let us involve parents closely. Parents and teachers are partners that need to be hand in hand to guide the growth of students. Do not forget the involvement of the community in the educational process at schools. Do not make the school a closed environment, but open the walls to the community. Let us invite all the various elements of society to share in the students' development in the schools and invite the students to be actively involved in the life of the community around the school. Let's starts this endeavour as a preliminary step to cultivate our students to become children of the learners.

Students who are standing in this yard are the sons and daughters of the nation that will lead Indonesia as we celebrate 100 years of Indonesia's independence. Let us grow our kids to achieve their potential, make the best of them, and later they could be together getting into a new generation, the maker of Indonesia as a developed nation, prosperous country with social justice for all the citizens.

When Ibu D finished reading the letter from the Minster of Education, all students clap their hand and look enthusiastic.

The ceremonial flag continues; students and teachers sing the national anthem.

After finishing singing the national anthem, the flag ceromony continues with speech/preach from a religious leader. This takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

While listening the speech, some students in the front row are sweating. It is already sunny in the yard with the temperature about 30 degrees celsius. The other students who standing in the back row seem not to be paying serious attention to the speech, chatting and joking with their friends.

The flag ceremony finishes after the students who are in charge of reading the prayer finish reciting it.

9.43 am

After the flag ceremony is done, all the teachers go the office. They look relaxed, perhaps because in the first week of teaching and learning activities have not yet been set up. The teaching schedule has not been set by the school

Inside the office, in middle of the room there is a set of couches with one big table at the center. In that table, there are various kind of foods. The teachers chat with others while eating some snacks that are on the table. I think to join in and engage with conversation while eating the foods placed on the table. However, I keep silent and just listen their conversation.

10.00: a school meeting to prepare school for the new academic year

Ibu H is in the edge of the teacher's office with a mic in her hand. She attempts to attract teachers attention by saying typical greeting in the Indonesia context--- "*Assalamualaikum*" an islamic way of greeting.

She announces, it is time for the teachers' meeting to prepare for school teaching and learning activities. She further describes that the meeting has some agenda related to students admission from the middle school. The meeting will be started by opening speeches from Ibu D and Pak A (the head of school admission commitee) with a discussion session.

In her speech, Ibu D describe about the bribery issues surrounding the process of school admission. She speaks in exactly the same way as I heard when I met her on the yard of the school.

After the speech by Ibu D, Pak A continues the meeting with an announcement about the ending of the school admission process. He says thank you to all those teachers who engage in the comitee.

11.00

School hour is over, all teachers leave the school early. Usually school hours ends at 3 pm but in the first week, teaching and learning activities have not yet started so the teachers just spend time chatting with others.

School Observation Tuesday, 28 July 2015

8.22

I meet with Ibu D in the teachers office. I introduce her to my research plan for data collection next year. I tell her that I plan to conduct school observations, interviews with teachers and students next year in the field of school assessment. It probably will take 4–6 months. *She responds that she is willing to help me to provide access for my research, although, she will be promoted to her new position as Head of Subdivision of Curriclum in the District Education Office.*

9.15

I engage in a converstaion with Ibu J in the teachers' office. She is a senior teacher with more than 25 years working experiences and is a former principal in SMAN 2 Depok.

I introduce my research in the field of assessment and as an attempt to connect with the school to define the research protocol.

I ask her about what she think I need to know in terms of national examination and school assessment practice. She explains that teachers face three different assessments driven by national education standards. They consist of teacher assessment driven by the curriculum, school final assessment driven by competence standards for school graduates, and national examinations.

She further explains that research in the field of assessment practices in a school context needs to be conducted in order to understand the complexity faced by teachers in responding to government policy driven by national education standards.

10.49

I have a conversation in with three young teachers in the teachers' office. They are Pak P who teaches history, Ibu T who teaches maths, and Ibu L who teaches history as well. We engage in conversation about what it means to be a teacher? *Pak P explains that to be a teachers is fun. He says that to teach students, to educate and to motivate them provides happiness for him. He also describes his proudness for being a teacher in society. Teaching is a well respected job. In society, in his neighbourhood especially, people will be willing to help him when he needs it.* While Pak P is explaining this, *Ibu Lina interrupts to say yes it is fun, when the salary is enough to cover living expenses. She explains that her salary is too low due to her status as a a part-time teacher. She complains that although she has a low salary, she has to work just as hard as a full-time teacher.*

12.00 School hour has ended. I go to the front yard of the school preparing to go to the Directorate to meet with some colleagues to plan for tomorrow's activities. I see a a big annoucement board on the right side of school front yard with the title: ***congratulations to the students of SMAN 3 Depok who were accepted into the State University through the invitation line without any test.*** There are 120 students listed in the announcement board with other information consisting of each student's name, gender, the name of the university, and the university department.

Invitation line is a system of State university admission in which students will be reccomended by the school based on their academic achievement. Students who have a stable or increasing grade in all subject based on teachers report cards (teacher assessment to measure student's academic performance reported every 6 months) will be recommended by the school. Based on the school reccomendation, the State university will decide whether to accept or decline it. Students who are recommended by the school and fit the university criteria will be admitted in the university without doing any admission test, while students who are not reccomended by the school will have to pass university admission test to be accepted in the university.

Opening Access for Data Collection in the Ministry of Education Office, Wedesday, 29 July 2015

Today I plan to go to the Directorate of Senior Secondary Education to meet with some colleagues; Pak S, Pak W and Pak R We have discussed in advance by phone and decided to go to the Ministry of Education Research and Development Board Office in order to introduce my research to the Head of the Research and Development Board.

I arrive at the Directorate at 9 am. I decide to write up my excerpt from when i observed the school for the last two days. It takes about 45 minutes and after I work on my excerpt, Pak W arrived at the office followed by Pak R 10 minutes later and Pak S as well.

Pak S tells me to quickly prepare to go to the Ministry of Education Research and Development Board Office. Our office is located in South of Jakarta while the Research and Development office is located in Central Jakarta. It normally takes 30 minutes without traffic jams.

We start to go to the Ministry of Education Research and Development Board Office at 10 am. I drive Pak S's car. It takes about one and a half hours. The Ministry of Education is a huge office consisting of five buildings named A to E. There are about fifteen to sixteen storeys in each building.

The Research and Development Board office is located in E buidling. We arrive at 11.30 and directly go to the office on the second floor. At that time the head of Research and Development is having a meeting with the Minister of Education and will be available at 13.00 pm.

13. 09

After waiting for one and a half hour finally the Head of Research and Development arrives at the office. He knew us well as his former staff. He welcomes us and inform us that the Head of Centre of Education Assessment will be here for a meeting in a few minutes

I have a chance to talk briefly to introduce my research in the field of assessment. He suggests me to explain my research to the Head of the Centre of Education Assessment.

13.30

We wait for Pak N and Pak T until they finish the meeting.

14. 25

Pak T and Pak N end up the meeting. They are going out from the office. I attempt to have a converation with Pak N. I managed to be able to talk with him to introduce my research. He suggests for me to discuss the topic with the Head of Division in the Centre of Education Assessment.

I managed to get Pak N's phone number and his e mail.

14. 35

Pak S overhears my conversation with Pak N initiatively calls pak A since he is a friend of his. He asks Pak A to meet us in Pak T's office

15. 02

Pak A reaches the office. Pak S introduce me to him. Then we engage in a conversation. Here are some details about the conversation:

I start the conversation by introducing myself as a researcher and student in the University of Auckland and a government employee in the Directorate Senior Secondary of Education. I further explain that I am here to define the research protocol for my research.

He responds with several issues to be considered in the field of National Examination which are:

1. Mass Cheating Issues in National Examination Implementation;
2. The National Examination as one tool of assessment that have been used for two function which are to evaluate national education standard and to determine student's exit from high school.
3. How national examination possibly contribute to the school quality improvement.

He further explains that some related parties in the structure of national education system (Education Provincial Office and District Education Office) deem student's test score in the National Examination as an objective measurement of education quality. He beliefs that is not the right way to understand National Examinations. He emphasizes that the student's test score in the National Examination function to assess school achievement toward the National Education Standard.

I continue to ask about what government parties are included in national examination implementation. He replied that it is a complex and hierarchical structure consisting of National Education Standards Board (Badan Nasional Standar Pendidikan) that is responsible to develop national examination material (test material). The Centre of Education Assessment is responsible to deliver the national examination material to the Provincial Education office. The test material will be printed and duplicated by the Provincial Education office and will continue to be delivered to the District Education Office. The material is delivered from District Education Office to the schools for national examination implementation.

He continues to explain that the structure and hierarchy of the national education system employs a top-down approach while decentralising education management to the Provincial government and District Government can be a

weakness. The Provincial governments and District Governments have responsibility to manage and to improve school quality. Hence, the Provincial government and District Government want to improve student test scores in national examinations. They perceive that student test results represent education quality. Enhancement in national examination scores is considered as an improvement in education quality and performance. Those explains why mass cheating is a main issue in national examination implementation.

He further explains that in this year the Centre of Education Assessment introduce Computer Based Tests for the National Examination implementation which function to control the delivery of test material, to secure the test material and prevent the confidentiality of test materials.

Pak A leaves the office.

15. 46

I engage with Pak T and the others who are having a conversation about his new position as the Head of Research and Development Board. He stressed that as the of head of Research and Development Board he will focus on conducting research in education which aligns with national education policy and programs. He mentions some priority programs such as 12-year Compulsory Education Program, Character Education, and the School Operational Grant. He furthers emphasis that the field of National Examination is one of the priorities to be research.

He supports my research in the field of assessment. However, he wants me to consider the political and ethical issues in my research (in case of confidentiality of the data). He suggests that I have a discussion before data collection. After I am done with the research he wants me to discuss the finding of the research for potential contribution to the Research and Development Board and National Education Policy.

School Observation, Thursday, 30 July 2015

8.20

I arrived at the school late at 8.20 am. It was heavy traffic from home to the school, although, I drove my car through the highway.

After parking my car, and alighting, I plan to go to the teacher's office directly. On my way there, I meet with Ibu H. She is opening her fancy car (a BMW new series). I greet her "*good morning*" and "*assalamualaikum.*" She is smiling at me, asking why I didn't show up at the school yesterday. I answer that I went to the Ministry of Education office.

She offers help to connect with other teachers in the school. I answer, "thank you, it will be good to have a conversation with teachers." She replied "I will try to ask Pak T to have a conversation with you if he has free time." Then she asks me to wait in the vice-principal's office.

8.30

I go to the vice-principal's office waiting for Ibu H there. After 15 minutes she doesn't show up. While waiting for her, I go to the teacher office to pick up my writing book which I unconsciously left two days ago.

When I arrive there, in the teacher's office, Ibu H is already there and having a conversation with Pak T.

She calls me to come close to her and tells Pak T that I want to have a conversation with him. Pak T is the Vice-Principal in the Field of Curriculum.

Pak T then invites me to grab a chair near him and we start our conversation:

I introduce my research in the field of assessment and attempt to connect with the school to define the research protocol. I ask him what he think I need to know in terms of national examination and school assessment practice. He replies with this explanation of his experiences in terms of school assessment:

"in terms of national examination, there is a change in current government regulation compared to last year. In this year, 2015, the test result in national examination is not a determinant factor for student's exit (graduation). School has the authority to determine student's graduation, based on the school final assessment, teacher's assessment and national examination result."

"It is different compared to last year, in which the result of national examination will decide student's graduation. With the formula--- **school score**= (30% x school final assessment) + (70% x teacher's assessment). The student's graduation will be decide based on final score with this formula --- **final score**= (40% x **school score**) + (60% x **national examination score**). The student has to be able to get a minimum final score of 4.0 in every subject tested in the national examination (Math, Biology, Physics, Chemistry English, Bahasa Indonesia) with minimum average of 5.5 in those 6 subjects to graduate.

"He continues, it is not only about national examination to decide student's graduation but how the teacher manages the other tests including teacher's assessment and school final assessment."

I futher asked for an explanation of which government institutions are involved in the national examination and school final assessment?

"He explains that in terms of national examination the regulation is determined by the Ministry of Education as well as development of national examination test material. While, the distribution of test material is the responsibility of Provincial Education office then delivered to District Education office. The school received test material from the District Education office, he further explains."

He continues with his explanation that this year the national examination implemented by using computer-based test (CBT) an on-line system of conducting national examination. He further explains that not all school has the computer facilities as well as appropriate internet connection. In SMAN 3 Depok, we have to borrow computers from other schools nearby and recruit expert in the field of computer and networking to successfully implementing the national examination."

I was courious about the announcement in the front yard of the school and start to ask Pak T, what was the meaning of the announcement titled: congratulation for the students of SMAN 3 Depok who were accepted in the State University through invitation line without any test?

He replied that "It is an achievement for school and for teachers especially for being able to send the students into some state university in Indonesia. As you know it is a dream of all high school students in Indonesia to enrol in the state university, especially the University of Indonesia."

"Teachers and the principal will be proud of his or her performance when the school are able to send the students into the state university. Those aspect reflects the actual school quality based on daily learning process and teacher's assessment. It is evidence of school real achievement that we always proud of."

"He continues with his explanation that the number of students accepted in the state university is increasing from 60 students last year to 120 students this year."

"This achievement will attract parents to send their children to this school, he ended his explanation."

10.13

There are 4 students one of them having a discussion with Pak P, a teacher in History. They discuss the group paper that students already have a draft of. They plan to submit the paper to a competition. It is a student's paper competition about the history of Depok City. The competition offers an amount of money for the prize; 3,000,000 rupiah (300 NZ Dollar) for the first winner, 2,000,000 (200 NZ $) for second and 1,000,000 (100 NZ $) for third winner. The group of students and Pak Pieter want to win the first prize.

Pak P says to the group that in order to write a good quality paper the group should have a specific topic. He continues to open his laptop and to start to edit the students' paper. While doing so, he engages a discussion session with the students. The students suggest some comment to be addedd in the paper.

Pak P continue to work on his computer editing the paper, sometimes he browses articles through the internet, reading the article and continuing to edit the paper.

At the same time two students, D and P, engage in discussion about Israel and the Palestine conflict. Daffa is a supporter of Palestine while P attempts to argue against D's thought. They become involved in a very exciting debate about political and religious issues.

Pak P tries to be a mediator in the discussion. He describes those issues, telling the students "*don't see the conflict through the religious point of view - instead see the issue in terms of politics*" it makes the students silent for a while.

Pak P continue to edit the paper and the students engage in debate with the same issue.

11.08

today most teachers wear the boyscout uniform. It is a dark brown dress and trouser with light brown for the shirt. However, some of them wear the Batik, the Indonesian traditional clothes. I asked ibu L about the uniform. She answers, "*we used to wear the boy scout uniform on Wednesday, however, since there are extracurricular activities for new students grade eleven, some of the teachers asked to wear the uniform.*"

School Observation, Friday, 31 July 2015

9.15

I meet with Ibu J in the vice-principal office. We had a conversation previously about what kind of assessment is implemented in the school as a part of education policy set up by the Ministry of Education. She is a senior teacher with more than 25 years working experience and a former principal in SMAN 2 Depok.

I continue that conversation with her, asking about how to do a research in school in the field of assessment?

She responds saying "it is good if there is a government employee who observe the process of assessment at the school. As far as I know, the way the government set up the assessment policy rarely considers how the policy is being implemented at the school. It needs profound observation about policy implementation at the school level. The result of the observation would probably be reported to the government to evaluate policy implementation for further changes or improvement"

She continues explaining with a suggestion to understand teacher experiences in implementing assessment policy driven by national education standards. She also suggests that I take a look at the local government represented by the District Education office; how local government responds to assessment policy in the school as part of its performance in improving education quality.

10.33

After my conversation with Ibu J, I go to the teacher's office. When I enter, I see five students (three girls and two boys) seated on the couch in the middle of the office. Some teachers talk seriously with these students, some scold them.

I wonder what is going on? Here, teachers are accustomed to talk each other about family life, foods, and places to visit at free time. But today is different, they look edgy. I sit in my chair and begin to see what is going on with the students and why teachers are scolding them. I begin to realize that these students were allegedly involved in negative behaviour. They celebrated their graduation immediately after they finished their national examination three months ago. The boys took pictures of the girls in a sensual and sexy way as a celebration of their graduation and shared the picture through social media (WhatsApp). Somehow, the teachers noticed the girls' pictures from the social media.

This is negative conduct in the teacher's perspective, and contrary to school rules and regulations and moral values. As a consequence, the teachers withhold the students' high school certificate (diploma) for their misconduct.

Some teachers express their disappointment for students' misconduct, they say "the actions of these students ruined the school reputation, we would prefer to have a well-mannered, slow-learner students than a smart student with awful behaviour."

I decided to leave the office for Friday prayers and finish my observation afterwards.

Opening Access for Data Collection in The Center of Education Assessment, Monday, 3 August 2015

I arrive at the Center of Education Assessment office at 11.30 am. I have an appointment with the Head of Division in The Center of Education Assessment. I met him last week, when I visited the Research and Development Board in The Ministry of Education. He allowed me to visit his office to discuss assessment policy after I called him by phone last Friday, 31 July 2015.

I introduce my research and My attempt to define the research protocol. I ask him about what he think I need to know in terms of national examination and assessment policy.

He replies with his explanation about the constraint of assessment process in schools. The lack of assessment literacy by the teachers.

He explains "First we distinguish between classroom assessment and final exam. Classroom assessment function as a quality control. Classroom assessment will immediately be followed up with feedback from teachers for the development of the student's learning. However, there are not so many teachers who understand how to conduct formative assessment. Hence the practice of classroom assessment is ambiguous - for example, the teacher should do classroom assessment with appropriate techniques, whether performance or portfolio assessment. However, teachers use multiple choice forms to assess student's learning in classroom. Multiple choice has its limitation to assess the student's ability in expressing their idea for example. That is the main problem in the field of assessment in Indonesia.

He continues his explanation "the bigger problem arises when teachers, principals, local government and even policy makers assess the quality of education merely based on the test score on national examination. That is what I worry about, without considering the real constraint in the quality of teacher's assessment, why every person involved in education, assess the quality of education merely based on result in national examination? On the other hand, at the higher political level, the policy makers (e.g. the minister of education) assesses the quality of education in national level, solely based on the result of international test such as PISA and TIMMS. I think that point of view is not appropriate. That is a simplified way to measure the quality of education. In my opinion, the way PISA and TIMMS are implemented is problematic, in this case the sample of students who involved in the test have to follow test regulations while the disparity of education quality between Java and other island is very wide."

Then he continues, with his statement and his answer: "Why the government still implementing the national examination policy considering the bigger challenges in terms of teacher's assessment? there is a need from the central government to have an assessment in quantitative form in order to compare the outcome of learning process among districts and provincial government. The government is aware that there is a process of student's learning that could not be measured through a multiple-choice question. I would say that student's learning process that cannot be measured through national examination, should be measured by teachers in the classroom."

"The pros and cons regarding the national examination policy also influenced by the political interest. Pak J during his presidential election campaign stated that the national examination policy will be abolished. As a consequence of that statement, the minister of education changes the regulation of national examination in 2015 by lowering the stake of national examination as not a determinant factor and requirement to decide students' graduation (previously student's score in national examination determined whether students will be able to graduate or not). Th school has its authority to determine student's graduation. It is a win-win solution by the minister considering the political promise and the need to map out education outcomes among districts and provincial government."

He ends his explanation with a suggestion to take a look at how education stakeholders, including district education officials, principals, teachers, and students respond to the changes in national examination policy as a focus of my study.

School Observation, Wednesday, 5 August 2015

I arrive at the school at 8.40 am. It looks like something Has happened. Many people are gathered outside the school. Near the school fence, there are about 10 people gathered. I wonder, what is happening? I park my car and I am not sure whether those gathered in the front yard of the school are parents or teachers.

9.02

I meet with the new principal of the school in the teacher's office, her name is Ibu Z. She was a history teacher previously in SMAN 1 Depok. She was recently inducted as a new school principal at SMAN 3 Depok yesterday. I introduce myself as a student in Auckland University and as a government employee at Directorate of Senior Secondary Education who will conduct research in this school next year. Currently, I am doing my preliminary study to design the research protocol. She does not respond to what I say. She looks stressed.

I am now even more curious about what is going on in the school? why so many people gathered in front of the school and in the front yard? Why the new principal and other teachers look so stressful today?

9.25

I talk to Pak T and he explains "there is a pressure from the parents to send their children here at SMAN 3 Depok. Some parents even gave their money to what it is called "scalper" or "broker" in order to get some assistance by them to be able to send their children to SMAN 3 Depok."

"The "scalper" or "broker" usually is from a non-government organization (Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat) or "fake journalist" who seek money for personal ends. They promise to find a way for children (middle school) who have their total national examination score below the passing score to be admitted at SMAN 3 Depok."

Note: the middle school national examination consists of 4 subjects: Bahasa Indonesia, English, Mathematics, and Science. The score in each subject is in scale of 0 to 10. In order to be admitted at SMAN 3 Depok the total score of national examination for middle school student has to be higher that 34.35 out of 40.00. in other words, student who will be admitted at SMAN 3 Depok has to get minimum score of 8.5 in each subject tested.

He further explains that: "I don't know why - Today the district education office sent the school an instruction to increase the number of students in one class (from 36 students to 44)."

He ends our conversation muttering " I am tired with this kind of condition, it is unproductive, I still have so many thing to be done … school accreditation … syllabus…"

10.15

I see three police officers enter the teacher's office. I am not sure why there should be police officers guarding the school. I sit near Ibu J and start to ask questions about this. She answers, "*the police officers guard school members in case something terrible happens as a result of people gathering there outside the school building.*" She then continues "*in this case, here at SMAN 3 Depok, the parents perceived this school as a prestigious school. They want to send their children here to have a better chance to go to the state university. You know that we managed to send 120 of our students to the state university. They think that if their children enrol here, the children have a greater chance to be accepted in the state university. However, it is depending on the children themselves.*"

Pak A, the Vice-Principal in the field of student activities expresses his thought "this is one of those situations that negatively influences teachers feeling, it is unproductive for teachers in preparing the learning process for students." He continues "obscurity of district office regulation in school admission processes makes teachers feel depressed to face and to deal with parents and community demand." "The school admission is over… so why do we have to deal with the same kind of business. We do have to focus on our teaching not these things."

11.30

I am standing at the front yard of the school. I see about eleven people gathered there. I attempt to approach them and have a conversation with them.

Some of them are the parents who want to send their children at SMAN 3 Depok. Some reside nearby, and some have to take a bus or taxi or car to get into the school. Some of them are the "*scalper*" or "*broker*." I am able to recognize them by talking to them and their talking style are different compare to the parents.

I am talking to Ibu I … a parent who wants to send her children to be admitted to this school. She thinks that her son has a bigger chance to be accepted in the state university where he dreams of going, although her son's test score in middle school national examination is below the requirement.

I was talking to Ibu E as well, a parent who wants to send her daughter to be admitted to the school. Her daughter is already enrolled at SMAN 8 Depok… although she insists to send her daughter here at SMAN 3 Depok. She wants her daughter to enrol in a better-quality school. She tells me that she gave an amount of money to someone who promised her to help her daughter to be admitted in SMAN 3 Depok … she gave 8.000.000 rupiah (800 NZ$). She looks stressful waiting for the final decision for her daughter from either the school or the district education office. She said "*I will do anything I can for my daughter's education … I want my daughter to be admitted in the state university for a brighter future.*"

Appendix 5: Sample of Field Notes from Research

Friday, 10 June 2016

-stuck at the teacher's office-

I should be at the school yesterday, after three days breaks of welcoming the Ramadhan, started on Monday, the school began its activity again yesterday – on Thursday. Feeling unwell - got a runny nose, headache, and fever made me unable to come to the school yesterday. Today, I feel a little bit better, although, still not good enough to work on my fieldwork, I insisted on going to the school, hoping to meet teachers to talk to.

The clock at the school gate shows 7.53 am in the morning. I glance at the upper side of it, where the clock is located before the school guard open it to let me in. It may become a ritual for me, at least for the next two months.

Hoping to see teachers introduce the research and talk to them - bu H, an English teacher and pak P, a young teacher, taught history. Those names appear in my mind. I walk to the teachers' office and get in there. The room is quite large; it's about 200 square feet but packed with about 40 teachers working on there, make it looks like crowded. Every teacher occupies his/her spot, with one chair and table. I used to sit at my "spot" before, when I conducted the pilot exercise, I was given that place as my work space. It's located in front of bu H and pak P's table.

I sit there, at my "place," open up my laptop, writing the field notes while waiting for them. On my left side, bu L, a history teacher, the young one, busy with her work. On her left, bu T, a senior teacher, she's also busy preparing the teacher's report card as well as any other teachers.

It's been two hours, working on my field notes, I feel so hungry as I'm fasting today. It stops me to progress to write the notes. I look around the room, still, I can't find bu H and pak P, and other teachers just too busy with their work – grading their student's work, put the grade into a particular format, and preparing to hand in the student's grade report for parents next week. I keep waiting while observing what's happening in the room.

I see some students, get in and out the room, looking for their teachers, hand in the assignment. Some of them come in a group, do the assignment in the room while some of them, come by his/her own and hand in a piece of paper or another assignment for teachers. I wonder, what's the purpose of hand in the assignment of students to teachers at this moment? Should they have done it in the classroom? The academic year is nearly over; the teachers should focus on preparing student's report card to parents then, instead of giving students additional task?

While observing the room, eventually, it's already, 11.30 am. I have to prepare for the Friday's prayer as a Muslim. I keep those questions in my notes, hope to discuss with teachers for any available chances.

Done with the Friday's prayer, here I'm again, at the teacher's office, prepare to finish my observation for today. Before leaving the room, fortunately, I have the chance to talk with Ibu Kha. She's a senior teacher, has been taught for about 30 years, since 1985. I explain the research, and she's willing to have a conversation with me next week on Monday.

Have been waiting for several hours, the conversation with ibu Kha is such a relieve for me. Can't wait to do the interview next week.

Monday, 13 June 2016

-mingling with the teachers-

8.17 am in the morning, at the school's front yard, in front of the school's mosque, some students sitting on a set of chairs and tables. Three of them sit behind the table, in front of the table, some chairs prepared for other students to "check-in" - put his/her signature in the student attendance list.

I decide to approach them; want to know what they're doing? It looks like a particular event on the special month occurred? They're doing, what it called a "pesantren kilat" – an activity to welcome the Ramadhan, where students get together at mainly at the school's mosque to read and learn the Qur'an, have a discussion with their peers to better understand their religion, as well as listen to the speech from a religious leader usually about the meaning of Ramadhan and how they may get their activities as meaningful as possible during the Ramadhan. The event will be conducted for two days, started today and end up tomorrow. It's a popular event carried out at this, and other schools aim to deepen student's understanding of Islam and nurture their moral character.

While at the other side of the school's front yard, at the meeting room or the auditorium, bunch of students, they're embraced Christian as their religion doing the "similar" thing. They're watching a movie; I suspect about a story in the Bible. I wonder how beautiful it is, to see students doing different event based on their religious belief but still be able to tolerate each others.

Fascinating to what I've seen at the yard, I then walk to the teacher's office, hope to see ibu Kha to prepare for the interview. But she's not there yet, and I decide to sit on my place and continue working on my field notes.

After a while, I see ibu T; she teaches religion subject - Islam, and also a parent's representative of Class 11a – a teacher who has a responsibility not just to teach but also as a "parent" in a particular class - that class. As a "parent" in her class, she has the responsibility to take care about 40 students in her class, for example: dealing with any student's misconduct against school's rule, monitor student's progress in terms of his/her academic achievement and attitude, and decide student's promotion to the next level/grade based on academic achievement as well as his/her progress and track-record on attitude/behavior.

She looks so confused, walking back and forth, from her desk to a set of the couch at the middle of the office. I approach her, asking what's going on with her? She replies explaining that six of her students are "at risk" of not being able to promote to the next grade – grade/year twelve. She mentions that some criteria that she uses to decide her student's promotion to the next grade, consist of set of competencies/knowledge - measured by teacher's assessment usually in midterm and final exam, skills – measured by assignments given by the teachers, could be individual or group assignments, and attitude, decide by teacher's daily observation in student's daily learning process. Students who are eligible to promote to the next grade has to achieve the minimum standard score, 75 out of 100, a weighted average between teacher's tests and assignments, in every subject taught and exemplify a good attitude judge by the teacher based on daily observation in student's learning process.

She explains that about six of her students are "at risk" of not being able to meet the minimum standard score, 75, in several subjects. She feels that she has the responsibility as a "parent" to take care of her students in her class, help them to achieve the minimum standard, nurture students' moral and attitude, and communicate student's progress and achievement with the parents. In another way, as a "teacher" – a professional, she feels "inconvenience" or may be "embarrassed" if some of her students won't be able to promote to the next grade.

To respond to those dilemma, she decides: (1) to coordinate with other teachers to give additional assignment for those "at risk" students, so then, she will be able to help them to promote, although, the students won't be able to achieve minimum standard scores, if he/she has shown a significant effort to do additional assignments, that's count as an important aspect to decide student's promotion, (2) to communicate with parents and to inform student's progress, in terms of achievement and attitude, so then the parents would be able to monitor student's progress and help them improve his/her school performance.

At this time, Ibu T is waiting for one of her student along with parents to communicate the risk of this student's of not being able to promote to next grade and any possible way to help him to promote to the next grade. D is his name, a student at year eleven, one of the students considered by Ibu T as a student "at risk.' He has five subjects below the minimum standard scores – 75. He won't be able to promote to year twelve according to the ministry and the school rule.

After about fifteen minutes, D's parent, eventually, come up. Bu T welcome Ibu E to sit on the couch in the middle of the teacher's office and begin to inform D's performance focuses on those five subjects below the minimum standard scores and the need to make up assignments, so then Ibu T would be able to help him "increase" the scores in those five subjects, and to have the opportunity to "defend" and "argue" for his promotion at the teacher's meeting which will be conducted the day after tomorrow. The parent responds with her explanation that her son has to have the problem with his studying since he has a girlfriend who older that him a couple of months ago. The parent has reminded him to focus on his school than his relationship with his girl, but somehow, he has difficulty in balancing his time for studying and for his girlfriend. Ibu T is then teasing the parents that she should arrange her son to a marriage, so then, he would be able to focus on his study … both of them are laughing. She attempts to calm the parents down, because, Dimas's parent almost crying when she explained about the problem with her son in his study.

Ibu T explains to the parent that it's his responsibility as a teacher and a "parent" for his student to inform about her assessment in her student's learning, especially, in his/her achievement to meet school minimum standard, so then, the student and the parent could follow up the information to improve student's achievement. In this particular case, she concerns more about the student's performance towards the minimum standards, because it has significant consequences of deciding student's promotion to the next grade. She also mentions that; she's already done any effort it takes to help her students achieve the minimum level of achievement. Any consequences for the student who wouldn't meet the standard will be communicated with the parents, so then, she wouldn't be blamed by the students and the parents when any negative consequences occurred, especially for not being able to meet the minimum standard and not being able to be promoted to the next grade.

At the end of the conversation, Ibu T – the teacher and Ibu E – the parent agrees to inform Dimas – the student, that he will need to make up some assignment and hand into teachers to enable Ibu T to "increase" his scores and being able to defend and argue for his promotion to the next grade in the teacher's meeting.

Tuesday, 14 June 2016

-a conversation with Ibu Kha – a chemistry teacher-

As usual, I start the day at the school, doing my fieldwork. Early in the morning, 8 am, hang around at the school, particularly in the teacher's office. I get into the teacher's office, walk to my chair and desk. When I get into my spot, I see Ibu T, a senior English teacher about 50's years old, working on her laptop, get her students final score - the

teacher's report, from her written document to school's computer application system. It looks like that she has difficulty to use her laptop, so, I help her get her work done. It takes about one hour, to finish her work.

It's been a while, about two hours, talking with teachers at the office, but Ibu Kha hasn't shown up yet. At the office, I see some students hand in their assignments to the teachers, based on the conversation yesterday with Ibu T; I think the students hand in the makeup assignments to get their score "increase" to meet the minimum score standard, to be promoted by their teachers to the next grade. They may be the "at risk" students because the teachers should have done their assessment and get the students' score ready to get in the school's computer system. I then decide to take a break for a while, doing my prayers at the school's mosque on 11.30 am.

It's about 13.30 pm, after my prayer, at the teacher's office, still waiting for bu Kha to have an interview with her. We should have done our interview yesterday, as we both agree to do it when we talked about that on Friday, last week, but she was busy dealing with student's admission event. She was one of school committee for student's admission in this new academic year. I'm wondering to do the interview tomorrow, but I have to talk with Ibu Kha first. I walk out the teacher office to the school auditorium, to see her, but on my way there, I meet her. I ask her a question if today is a good time for us to have a conversation? If not, can we do it tomorrow? She tells me to wait for about 15 minutes; she needs to pack up her stuff, and she wants me to wait at the teacher's office before the interview.

We then walk to a classroom located in front of the teacher's office, find a chair and start our discussion. Here is the transcription of the discussion:

Data	Analysis
Me: Could you please tell me about your teaching experiences? Kha: I was appointed as a teacher in 1985, the first placement was at one high school in the district of Cikampek, West Java, taught at that school for five years. Then, in 1990, taught at high school #2 at Depok for nine years, begun to teach here at high school #3 from 2009 until now.	
Me: could you please tell me about your experiences as a teacher? Kha: my decision to be a teacher is driven more by my passion, not because other things, such as I didn't have any choice in my career instead of being a teacher. I was born in Medan, South Sumatra, spending my elementary and middle school there, moved to Bandung, West Java, for my high school, and then get my university degree at Faculty of Education and Teacher Training at the Indonesia University of Education. I enjoy so much for being a teacher, pleasure, it's my dream, dynamic, we're dealing with diverse students every year, and each of them has their own uniqueness and different characteristics.	
Me: what students do that make you feel happy? Kha: definitely when they can follow my lesson and class instructions. Nevertheless, if they have difficulties in their learning, like a slow learner student, if there is progress, a positive one, in their learning, although it takes time, I would feel very happy with them. Not merely in term of academic achievement, their attitude, if they showed a positive change in their attitude, such as those who are lazy to open and read the book, if they are willing to read books, even slightly, that would be a form of happiness for me in my teaching. Even more, if they're already graduated, well-behaved and had a good job, which in general, they're already good learners and smart students from the beginning. But I would be happier and proud for those who, let say, a slow learner or troubled student, showed substantial progress in their attitude and academic achievement, get in into university, have a good occupation, successful in their life and then visited our school, I would feel enormously happy, although, not absolutely my contribution in educating and nurturing their character and achievement as well as their successfulness.	
Me: is that the value that underpins your teaching or assessing your student's learning? Kha: yes … eventually, I assess my students not merely on their academic achievement – based on their test scores and assignments, but I consider more on their attitude and character, if students show a good attitude and effort in their learning – doing their assignment and tests, I would then consider those aspects in assessing and evaluating students' progress.	Assessment function not merely to assess student" progress on academic achievement but also for moral and character development

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Data	Analysis
Me: how does it relate to the curriculum and assessment implemented in this school? Kha: concerning academic achievement, there are basic competencies that students have to be mastered. For chemistry subject, in grade twelve, there are six competencies, let say a, b, c and d. From these core competencies I will deliver tests and assignments to assess knowledge and skills that students have to be mastered. There are also core competencies, focus on students' affective domain in learning, their attitude and behavior. For those aspects, I assess them by doing daily observation from classroom activities, for example how they engage and cooperate in group assignment with the peer, and their manner, such as greetings when students enter the classroom. It's a continuous process, where I will try to see and observe students' attitude and behavior. However, I found it difficult due to large class size, more than 40 students in one classroom, I find it difficult to observe each student, I couldn't monitor them one by one.	I may need to observe the practice of classroom assessment - to assess student" learning and their attitude and behavior
Me: how many classes do you teach? Kha: I teach seven classes in total, three classes in grade twelve and four classes in grade ten. There are 280 students in total; I couldn't assess them one by one.	This is one aspect considered by teachers as a constraint in their assessment practices. For example, if teacher gives students essay, they will spend substantial amount of time for grading
Me: could you tell me more about the assessment in the cognitive domain, in your teaching, how to assess students' mastery of competencies in the curriculum? The purpose of that assessment? Kha: in this aspect, I see the purpose of assessment in my teaching is to assess students' mastery of competencies in the curriculum and to determine students' achievement toward the minimum competency standard, 75 out of 100, a weighted average score based on students' mid term and final term test scores and classroom assignments. It means that students' have to master about 75% of the content being taught. I feel that 75 is quite high. The tests and assignment function to determine whether students able to reach the minimum competency standard. If students haven't been able to achieve those scores, the minimum competency standard, I will do "remedial" – additional classes or sessions to re-explain the content that students haven't been able to master. However, due to time constrain and the availability of classroom, I just give those students additional assignments, to help them understand better the content, to improve their scores in the assignment, assist them to get a good score in the final term test, and pass the competency standard.	Teacher assess student to determine their competency towards the minimum competency standard in each subject. They would attempt to do remedial lesson to help student achieve the standard.
Me: is there any other purpose in doing those assessments in your teaching? Kha: to motivate students to learn better and to nurture the value, such as honesty in students learning. In my assessment practice, whether tests or assignments, I have to keep my eyes on the process, they supposed, to be honest in doing tests or assignments without my presence or supervision, I hope. If I find, for example, one of the students cheating, I will rip the test paper or assignment, I hope through that action, I "sacrifice" one student but spread a message to others the consequence of cheating and to nurture the value of honesty and fairness in their learning as well as to build their moral character. There is another important value to be cultivated in my assessment practice.	This reflects the value that underpin teacher in their teaching practice
Me: how do you think about the national exam, what the exam function for assessing students' achievement? Kha: I feel that the national exam is useless, both for me as a teacher as well as for students' learning. For me, the national exam doesn't assess anything. Throughout the schooling process and daily students' learning, the teacher has already assessed students learning comprehensively in both	Tension with the national exam, reducing her sense of professionalism.

Data	Analysis
aspects – academic achievement, their knowledge and skills and their 'affective' aspect – attitude and behavior. To be honest, if we take a look at the teacher's classroom assessment, with tests and assignments, those already assess students' competency and their achievement in their learning. I would say that the national exam is worthless, that exam which only conducted in few days' won't benefit anything in my teaching and students' learning. That exam only functions as a standard to evaluate school's performance towards the standard. However, as long as the exam conducted in paper-based, which the students probably will get the leakage of exam answer, that exam won't be able to determine school performance and its students' achievement. The evaluation towards the standard couldn't be considered as a comprehensive assessment, using only one variable test where the learning process at the school itself is quite complex	
Me: do you feel overloaded / burdened with the national exam? And how do you prepare your students to sit for the national exam? Kha: It may create pressure for students, to get the certificate for passing the national exam, students have to get the minimum score of 55 out of 100. If they got the low score, below 55, they would have the chance to repeat the national exam, get a better test score on the certificate. Although that certificate doesn't determine their graduation, the certificate might be used as a prerequisite to getting into the university. The school conducted "additional learning hour" to prepare students to sit for the national exam. For students grade twelve, they begin their learning very early in the morning, at 6 am, in the last semester of the school year, one hour earlier than usual, at 7 am. One of the "burden" of preparing the national exam is that we have to narrow down the curriculum, especially the content that have to teach in the last semester. The national exam is conducted in March, we have effectively five months for final semester, from February to May. To prepare students for the exam, we only have one month to cover all the content for the last semester. As a consequence, teachers and students have to shift a substantial amount of the content for the final semester to semester five - August to January. It's like we have to cover the material for one year for just six to seven months. The pressure to prepare students for the national exam makes us to "packed" the curriculum, although the exam may not have significant benefit for my teaching as well as for the students' learning.	Reflect how teachers respond to the national exam policy – narrowing down the curriculum
Me: does the school has any particular target for the national exam? Kha: we don't have any specific target for the national exam, but we try to help students to be successful on that exam. Throughout classroom learning and the "additional hour," we attempt to get students succeed in the national exam without them having to "cheat.'	
Me: what the teachers and students did at the additional hour session? Kha: it just re-teaching and re-learning the content that may be asked in the national exam and practicing exam question from the previous year, more concern to prepare students ready for the exam by drilling and improve their test taking skills to get them succeed in that exam	
Me: how do you see the result of the national exam as a base of school achievement comparison? Kha: without any national test, we've been able to assess the ability of children who go to school, in which level our school is compared to other schools. I also don't really agree with the school comparison and ranked based on national exam scores. We couldn't compare schools due to the school condition and students' background - the schools input and process haven't had the similar standard. We have diverse students' background, the different condition of school facilities, its teachers' characteristics and their way of teaching as well as the learning process. If those aspects could be standardized, then it might be fair to compare and rank the school achievement based on the national exam scores.	Tension with standardization and test score comparison

Data	Analysis
So, I think the national exam is worthless, spending a significant amount of money just to show one school is better than others.	
Me: what would the government may do differently to make the national exam more meaningful for teaching and learning purpose? Kha: I think the government should put the trust on the school and teachers in assessing students learning. Unlike what we experienced before, in the implementation of the national exam, when there were police officer or government representative to watch the exam process. It looks like that the government distrusts the teachers and others school personnel. In the case of the national exam, that exam should be meaningful enough to improve teaching and learning process. If the national exam only function to assess how well, we meet the standard? That won't be significant enough. One of the benefits of the exam is that it may motivate students to learn. If the exam is capable of motivating students to learn better and could provide us with information to improve our teaching, that will be more meaningful. Like the case of invitation line, path to the university, the students work hard in their learning for better achievement. But anyway, when assessment undermines learning itself, that's what I worry about. In this case, I concern about the availability of tutoring institutions. They only focus on "short-cut" how to answer the exam questions, to get good scores on the exam, with less attention to the learning, how students understand the content. I think we should focus on learning first, then later on how we assess students learning. Any types of exam questions, I think students would be able to deal with if we pay more attention to learning. In this case, education process emphasizes on how students may get good scores on the exam, the assessment is more important compared to the learning itself, that's what I worry about. They should get their exam scores which represent their understanding in the content. There is hope, I think, from students, that they will easily get good scores if they join the tutoring institutions either through practicing the tests to improve their test taking skill, drilling, or may even worse through getting leakage of exam answer on the national exam.	

Wednesday, 15 June 2016

-observing a school assessment event-

Today, the school has a faculty meeting to decide promotion or retention for some students, who called "at risk" students. Those are students who are having a problem to meet what it described as "kkm" (kriteria ketuntasan minimal) – the minimum competency standard or the minimum standard score in every subject matter. The school has decided its minimum competency standard is 75 (out of 100). It serves as a criterion for student's promotion and retention. To be able to promote, a student, for example has to get minimum 75 score, a weighted average based on teacher's tests and assignments, in almost all subject matter, if a student failed to meet 75 scores in more than two subject matter, he/she won't be able to be promoted to the next grade. Also, the teachers consider student's attitude in the schooling process. Students who exemplify good attitude, judge by the teacher based on daily observation in student's learning process, would increase their chance to be promoted, for example a student who has their score below 75 in two subjects would still be able to be promoted, as long as he/she has a good attitude in the schooling process as stated in the government regulation 53/2014.

It looks like a "risky" school event to be observed, considering my role as a government official. Teachers might not fully follow the regulation to decide promotion or retention for "at risk" students in the meeting, they may have their way to determine promotion or retention for their students, and they might not feel comfortable with my presence at the meeting. They might perceive me watching their decision which may not follow the government regulation. I am aware of this situation, I talked with Pak T, the vice-principal, one day before, and once again before the meeting started, to allow me to observe the meeting, and luckily, he gives his permission.

The school meeting should begin at 9 am, I get into the school at around 8.12, go straight to the school's auditorium, see three female teachers, chat with them there, while we're waiting for the meeting. However, until about one-hour waiting, there isn't a sign that the meeting will be held. We decided to go to the teacher's office, staying there.

Eventually, at about 1 pm, after I finished my prayer, at the school's mosque, which located on the right side of the school's auditorium, I see teachers walking there. I go there, get in the room and see about forty to fifty teachers

sitting in the chair. The hall is located on the left side of the school gate, behind the security office, at the school's front yard. It's a rectangular shape building, about five to seven-meter width with more than fifteen-meter length. At the front of the auditorium room, the school leader, the principal, pak F, the vice-principal in the curriculum, pak T, and the vice-principal in public relation, bu H have already prepared for the meeting to begin. The teachers sitting neatly in the chair arranged in row and column shape, and the room is packed with teachers. I decided to sit in the very back of the room and begin to observe the meeting.

The meeting starts with a speech from the school principal. In his speech, he reminds the teachers about the value of educating students. He emphasizes that education is a process to educate students from not knowing to knowing and to nurture students' behavior, from "naughty" into "good.' He tells the teachers to pay more attention, especially in educating those who have low academic achievement and misbehave - "those are the students who really need our help, and its our job to provide them with the best possible way to learn and to nurture their behavior, we shouldn't ignore them" he said. He then explains that schooling is a continuous process, starting at the beginning, from students get in the school until they graduated. He points out, It's teachers' responsibility to assess students' development regarding their academic achievement as well as their attitude – "assessment should be an ongoing process function to inform teachers about students' progress and development and to build communication with parents when there are problems with students learning and 'attitude.' He politely criticizes some teachers who haven't handed in students' grade until today, as a consequence, the meeting which should be held in the morning has to be suspended until afternoon – "teachers should have assessed students' progress throughout their learning process, but until the end of the semester, there are some teachers who haven't completed and handed in students' grade / teachers' report," Finally, he emphasizes the need for careful consideration in deciding students' retention or promotion to the next grade, to carefully consider students' progress in their academic and attitude development, for the purpose of providing students with the best possible opportunity for students' development instead of hindering their development with teachers' decision for students' promotion or retention.

The meeting continued with an explanation from the vice-principal in the curriculum, pak T, about the criteria to decide students' promotion and retention based on the ministry of education regulation 53/2014. The regulation stated some criteria, consists of, (1) students' complete participation within one year of the schooling process, with minimum absence rate less 15 times within one year of schooling, unless having problem with health condition with medical evidence from doctor, (2) achieve the minimum competency standard decided by the school (75 of 100) - student who unable to meet the standard in more than two subject matter won't be able to be promoted, (3) exemplify good attitude based on teachers observation throughout the learning process. He then describes that there are thirty-three students in total who failed to meet the criteria stated in the regulation, mainly unable to achieve the minimum competency standard in more than two subject matter, fifteen students from grade ten and eighteen from grade eleven.

The meeting then filled up with discussion and negotiation, involving teachers who serve as "parent" representative of a particular class – a teacher who has a responsibility not just to teach but also as a "parent" in a particular class – the "homeroom teacher" with subject matter teachers to decide students' promotion or retention to the next grade. Below an example of the discussion and negotiation:

Case 1, grade 11, social science 1

Ibu T, a homeroom teacher for grade 10 social science 1: in my class, there are seven students who are unable to achieve the minimum competency standard in more than three subjects (according to the government regulation, the students won't be promoted), I will consider three of them to be promoted, considering my "conscience" as a mother and a homeroom teacher, I would need help from some subject matter teachers. They are (she mentions the initial of the students) "gws," "mar" and "lw," Here are some caveats, for "gws," he has eight subject matters below the minimum competency standard – in Math, History, English, Arts, Geography, Sociology, Economy, Japanese Language, with twelve-time absences.

A random teacher (couldn't remember his name): too many failed subjects, no need to be discussed, I would say no, no promotion for this student.

Ibu T: as a homeroom teacher, I've done what it takes to help him, build communication with the parent through the home visit, twice in one semester, so I've done all I can to help him achieve the minimum competency standard.

Pak T, the vice-principal in the curriculum: I heard from some teachers about this student, "gws," He's lazy, mainly due to no one willing to motivate him, including his parents, but he has the potential to learn better if someone communicates and motivate him. I suggest his teachers, all of us, to help him learn better than before, how about "lw,"

Ibu T: he has four subjects below the minimum competency standard. I noticed once, he watched porn movie in the classroom, although he dodged by saying his peer who opens the film on his phone. He even caught up smoking sometimes during the school hour. I've often communicated with this student, understand his problem and motivate him, as well as build communication with his parent. Both of his parents are a banker. They're so busy.

Ibu W, sociology teacher: for my subject, "lw," he has achieved the minimum competency standard, by doing the additional assignment, so he has another three subject below the standard.

Pak F, the school principal: for "lw," he has three subjects below the standard, with the teachers in that subjects have already leave the meeting (it's been around eight p.m., the meeting started at one p.m.). According to the regulation, if one of the subject matter teachers are willing to help him by giving the additional assignment, he would be able to be promoted, but anyway, they are not here, so I suggest for teachers' agreement to decide his promotion or retention?

Ibu T: considering my "conscience" as a mother and a homeroom teacher, I want him to be promoted, but anyway, I'll leave the forum to decide.

A random teacher (couldn't remember his name): he, "lw," has good attitude, such as respect for the teacher, politely behave, just if he feels like being watch by the teachers, he would do differently, like he did another way around, not really showed good behavior, if he's not being watched by the teachers.

Pak F: with some caveats on "lw's attitude, we would need to consider carefully about his promotion. I don't think he showed any positive development, especially in his behavior.

Teachers: … most of the teachers in the meeting saying … nooo!! …

Ibu T: for student "mar," he has some subjects slightly below the standard, in English, Japanese Language, Math, and History, and I think he has good attitude

A random teacher (History teacher): for my subject, history, he - "mar" - has done the remedial, handed in some additional assignment I ask, and for English and Japanese Language, they're not here, so he has a big chance to be promoted …

Teachers: … most of the teachers in the meeting saying … Yesss!! …

Ibu T: Thank God, I got two out of three of my students to be promoted, so I'm not so embarrassed.

Case 2, Grade 11, Social Science 4

Ibu L, the "homeroom" teacher: I have two students in my class who have their score below the standard, "nfp" – with eight subjects below the standard, in Religion, Math, Arts, Local Language, Sociology, Economy, Japanese Language, and History and "hzh" with six subjects below the standard, consist of Religion, Math, Geography, Sociology, Economy, Japanese Language. For both of them, I personally, really really want them to be promoted, with my consideration as a mother and a homeroom teacher, my "conscience," I ask my favor for subject matter teachers; please help them.

Pak T, the vice-principal: any positive things from both of them, as a consideration for promotion?

Ibu L: for "nfp" he's the class coordinator, very well motivated, got good support from his parents, but a slow learner.

Ibu Nu, Math teacher: for "hzh," I think, he's a very well motivated student, he works hard to get his assignment done as well as in the teacher's tests. He's a slow-learner student. He might not achieve the standard, but he's a diligent student, I would say yes for his promotion.

Pak P, History teacher: I'll say yes for "hzh" promotion, he's a very diligent student, but a slow-learner

Ibu W, Sociology teacher: those students haven't had achieved the standard in my subject, I've called them and handed in additional assignments, for "hzh" he's in the process of doing the assignments, while "nfp," he didn't show up. I would help them increase their grade in my subject if the hand in the additional assignments.

Ibu T, Religion Teacher: I'd say no for them, I won't give them any additional assignment for my subject

Pak R, counseling teacher: for "hzh," he only absence twice in a year, supported by medical evidence from the doctor. He's a diligent student, work hard to finish any assignments, but he's a slow learner, I feel sad / pity, if we don't give him a promotion. The same thing applied for "nfp" both of the are slow-learner, but they're very well motivated, but for "nfp," he has high rate of absence, without medical evidence

Ibu Ma, History teacher: but if we give them promotion, what will happen with them in grade twelve, teacher who teach them would have a very hard work, please pay attention to that. If every slow-learner student would be promoted, then every student should be promoted …

Pak T, the vice-principal: so what should we decide? Should we give "hzh" and nfp" promotion?

Almost all teachers: some of the teachers shouting … Yesss!!! but then others responding by yelling … nooo!!!

Ibu L, the homeroom teacher: Why don't we give them the opportunity, they may improve their learning and score well to meet the standard in Grade twelve. I believe they have a good attitude and very well motivated in their learning.

The debate ended up with promotion for "hzh" and retention for "nfp" …

Those are just tow examples of the discussion and negotiation to decide student promotion or retention throughout the meeting. It's a very long meeting, about six hours, started at around one p.m. and finished at 8 p.m. By observing the meeting, I noticed:

(1) Tension from teachers towards standardization, of getting their students to achieve the minimum competency standard and enable them for promotion for the next grade. Teachers view education as a continuous process, instead of judge student's achievement based on a standard score to be achieved, they would prefer to give students as many chances as possible to nurture their academic and moral development. They see their role and responsibility not just as a teacher, but also as a parent of their students. As a consequence, they modify the regulation from the government through "increasing" the grade in a particular subject in which their students failed to achieve the standards. This is commonly perceived as a practice of "mark up" students grade.

(2) Tension from teachers' role as professional teachers and government official (in Indonesian context almost all of teachers paid by the government) to get their students achieve the standard. As professional teachers and government official, teachers have the responsibility to follow the rule and regulation of the government, also to meet parents' expectation to develop students' achievement and get them promoted to the next grade. In the case of "at risk" student, when they follow the regulation accordingly, they won't get their students promoted to the next grade, on the other way, they have their responsibility to meet parent's expectation. They would feel "ashamed" if they failed to get their students promoted. Some of the teachers see this meeting as a practice against the government regulation, while some of them see the meeting as a way to articulate their value in developing students' growth.

(3) Tension between homeroom teacher and subject matter teachers in sharing their responsibility to develop their students. In the case of a student with initial "dp" – grade ten, he has a problem with his art teacher. As a consequence, he would avoid meeting his art teacher every Wednesday. He mostly wouldn't go to the school and attend his class on Wednesday. He would skip other subjects on Wednesday. This aspect gives rise to "conflict" between his homeroom teachers who "regret" the way the art teacher approaches this student. As a consequence, "dp" has some subjects below the standard. The homeroom teachers still want him to be promoted, while the art teacher defend her position.

Thursday, 30 June 2016

-introducing the research to the ministry of education-

It's about 1.25 p.m. afternoon, I walk from a shopping mall nearest to the educational research and development office, the ministry of education, at the central of Jakarta. From the car park, I can see the ministry of education complex. There are five buildings, named from A to E. The "A" building is located at the very front of the ministry office entrance, from the street side, the Sudirman Avenue, a major road in Jakarta, one of Jakarta's main business avenue, where numerous big business companies and shopping mall stand along the road. The office of educational research and development board (R & D board) located at "E" building, behind the "A" building. It's a sixteen-story building, where, perhaps hundreds of the ministry employee settled there during the office hour.

I walk along to the second floor, get in the R & D room, see two of the secretary of the R & D head. I introduce myself to them, as a student from the Auckland University and government official at the Directorate of Senior Secondary Education, mention my name and explain my purpose of talking with the R & D head to introduce my research. They tell me to sit and wait, call the head to inform them whether the head allows me to talk with him or not. Eventually, they let me get in, and I was quite a confidence before, that the head will allow me to meet him. He's my former director at my office, he knows me as his staff, once we've worked together, I helped him to develop the draft of the ministry planning for the twelve-year compulsory education program, figured out the plan and calculated how much of funding that program. Those were one of the most challenging assignments in as a government officer in the ministry.

I get in the room, in the first part of the room, there is a quite big meeting room equipped with set of table and chairs in rectangle shape and as well as a projector and computer, the second part of the room is his working space, and at the end his private space with a set of table and chairs in circular shape for four people. I meet with the head of the R & D Board. His name is T. At that time, he has a meeting a conversation with Pak S - one of the head of division at my office. They're old colleague. They're talking about the political pressure from people in the House of Representatives, the legislative, concerning the delivery of the government grants for schools. The conversation continued on some issues: the twelve-years compulsory education program, the need to enhance the ministry effort not just in providing educational access but how to improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as informal conversation about families and office life.

Then, eventually, the time come for me to explain my research to the head of R & D board. I tell, it's about educational assessment, and the aim of the research is to understand educational assessment from the perspective of policy and practice. I will do a case study in one school to understand educational assessment at the implementation level, and from administrative at the district and provincial level, bring the story – the data for the ministry of education, as well as exchanging data from the ministry to the school. Here is the summary of the conversation:

1. The belief from the ministry about the idea "assessment dictates behavior" or "assessment drives learning.'

Here is the rationale for the assessment policy, "assessment dictates behavior," It's natural, learning happen when students do tests or assignment. Every form of assessment whether classroom assessment and national exam should

function not merely to judge the learning outcome – assessment of learning, but also capable of informing teachers to reflect on their teaching and to provide feedbacks for students to improve learning - assessment for learning. We need to introduce this idea and develop teachers' capability to reflect their assessment practice to improve teaching and students learning.

One of the problem with assessment, whether in the national examination or classroom assessment is our limited capability to develop assessment items which in line with the curriculum and capable of measuring different level of cognitive thinking starting from low level to high order thinking. In our classroom assessment, the way teachers develop test item, rarely assess the skills in analyzing and evaluating, in critical thinking and problem-solving skill, which we need to develop. We need students who can write well, have the literacy skills, for example, that will be useful in their future when they enter their job.

We started to develop item question which measures critical thinking or problem solving in the national examination. This year, we begun to put, at least ten percent of the item questions in the national examination, with question which assess students' competency in higher order thinking This function to assess and to develop students' competency in critical thinking and problem solving as well as to lower the marketability of the tutoring institution, to make the item questions in the national exam less predictable.

2. The intention to change the national examination policy from the concept of assessment of learning to assessment for learning.

We want to change the function of the national exam. Previously, the national exam is construed as the judgment day, to decide that a school is good or bad, decided on the day of the national examination. This, in the near future, mustn't, the national examination must function as assessment for learning. The national examination should function to give feedbacks for students, what need to be improved. Assessment to inform, not to judge you're good or bad, that you need to improve in a particular area, please pay attention and improve in the area that needs to be improved. So, I think, the national exam shouldn't be conducted in the end year of schooling; we should implement, let say in grade eleven, with the opportunity to redo it in grade twelve. I still not sure when we will make it happen, though? Currently, the national exam may benefit, but for students in the lower grade.

If we take a look at the national policy, two or three years ago, when it functions as criteria to decide students' graduation. Here is my explanation, the national exam, does it matter? I'd say it is important. First, classroom assessment isn't standard and impossible to be standardized. The national exam function as a standard measure of the outcome of students' learning, but the national exam which function as a standard measure, would be meaningful if there isn't cheating practice in its implementation. The reality, cheating happen, then the national exam wouldn't be useful as a standard. Then, in the current year, we focus on how to lower the cheating practice in the national exam, by not using the national exam as criteria for students' graduation.

3. The need to understand teacher's classroom assessment practice.

Classroom assessment should function mainly to inform how students learn, to provide feedbacks for students as well as for teachers to reflect on their teaching, function as assessment for learning as well as the assessment as learning. If students are doing assignments or tests, it's learning in itself. We plan to focus on improving teaching practices in classroom assessment, and we need information in how teachers' practices in classroom assessment.

Monday, 18 July 2016

-a new school year and problems with the school admission-

I am back again at the school, after about three weeks due to school holiday. It's 7.11 am, I walk to the school gate, I see many people, about twenty, standing at the school's front yard. I know those are parents who are accompanying their children on the first day of the school year. As persuaded by the Minister of Education, parents' presence at the school at the first day of the school year may benefit to enhance communication and relationship between the school and the community, engage them into an "ecosystem" of education, foster the responsibility both from the school and parent for students' learning.

I am a little bit late today, I should have been at the school thirty minutes earlier, but traffic jam from home to the school take me about one and a half hour. It might be interesting to see how teachers and parents are talking in the front school yard. I heard noises from the school building, the schoolyard, a student speaks using a loudspeaker, it looks like flag ceremony is going on there. I walk there quickly. The flag ceremony is already being held. I glance at the yard, more than a thousand student standing in the yard, lining in row and column shape, beautiful weather, not too hot, happy faces, girls standing in the front line, most of them wearing hijab, while the boys at the back. I see teachers lining up, in the front of their office, facing the students. I join them, standing beside Ibu Kha, greeting her, and start to listen Pak F, the school principal giving a speech to welcome the new students, grade ten. After recitation prayer from a student and speech from a religious leader, the students, hundreds of them, then walking to the teachers' row, one by one, shaking hands with the teachers, as a way of celebrating the end of Ramadhan, to forgive each other. It's a unique

and fascinating experience for me, shaking hand with hundreds of students, I feel the excitement of being a teacher at this time.

The school admission problem occurred again this year, not as worst as last year, though. I know this when talking with Pak F, Pak T, Pak Ag and Pak S in the principal office. One of the government official from my office calling me, asking whether I already at the school. His name is Pak S, one of the head division in my office. He is on his duty to see the "school orientation for new students' – a school event to welcome and introduce the new students. He invites me to join a discussion with the school principal and teachers in the principal's office. It's quite the same as last year. Many "elites" - people who hold a strategic position in Depok Municipality, such as, I suspect, politicians who sit in People Representative Council, military member, people from the local attorney office and other member insist on getting their children admitted to the school although their national exam score below the passing score determined by the school. If the school decided to take in one of them, then, other community members, the "broker,' who already get the money from any community member would then force the school to admit their kids/students.

In this situation, Pak F faces enormous pressure, he won't be able to take the kids from the "elites' get in the school due to the number of students in one class which already packed, 40 students in one class. Although, he may face a risk of being replaced and moved to other schools due to the "elites" power to influence the decision for the local government. How hard it is to be a school principal in that situation.

Tuesday, 19 July 2016
-school's admission and a conversation with the vice-principal-
It's four p.m., after school hour, pak T comes to the teachers' office, walking to my chair, I heard he's murmuring …
"its done when its done, don't worry about the "elites" pressure, the school principal should have taken the risk of the pressure, don't listen to them, stick to the rule, in a low tone. He has done a meeting with the school principal and faculty member about the problem of school admission which there are pressures from the "elites" to get their kids get in the school although the national exam scores below the school's passing grade. He explains that teachers worried if last year problem with school admission would happen again this year. As for last year, the former school principal accepted the "elites" interest by allowing their kids get in the school. As a result, this triggered the "broker" to send their "kids" – the kids from parents, who want them to be admitted in this school, by giving money for the "brokers,' to "help" them send the kids to the school. They would put more pressure on the school if the school accepted kids from the "elites,' pak T explains the problem. Eventually, last year, the school has more than 400 students over the capacity that the school can hold. Consequently, last, the school has to open nine additional classes for students in grade ten. Due the limited school capacity and the number of students in a class which already rife and exceed the capacity, those nine classes, has to be held at one of the middle school, in Depok municipality. Those students in the additional classes have to attend the class starting from the afternoon, instead in the morning, as students from regular classes. Those considered by the teachers as a "trauma" which they won't that happen again this year, in the meeting the teachers attempted to support the school principal to defend the school, not to follow any interest both from the "elites" as well as the "brokers.'
We have a short conversation afterward, mainly about the national exam policy, and here is the transcribe of the conversation:

Data	Analysis
Me: Could you please tell me the story of the national evolution in the past five to ten years?	
Pak T: First, when the national exam score became the single determinant criteria for students' graduation, it was obviously a problem, for example at that time students have to score 4,00 in every subject tested to be graduated. It created enormous pressure for students, when we did a classroom test, semester test, mid-term or final tests, for math, subject that I taught, which its content coverage narrower compared to the national exam, there were students who score below 4,00 - such as 2,00 or 1,00. When 4,00 became a standard for graduation, many students become "distraught," Then, there was the school role to help students during the national exam, so then, the students' scores in the national exam became "impure," Second, when the students' graduation was decided with the national exam and school-based assessment score, the school become more relieved. The students' tests could overcome the fear of getting the students to achieve the minimum score in the school-based tests. So then, the students' exam scores, I'd say, don't represent their learning process, more function to get students' to be graduated, there is score's inflation in its result.	
Me: how the school prepares students for the national exam?	

Data	Analysis
Pak T: when the national exam function as single criteria for students' graduation, in the last semester, for students in grade twelve, they only learn six subjects being tested in the exam due to the number of students who won't be able to pass the standard score, 4,00, in the national exam. It runs for one year, then, some teachers protested the school policy … well, every subject has an equal right to their learning process.	This is good evidence of the system encouraging game-playing. It's too easy to see this simply as "cheating," The school is wanting to see assessment properly represent and serve their kids.
When the students' graduation was decided with a combination of the test scores in the national exam and the school-based assessment, there were definite target from the school and the district education office, they want for a hundred percent of student's graduation, what would happen is that the assessment result didn't represent its learning process. *One of the thing that we did, often, for students who have low scores on the national exam, we did marked-up, their score in the school-based assessment as higher as possible, so then, those students would be able to graduate, and we and the district get a hundred percent of students' graduation, which I'd say that assessment completely didn't represent the learning process, merely an engineering of score data, to get a hundred percent students' graduation.* I think it useless, even negative for children development as well as their learning process.	
Currently, the national exam doesn't determine the students' graduation, well, at least, our practice in assessing students' learning getting more objective. It means that we attempt to follow the learning process to get our students score well on the national exam as well as in the school-based assessment. Well, we gave students the exam content outline, so then, they would well prepare to sit for the exam. For students' graduation, they still have to pass what it called, the minimum competency standard, to get 75 out of 100, in school-based assessment. For those who unable to achieve the standard, we make a rule, to get them to meet the standard through additional assignments.	This reflects Gene Glass's argument (*Criteria and Standards, 1978*) – that there is no validity to any cut-off score, and that the only feasible value of assessment in education is to say whether something is getting better or worse.
Reflecting the system in earlier time, I'd say, it's going to be better if there is no minimum competency standard that students have to achieve. So then, it would be proper / natural to give students' scores like 2,00 or 3,00 represented in the learning process. It would be more efficient, if we employ standard, but there would be pressure to achieve that standard. In some cases, for students who are unable to meet the standard, there would be an attempt or effort from teachers to "increase" or "mark up" the students' test scores to achieve the standard.	
Concerning how the school prepares students to sit for the national exam, this year, we conducted, what we called, the "zero class hour,' the twelve graders would start their school time at six a.m. instead of seven a.m. There is a special effort from the school to prepare students for the national exam. The purpose of the "zero class hour" still similar as in the previous years, due to the school comparison based on the result of the national exam. The result on the national exam would be presented and displayed in the district education office. So then, from our perspective, the implementation level, we still have the eagerness to prepare our students for the national exam and score well on the exam. Even, in an event, the handover of the school principal, the former principal of high school #3 who officiate as a new principal of high school #7, in which teachers from both schools gathered, there were a statement from our former principal, stated that our achievement - the high school #3 is less and lost compared to the high school #7. We feel so offended or even angry to hear that.	
Me: How the school sees and feel for this school comparison then?	
Pak T: umm … the school comparison isn't always a bad thing, though; it motivates us to some extent. Even, we have developed a strategy to improve our students' achievement in the national examination. We	What he's saying is that "benchmarking" with another school may be useful in *formative*

Data	Analysis
emphasize on the improvement of teaching and learning process. First, for this academic year, our strategy would probably, distributing the sample of the national exam from previous years for students with a model of group assignments. From there, the students would work in a group, and we would do teacher's consultation session for them, so then, with that strategy, I think, the learning process would run better. For the "zero school hour," I personally, doesn't really agree with that, more to teachers' request, especially for the senior teachers, they ask me as a vice-principal for curriculum like … we should have run the school preparation program for the national exam, which in other schools those preparation programs have already been running on … it's the thing that we don't want to do … if we do a preparation program, we will do that after the learning process has already been completed. We attempt to emphasize on the learning process when the national exam result wouldn't decide students' graduation, we really want to conduct the learning process following the curriculum. It was confusing, while before, at the beginning of the academic school year, we didn't really want to do that, but with the insistence of the other teachers, eventually, we conducted the national preparation through the "zero class hour" preparation program. For its effectiveness, the preparation program, I'd say … umm, less efficient but we have to put significant effort, in terms of time, energy and cost. For example, the development and printing module which contain the exam material – as the purpose of increasing the national exam, we agree to develop modules which include the previous year's exam material, developed by teachers themselves. It also contains the exam content material, but anyway, we only have fifty minutes in the "zero school hour" with so much content to be covered and practicing the exam material as well. I'd say it wasn't effective enough. What we feel with the school comparison, let alone with other schools, within ourselves, in this school, sometimes, it appears that we'd like "blaming" each other, for example, if one teacher taught one subject tested in the national exam, which the exam score achievement below last year score, sometimes there was a slight blaming from one teacher to others or teachers sometimes said … okay, it would be better for not to teach the twelve grade. This partly happens due to our limitation in teaching staff' cooperation. We attempted to develop teachers group discussion based on their subject matter in this school - we call it "musyawarah guru mata pelajaran" or "mgmp," but it didn't work … we need support from the school principal, in this case, I personally don't have the authority for this. It also appears that as if, the teacher who taught for twelve grade, would be responsible for the national exam result. We need teachers to work in a group. Maybe this would be possible if, the government lower our teaching hours (the government mandated that every teacher should teach at least 24 hours in a week, and this relate to teachers' certification and their salaries). We've already so busy with our teaching job, plus the additional duties such as preparing our lesson plan, examining assignments and tests. So we feel that we have a time constraint for our group discussion and collaboration to improve our teaching.	terms – formative of pedagogy, that is.
Me: How about the idea of collaboration among schools instead of schools' comparison?	
Pak T: so far, there has been no attempt to foster collaboration among schools. Reflecting on my experience, this might be done by sharing the learning process carried out by the school, in the form of lesson study for example. This can be implemented in "mgmp," where we held a regular meeting, alternately between the schools. There we are discussing and sharing the learning process with the aim of improving our teaching. We may share the learning process with a particular school which has a good result in the national exam, or even we can	

Data	Analysis
share the learning process in a school with lower exam score, what pluses and minuses, to reflect our learning process and what we need to do to improve it? If that could be realized, then I'd say; indeed, the education process can be further developed and significantly improved. The forum is needed to be further developed, at least at the small scale, for example, involving the school nearest, no need to do it in wider-scale, all schools in the city. Let say, three schools, this school, high school #8 and one private school nearest. For math subject, we can conduct, a regular meeting, to share the learning process, how the learning process in the high-achiever school as well as low one. It's far more useful. Sometimes, it arises in our thinking that the national exam results don't describe the quality. I think that the students' learning process, the whole process of students' learning and their effort in their learning which represent their character and their "struggle" or "means" for academic achievement would be more important as a preparation for their future, that the essential thing in educating our students. The challenge would be, how the assessment process and their character development could be in line and support each other. We are, in this school, in our attempt to educate our students, the most prominent aspect would be nurturing students' character, and is very remarkable. For example, for those, our kids, in the students' union, when we give them the responsibility to organize a large national event, for instance, they'd have been able to manage that event. Those skills would be very helpful for their future, when they build their career, due to their school's experiences, they could even become a leader in their future as well as their career. That's the uniqueness of this school which distinguishes this school with others.	A good expression here of the tension between educational "quality" as measured by a school's performance, and "quality" as judged by the individual student's learning and character development.
Me: what character that the school attempt to nurture? In what ways?	Yes – your questions are good – focusing on the key utterances of the interviewee.
Pak T: we hand in the responsibility for our students, put our trust for them, the ideas of all extracurricular activities come up from our students. If in other schools, are managed by teachers and parents. In this school all of those activities are handled by them, so we just, listening, supporting what our students plan to do. For example, we will hold students' art performance in September or October, from the beginning until the end of the event, the kids from students' union assisted by others, they'll work together making sure that the event will go well. We strive to build skills like leadership, creativity, cooperation, responsibility within the team and for our students. It's a character building that will be very helpful for our students in their future and career. To prepare for their future in addition to the academic aspect.	So the question for the Ministry is how to assess these attributes. Of course, you cannot use measurement. But these attributes are important, since they reflect the qualities of a skilled and creative workforce.

Thursday, 21 July 2016
-being a school guard-
It's been so late for me to get in the school today, about 11 am in the morning, feel so tired due to the water problem at home, and I have to fix the water pump. I see teachers at the security building, near the school entrance, on the left side of the school gate. The security office is an open space building, about fifteen meters square wide, with a table and three chairs at the front and a couch at the back. It's a place where students should notify the security guard when they want to get out the school for a particular purpose, and for visitors to report their purpose if they want to meet the school faculty members.
I see Ibu Kha, Ibu Ell – a physics teacher and I approach them and having a conversation. They explain that due the problem with the school admission, teachers are assigned by the school principal to watch the visitor. They worried about the pressure from the "elites" as well as the "brokers" who want to put their pressure to influence the principal decision to admit their kids to the school. The would ask the school visitor to explain their purpose, if they think the visitor are the "elites" or the "brokers" - in most cases they want to meet the school principal, then the teachers would explain that the principal is away, out of town for training or have a meeting with the district education office. This is

a strategy considered by the principal, and the teachers would help the school prevent pressure from the "elites" and the "brokers.'

Throughout the conversation, it seems that they want me to stay here, at the security office, to help them guarding the school and watching the school visitor. My role as a government employee from the central office would probably make the "brokers" particularly disinclined to put their pressure to the school principal. They might be afraid if I would report their action to the ministry people, although I don't have any right with my role to do that. They may see my presence at the school, with my identity as a central government employee, would benefit to lower the pressure from both the "elites" and the "brokers" … and that seems to be working in the case below.

It's about twelve o'clock in the afternoon, still with Ibu Kha and Ibu Ell at the security building. I see three men with unpleasant appearance - untidy clothes, long hair, unfriendly faces approach us at the building. They introduce themselves as a journalist from a newspaper like "*radar depok*" and "*media bangsa*" newspapers, which is unknown or we never heard before. I see a tension in the conversation from the journalist and the teachers … Ibu Kha says I never heard about your newspaper before, what is your purpose? And the "brokers" reply we want to meet the school principal … umm, maybe it's because you don't like to read anything … in a quite high tone … Ibu Kha then responds by saying … the school principal is away … maybe you can talk with this person, from the ministry … she looks at me … I talk to the "brokers" then … can I see your identity card … then one of them shows me his "id" … I say … can I take a picture of it? … where are you from? he asks me … I answer, I'm working for the ministry of education, I assigned to watch the school admission (I'm lying to them) … they respond … so you're working for Anies Baswedan (the minister of education) … I reply … Yes, I am, and the school principal is away today … they answer … ooh, okay … then they're moving away from the school using their motorcycle. A few minutes later another "journalist" coming and approach us, asking, can I meet with the ministry people who watch this school, he asks us … I reply … yes, it's me, what can I do for you? … he answers … no, nothing … it seems that he just wants to make sure my presence at the school, I'm quite sure that he's one of them.

Monday, 1 August 2016

-watching school's visitors while talking to teachers-

It's 9.40 a.m, Once again, I see two teachers sitting in front of the security office "guarding" the school. I approach. My presence there at the security office may benefit to lower the pressure, as it was proved last week. I see this as my contribution to the teachers and the school in return for giving me a chance and access to do the research in this school.

I sit beside Ibu Im. She's an Indonesia language teacher and has been teaching for more than twenty-five years. At that time, she's examining students' assignment while doing her job to watch school's visitors. I start our conversation by asking "you looks so busy, what are you doing?" She answers by explaining that she's examining her students' assignment, and she explains further that for this assignment she wants her students to find an article from a newspaper/internet/others about the history of an event or people. She wants her students to describe and decide what types of text that student read, explain the sequence of history in the text, and understand the main idea in each paragraph. She emphasizes the purpose of that assignment, including to enhance students' readability, to improve students' ability in understanding the content in a text. She is then patiently reading and examining her student's assignment, one-by-one on each student's assignment books, putting a grade on a hundred scale, and attaching her signature, in each of students' assignment books. I help her tiding-up the students' assignment books, sometimes reading the text in that assignment.

Done with examining the students' assignment, then, we engage in a short conversation, particularly about Ibu Im views towards her teaching practices. She explains about differences concerning students' background. She said, here in this school, we're dealing with various students' socioeconomic background, their family and parental support, economic condition, academic ability. Due to local government regulation, the school has to admit about twenty percent of the available space for ten graders from the lower socioeconomic background without considering their score in the national exam at the middle school. It's commonly called "affirmative path" in the high school admission system. That system has its consequences and challenges in her teaching. She sees her job as a parent for her students as well as a professional teacher. She regards her responsibility not just to develop students' ability in their academic but also to nurture their moral and character. She prefers to understand each student's uniqueness and characteristic as a strategy to develop students' academic ability as well as to nurture their attitude, moral and character development. However, due to its differences in students' background and a large number of students in class, she found it difficult to implement her teaching strategy. She would then focus her attention on those the high-achiever and the low-achiever students. It has a consequence that she has to like "neglect" those students in between.

Unfortunately, we wouldn't be able to continue our conversation. She has to teach her class. But I take it as a chance to ask for her possibility to have a conversation with her for my research.

Tuesday, 2 August 2016

-a conversation with Ibu Nu, a math teacher, at the security office-

Still at the security office, like what I did yesterday, talking with school's visitors and asking for their purpose. It's already 10.25 am, and I'm already here for about one and a half hour. I see Ibu Nu is heading towards the security office, sitting down beside me. She has a duty to watch school's visitor twice in a week, about one to two hour each. While doing our job, we engage in a conversation related to the school admission process and her view towards standardization.

Ibu Nu is a math teacher and has been teaching for about twenty years. She explains that due to the school's admission problem, with the enormous pressure from both the "elites" and the "brokers,' in the last year school admission, the school has to admit students beyond its capacity. The school has its capacity to admit approximately 400 students at grade ten and with an already large number of students in one class, about 40. However, the "pressure" was capable of sending additional 300 students to be admitted to the school. This limitedness in school capacity, in particular, the number of the classroom available, has its consequences. Those additional 300 students have to do their schooling outside the school, in one elementary school in the municipality, with its limitation in facilities, schooling hour (less than normal schooling hour), teachers' experiences. And Ibu Nu was assigned as a senior teacher and as a coordinator to taking care of those additional classes.

She further explains her concerns towards those additional students. She said that some of them are slow-learners, or at least below their peers concerning their scores in the national exam. Considering, its limitation in the schooling process and its background, she argues that it may not fair to standardize the achievement between the students in the "regular" school with those additional students, particularly in the minimum standard to decide students' promotion or retention. She belief that all students should learn based on their potentials. In the case of slow-learner students, in the additional classes, she points out that no matter how she put her best effort to get them achieve the minimum standard, through remedial or her personal approach towards the students, it's hard to get them to achieve the minimum standard. This condition leads her to focus on nurturing students' potential, in other aspects of their learning, for example by motivating, inspiring and nurturing their character. Concerning the minimum standard, she would be willing to let her students pass the minimum standard to be eligible for promotion. She belief that by "passing" them achieve the standard, let them for promotion and later for graduation, this would open the opportunity for her students, to focus on their own talent or skills, that would benefit for them, for example to be entrepreneurs, open his/her own business such as clothing or laundering business, or any other possibilities which would benefit for her students to prepare their future.

Wednesday, 3 August 2016
-a conversation with Ibu El, a Biology teacher-
It's about 10 am, as usual, during this week, I attempt to mingle with teachers at the security office, having a conversation with them, particularly about the school's admission process and understanding their views in educating and assessing their students. While staying here, watching the school's circumstances near the school's entrance, Ibu El, a senior teacher in the school, taught biology subject, approaching and offering me a cup of meatball and noodle … have you already eat something for breakfast? She's asking me … I said thank you so much. I have my breakfast already … she responds by saying … don't be hesitate, feel free to have a meal with us or help yourself to make a cup of coffee in the kitchen near the teachers' office … she then told me at a glance of about her view towards school's admission process … "here, in this school, we attempt to nurture students' honesty and integrity, but our leaders ruin that by giving a bad example in their action" … she refers to the "elites" interest to send their kids to the school, without considering the school's admission rules.

She then told me her belief in her teaching. She sees her job as an "amanah,' an Arabic word meaning moral responsibility of fulfilling one's obligation due to God. She belief her responsibility in her teaching to taking care of her students as her own sons or daughters, as a parent for her students. As a parent, her priority is to nurture her students' moral and character development as well as their academic achievement. She then points out at a board, made from wood, in front of the security office. It's the school vision, stated that forming of students' akhlakul karimah and excel in achievement. "Akhlakul" is an Arabic word means character, behavior, and habit, while "karimah" means noble, commendable, and favorable. In short, she explains that the school's vision is to nurture students' character and behavior as well as school's competitiveness in academic and non-academic achievement. She ideally would attempt to understand her individual student's characteristics as a way to educate her students. However, a large number of students in one class, and her responsibility to teach several classes make it difficult to assess individual student's growth. This forced her to focus on high-achiever students or troubled students with the possibility of "neglect" those in between. She also expresses her concern towards the minimum achievement standard, to decide student's promotion and retention. She describes that as a homeroom teacher, she faces the fact that, in general, at least about thirty percent of her students wouldn't be able to meet the minimum standard, with the risk of retention for them. As a consequence, she has to get those students' scores whether in classroom tests and assignments to meet the standard, through additional assignments. She often faces a dilemma between grading her students' tests and assignment which represent the "real achievement" or "helping" her students to meet the standard through additional assignment or increasing her student's scores to meet the standard. But as long as her students' shows a good attitude or positive growth in their behavior, regardless their tests score, she would prefer to help them to meet the standard, and get them promoted with the opportunity and possibility to improve their academic achievement in the next grade further. She finally concludes that the standard has its advantage as a reference or target for achievement in her teaching but somehow create tension in her teaching, especially for those low-achiever students.

Thursday, 4 August 2016
-a conversation with Ibu Ell, a Physics teacher-
Still in the same situation, like in the past three days, having a conversation with the teacher in the security office. This time, I have a conversation with Ibu Ell, a physic teacher. She tells me about her male student namely R and how she attempts to nurture the value of honesty and integrity in her teaching practices and in educating her students.

This story happened a couple of years ago and may represent Ibu Ell's value in educating her students. R is a male student under Ibu Ell as his homeroom teacher. He is a young boy, has a good family background, an ordinary student, not an exceptional nor a high-achiever or slow-learner student. He was allegedly stealing a cellphone, a latest new series and branded one, from his female peer. Ibu Ell noticed R as one who potentially did this misconduct based on her investigation and conversation with other teachers and students in her class. However, instead of directly pointed her finger or blaming R as a "thief," she invited him to talk with her, in her favourite place, under the three, at the school's middle yard, as she used to talk with her students, to reveal what was really happening with R and the stolen cell-phone. In her conversation with R, Ibu Ell encouraged him, to tell the truth, highly appreciate if R admits his misconduct, and would find the best possible way to solve his problem. At the end of the story, R confessed his fault. Ibu Ell appreciates his honesty and found the best possible way to solve his problem.

This story represents Ibu Ell's values in nurturing her students' moral and character. She views the school as a mini-society, as a medium of learning, the place to prepare her students for future living. She belief that to do so, it's important to nurture students' moral and character so that the students would be able to adjust appropriately and ready to deal with the dynamics of their future life. She considers her teaching job not just as a professional teacher but also as a mother for her students, who teach with caring and loving. Building values such as integrity, honesty, collaboration, intrinsic motivation would benefit for students to enhance their learning and academic achievement. Hence, regarding assessing her students, she attempts to foster the value of honesty with her classroom policy, cheating means or equal to zero grade.

Monday, 8 August 2016

-a follow up conversation with Ibu Nu, a Math teacher-

It's about 9.15 a.m., I just arrive at the school, go straight to the teacher's office to put my bag. I plan to stay at the security office to get an opportunity to talk to teachers, to approach one of them for an interview. As I get in the teacher's office, pak T calls me, saying that Ibu Nu has a spare time, and may be able to have a conversation with me, if I want to. Well, this is a good opportunity for me. I thank pak T, for providing me with the opportunity to have a conversation with Ibu Nu, and promptly approaching Ibu Nu to respond the opportunity she offers. After, a short of conversation, explaining about my research, Ibu Nu and I walking towards the school's administration office for our conversation as it would be more convenience for us to talk about there compared to the teacher's office. Here is the transcribe of the conversation:

Data	Analysis
Me: how did you become a teacher?	
Ibu Nu: I took my college in the Bogor Agriculture University, majoring in Mathematics and Social Science, at that time there was no intention to be a teacher. I was simply thought that Bogor is near here, Depok, my hometown. I wasn't realized that the major that I took was a government program for preparing me to be a teacher. I felt that I have my weakness in communicating my ideas and to give a speech in a forum or public for example. When I realized that the major that I took was preparing me to be a teacher, I almost decided to quit the program and the university. I thought that it would be very difficult for me to be a teacher, considering the limitation that I have. But I like the Mathematics content I learned in the program, which much more dominant than the pedagogical content. As a result, I enjoyed my learning process in that program. Along the way, in my college, I started to convince myself that the teaching would be worthwhile, flexibility in working time as a teacher, allows me to split my time between teaching and taking care of my family. As I started to become a teacher, at that time, the way I taught, it was just merely delivering the content of math in the curriculum to my students, without attempt to emphasizing of nurturing students' potential ability by inspiring and motivating them to do their best based on their potentials in preparing their future life. At one point of time, in my teaching career, I realized, it would be worthless to just delivering the content of math for my students in my teaching. I believe that they have to prepare their future, to be someone that ready to interact with the dynamic of circumstances as they would face it in their social life, to be useful and to be able to interact with their community as well as their professional life. As a few weeks ago, at the beginning of the new academic year, I told my students about goals I want to accomplish this year and	As Tyler pointed out, the structure of the curriculum (sequence, continuity, coherence) and its objectives were only meaningful if they were in the mind of the student: Tyler, R. W. (1949). Basic principles of curriculum and instructionUniversity of Chicago Press. *IIIinois, USA.*

trying to motivate them to inspire them to improve themselves by setting targets that are relevant to them in their learning process. Because I think, intrinsic motivation within themselves to be more important to the process and the way they learn. When they had set a target, they will be more motivated to do the things they need to achieve these goals, including in the process of their learning. For them, the students were fortunate to participate in tutoring institution, take advantage of the opportunity to pursue a target for entry into universities and majors they want. For them, the students who do not have the opportunity to joint the tutoring institution, I encouraged them to take advantage to use their time as efficient as possible, to be more proactive in preparing and studying more diligently, for example, to borrow the material and tests exercise for those who joint the tutoring institution, practicing with them, so then they would be able to take advantage of their peers, and have the opportunity to see and practicing the material and tests exercise from the tutoring institution. I'm trying to motivate all students, what students aspire, their target; I'm trying to motivate them to achieve these goals, through interaction and discussion both inside and outside the classroom. I try to foster students' character. Including motivating them to strive and pray in achieving the target, in this case, the University and majors they want. Me: how do you see assessment in the form of "invitational line" or "university entrance test"? Is there any tension with your classroom assessment practices? Ibu Nu: I don't think so, for me not … it could be motivation for my students and me; there will be pressure for my students to prepare to get in the university. But, I would be emphasizing on the way and their efforts to prepare and succeed to get in the university, whether, through "invitation line" or university entrance tests. For those, my students, who have prepared to go through the "invitation line" at the beginning of their high school, I would attempt to motivate them to remain focused on their learning, add one more thing, prayers, to succeed in reaching their target. For those, who has their grade / score in classroom assessment up and down, I attempt to motivate them to prepare for the university entrance tests, improve their learning as early as possible and prayers to be ready for the university entrance tests, put more effort to achieve that goal.	
Me: Could you explain your practices in your classroom assessment?	
Ibu Nu: I assess the progress of students' learning regarding mastery of the subject being taught, through exams and assignments, in paper-and-pencil tests, and through our classroom interaction, their activeness in the learning process. For example, I give them exercises. I instruct some of them to work on the problem in front of the class. Those function to motivate them to be more active in their learning process. In my practice, assessment serves to determine the extent of students' mastery of the content that I taught. It also serves as to define strategies or approaches that I will use in my teaching practices.	Good. So here is a counter-factual that we have to take seriously. Perhaps her view is influenced by the fact that she teacher Maths, where mastery is more part of the challenge – though even she says she focuses on the student's futures.
Me: in your classroom assessment practices, what kind of feedbacks for you and your students?	
Ibu Nu: we talk about the minimum standard score here, for those, who their score in tests and assignments below the standard, 75, I would do remedial test for them, ideally it should be remedial teaching as expected in the curriculum. I usually conduct analysis based on my students' assessment result. In which content area do they need to be improved. If most of them have their assessment result low, in the particular content area, I would discuss those particular content again in my teaching. But, if a few of them have	Here is another example of more creative pedagogies than whole-class teaching. This sounds like a

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their assessment score low in particular content area, I would assign them with their peers to do peer mentoring, to discuss the lesson for those who score low and with those who has their score high, to share and to learn together, with further chance to do the remedial tests. I couldn't do what is expected in the curriculum here, doing remedial teaching, due to time constraint and the availability of classroom to do the remedial teaching.	pedagogically innovative school. Do you think it is?
Me: what students do in the peer mentoring?	
Ibu Nu: for peer mentoring, I usually communicate with them first, assign two of them as a mentor and mentee, for example "Dea, help me to discuss and learn this content area, with Mentari … and Mentari could you please learn this with Dea," So then, Mentari as a mentee wouldn't feel hesitate or ashamed to learn with her peer, and for Dea, would have her responsibility to learn with and taught Mentari or learn together with her. Also, this approach serves as a way for students to foster responsibility and cooperation among them.	
Me: How did it work?	
Ibu Nu: I think it works well, when I take a look at it, in the classroom, I often express my appreciation on the way they work together, like saying "Dea … I think you learn better with Mentari compared with me, you become smarter, I should have done better in teaching you this lesson,"	This is a very progressive comment!
Me: is there any other form of feedbacks for students? Ibu Nu: usually in the form of grading from exams or assignments. Also, for those who are slow-learner, I use to personally approach them, get a closer look what's the problem, make them comfortable and not to be afraid of me, so I can help them to learn better in their learning. Usually, they are a bit closed, hesitate to tell their problem and eschew from me as his/her teacher. I attempt to make our conversation as comfortable as possible, starting from a small matter, such as asking how are you or make a comment on his/her writing books, pencils, like saying this is beautiful. It serves to establish communication with them who really need help to improve the learning. So, for me, I assess to know the extent to which students in their learning process. Then, I attempt to give them feedbacks and follow up in their learning process, such as peer mentoring or giving them motivation and personal approaches to help them improving in their learning. Also, I evaluate my teaching approaches and strategies, to help me improve my teaching.	How???
Me: how do you see the external form of assessment, such as the national exam?	
Ibu Nu: I would see the national exam as a target that my students and I want to accomplish. I should be able to prepare my students to get there; I try to prepare students to succeed in the national exams. With the implementation of the national exam, I may be able to determine the outcome of my teaching, like I still in this position, what would I do to improve. As a 'target' or "goal" I want to achieve. The problem and challenge that occur with the national exam would be the students' tests result may not represent the process of students' learning. In this case, I'm talking about leakage of exam sheet or exam answer. Even though, I didn't experience that by myself, I understand well some of my students, those who haven't had good achievement in classroom tests or assignments, but score really well in the national exam. A few years ago, when the exam function as	

criteria for students' graduation, more apparent, which is now reduced, although still happened. I thought that I feel so sorry for those who worked hard to prepare for the national exam, got no leakage of exam answer, score below those who got the leakage of exam answer. So the learning process that my students and I strive for, the most important aspect of education, would be undermined, relate to that case, the result of the national exam doesn't reflect student's learning process. Another weakness in the national exam in particular as well as in the school-based exam, I would say would be the limitation of multiple-choice question format. There is a weakness in particular question test, for example, in one sample of the exam, especially in the school-based test, I found that there is the question that too easy so that every student would answer that correctly or too difficult so that they guessing the correct answer. The result from the exam in the form of multiple-choice has its limitation to measuring students' ability in that sense. Second, there is a tendency of the student to conduct cheating while they sit in the exam, whether school-based exam or the national exam. In fact, there are some teachers here who do not include semester final exam as a component to be included in the teacher report card. I would say that the problem lies in how the teachers supervise or watch the exam. Some of them didn't do their work properly, such as instead of watching how the students work on the exam, they would do something like reading the newspaper, go out for eating or drinking. Those open the possibility and giving an opportunity for students do cheating. There are a tendency and vulnerability for students to do cheating during the exam, so then the exam result may not be able to represent the learning process.	
Me: do you think that the national exam capable of improving your teaching?	
Ibu Nu: it depends whether or not the school giving me the result of the national exam and its evaluation. For example, for trigonometry content area, how many percentages of my students that answer those questions items correctly. That's going to be my evaluation and input for my teaching. It was available before, but not this year. Even, I couldn't get the exam paper / materials, maybe due to its implementation in computer-based instead of paper-based. When it was conducted in the paper-based exam, I was still able to get the exam materials, and I could do some analysis as a source of reflection in my teaching. But anyway, the its better in computer-based though than paper-based. As in paper-based, there was a higher vulnerability for cheating. If I can get the analysis of the national exam based on how students perform incorrect answer in a particular content area that would be a benefit for my teaching. One concern with the result of the national exam is when it used for mapping and ranking schools across districts. I overheard a bad thing happen during its implementation. Fear of having a low score in a particular school in the exam, feel ashamed about the school ranking, and comparison makes one teacher in that school giving the students answer of the exam, in front of the class during the exam hour. But that happened a few years ago when the result of the national exam considered as one of the criteria to determine student's graduation …	But this school uses a different system to boost the kids' grades!

Unfortunately, when the conversation is getting more and more interesting, Ibu Nu has to teach … I tell her, is it possible to continue our conversation for tomorrow. And she said yes, but I would depend on her teaching hour and her activities, as she's now pursuing her masters and may have an appointment with her lecture to discuss her thesis.
Tuesday, 9 August 2016
-continuing conversation with Ibu Nu-
It's about 3.30 p.m. afternoon. After staying at the security office, dealing with, again, some of the "brokers" who want their kids get in the school, I watch a school event. It's about how the students from grade eleven and twelve

welcoming their juniors. In the school's middle yard, dozens of students gathered there. They grouped in more than ten teams; each team represents their extracurricular activities, range from the club of social science, indoor soccer, basketball, taekwondo, traditional dancing, modern dancing, science club, students' Muslim club, and many others. Those who stay in the yard are eleventh and twelfth grader who are ready to welcome his/her younger brother/sisters, who still in the class for school orientation program. I see most of the students who stay there with their happy faces, cheerful, enthusiastic, talking and joking with their peers, holding boards which represent the identity of his/her extracurricular groups and ready to welcome their juniors and to introduce their club, so then they would have additional member for their club from the ten graders.

The teachers consider Those student's club and extracurricular activities as an essential part of the school's curriculum and its school's uniqueness. Through several informal conversations, teachers told me that these activities are a place for students to interact together to build students character, namely leadership, creativity, responsibility, respect, collaboration, and cooperation.

Eventually, pak T is calling me. He just finished with his teaching, tell me that Ibu Nu is looking for me, asking me whether I would be available for conversation with her. I say yes and straightly go to the teacher's office. I see Ibu Nu, at the back of the teacher's office, preparing to do her prayer. I wait there, sitting on the couch, and ready for a conversation with Ibu Nu. Here is the transcribe of the conversation:

Data	Analysis
Me: is there any other function in your classroom assessment practices?	
Ibu Nu: Yes, especially to foster student's moral and character, for example before the exam, I told my students that to carry on the exam, your teachers need to spend an extra effort, requires time and money. I emphasize here that it worthless for you especially and for your teachers, if your exam result/grade may come from cheating instead of your learning process. That won't represent your learning, your real capability in the lesson. Even I tell them, my students, don't be lying to us, your teachers, with cheating in your exam, that's not learning. If you have high scores, but with cheating, I would consider that you have mastered the lesson. But if you're honest, I will then be able to analyze and decide what strategy, how to best dealing with my instruction and helping you improving your learning. If you did cheating, I then wouldn't be able to build my teaching strategy to help you learn better. The point is that how the assessment reflects the students' ability in mastering the content in the curriculum, so then I can reflect on my practices for further strategy and improvement to help students learn better, especially those who below the minimum score standard. Another aspect which equally important is that when I attempt to pair students who were struggling in their cognitive achievement with those who scored well through peer mentoring. Through that approach, I try to emphasize to foster responsibility, empathy, and collaboration for my students. More than that, I attempt to let them know the important value that might be a benefit for their future life, how can we be useful for others, that's the most meaningful value in our life.	Remember your visit to Auckland Normal International when that teacher explained to us that a grade from an assessment was merely the basis for a conversation over Teaching and learning strategies?
Me: how about constraint and challenges in your assessment practices?	
Ibu Nu: I think mostly constraint in time, what I mean here, I feel that I always experienced the lack of time available for me in my teaching as well as assessing students. Sometimes, I've planned this, then suddenly I have to attend school's meeting or events. So then, I couldn't follow my planning. Another challenge is that the number of students in one class, for example, 40 students, and I have to teach several classes, including additional classes as a result of last year school admission problem. It's difficult to assess my students individually, each of them, one by one. As a consequence, I would pay more attention to those fast learner or slow learner / troubled students, and may neglect those in between. To minimize this constraint, like what I explain before, I tend to assign them through peer mentoring.	Again!!!

Data	Analysis
School's learning hour which is too long, finishes at 4.00 p.m. would be important consideration. Previously, when we finish our school at 1.00 p.m. I still have enough time for remedial teaching. For those, students, fast learner, well motivated, they would be eager to join the additional learning hour. But for students, slow learner, they have to be motivated by me, their teachers. We, my students and I already tired and spent the whole day for teaching and learning. Moreover, for the twelfth grader, we conduct additional learning hour, started at 6.00 am, to prepare for the national exam.	
Me: how do you prepare your students to sit in the national exam?	
Ibu Nu: I attempt to motivate my students. I believe that if they have their own motivation, they would pay attention and put more effort to prepare for the national exam. For those, who are "lucky" enough to join the tutoring institution, I motivate them to take advantage of the opportunity in the tutoring institution, to use the opportunity to have maximum benefit for joining the tutoring institution. So then, they would be able to succeed in the exam. As for them who haven't had the opportunity for studying in the tutoring institution, I keep motivating them, to learn from their peers who join the tutoring institution, to work together working on exam exercise and learn the content.	
Me: how do you see kids who join tutoring institution and those who don't have that opportunity?	
Ibu Nu: not too different, though, for students who don't have the opportunity for joining the tutoring institution, if they work as hard as possible, maintain their motivation, they will have equal chance to succeed in the national exam. For me, the most important aspect is their mental readiness, such as preparing for the test, and maintaining their health when it is approaching the exam date. If they're mentally ready, they'll have their opportunity to succeed in the national exam.	
Me: do you think, the school's program, the additional learning hour is school's strategy to prepare students to mentally ready for the exam? How do you see this?	
Ibu Nu: Yes, that program is one of the school strategies to prepare students to succeed in the national exam. In its implementation, teachers and students re-learn the lesson that already learned from grade ten to twelve, and practicing to answer exam questions to prepare students to sit for the exam. We used to practice to answer questions in the exam, like 20 questions every day, about ten questions we discuss in the class, while the rest of it would independently be practiced by students as homework. I would say that the program is good enough, provide benefit for students. But, anyway, considering the school's learning hour, which already too long, added by the additional learning hour, teachers and students are exhausted to deal with that preparation program. It could be helpful for us, if the school has the policy to eliminate certain subjects, such as local language, which would I say that the subject may not be meaningful enough for students. They may be able to learn it through extracurricular activities.	
Me: referring from our conversation yesterday, how do you see the result of the national exam, as a source of school's comparison?	
Ibu Nu: I would consider that as a reflection for the outcome of my teaching, how did my teaching performance? But when it compared with others students from different schools, this could be a question	

Data	Analysis
mark. Is it reasonable for my students to be in particular ranking compared with others? I would accept if my students' performance below compared to others. But then, I question, whether others schools have a better outcome compared to us? Is that the real condition? Are they better than us? Or are we better than others? In what senses? What about if cheating contributes to school's performance?	
I feel that it's difficult to say fair to compare schools based on the result of the national exam. As we discussed before, in the case of additional classes in this school. How come we set the same standard to achieve, considering the differences in its condition, for example regarding additional classes, they have less learning hour, different teachers' experiences, different school's facilities, struggle to achieve standard with the unstandardized learning process. There were cases, parents from the regular classes complaint why the school and the district apply "affirmative" program for school admission system, in which twenty percent of the quota for new students given for students from a low socioeconomic background as well as for those who have the non-academic achievement. I said to them that your sons/daughter are lucky to have a better opportunity for learning, enjoying tutoring institution, the availability of books and other resources, better support from parents. Unlike those from the low socioeconomic background, they won't have the same opportunity compared with you. However, let me tell you one of positive advantage with school's comparison, outcome mapping, like where is the position of my students compared with others? What kind of strategy should I take, if my students' performance below with others? What we need to do to improve students' learning? In what matter our limitation are? There are also some advantages in that comparison. However, due to the vulnerability of cheating, like I said before, in the case of teacher let the students know the exam answer during the exam, I'm afraid that cheating would significantly contribute to performance, might be happening in some schools. The problem will then, how can we compared schools based on the national exam result while its result might not represent students' learning process.	Strong argument
Me: is there any tensions regarding the schools' comparison? Ibu Nu: I tell you one story that may represent the tension. In one event of handover school principal. The school principal of high school (hs) #7, he moves to others school, while the principal of hs #3, this school moving to hs #7. There was statement that a little bit awkward from the principal of hs #7, he said we are here, the hs#7, mediocre school, but we outperformed the hs #3 … and it's repeatedly mentioned. I was wondering, in what aspect the hs #7 beat us? For those, the school leader, sometimes, he merely sees achievement based on the test scores, he oversimplified, that he won compared to particular schools … laughing … that happen because the hs #7 has done the national exam in paper-based while we haven't done our national exam in computer-based. This is our concern, the education process conducted differently, students background and characteristics different, the school character is different, the teacher is different, the exam surveillance which may contribute to the result is different, so its not appropriate to compare or rank schools' performance merely based on the result of the national exam alone.	This is Stenhouse's argument that an educational "standard" is a *local* agreement on what is worth paying attention to.
Me: do you prefer schools' comparison or competition or schools' collaboration?	

Data	Analysis
Ibu Nu: the form of schools' collaboration take place in the form of subject matter teachers group discussion or "mgmp," We meet once a month. We as teachers are willing to share our experience and expertise, maybe for the purpose of preparing us to face "teachers' competency testing," I see the advantage of teachers' collaboration in this case. As we discuss, we tend to improve our teaching capability, in the long run, that would benefit for students learning. As teachers more confidence in their ability as a result of collaboration, they would be more confidence, for example, to give the assessment at the certain level of difficulties that may be helpful to shape or improve students' learning.	The emphasis throughout is on teacher's professional judgement and personal knowledge. Epistemologically, as well as politiclly and pedgogically this is a distinct strategy from national assessment. The two ought not to be compatible – though she says they are. The reason Stenhouse proposed classroom action research – teachers researching their own classrooms – was to develop an alternative kowledge base from which to declare teacher autonomy from policy.
Me: how do you see assessment in the form of external assessment, such as the invitation line or the national exam might contribute to students' learning?	
Ibu Nu: for students who categorized as fast-learner. Usually they come from middle and upper family income, they've been planning to go with the invitation line for university entrance. There is strong motivation to learn and to get a high grade to strengthen their opportunity for invitation line. However, for students from the lower-income family which I believe they would have equal opportunity for the university entrance, there is a concern I want to express. The practice of teacher's additional lesson outside the school, like at his/her home, he/she gives the additional lesson for particular students, and the students have to pay for it, that practice should be avoided. Some parents have such strategy to enhance the opportunity for their kids to get in the university through invitation line with the additional lesson given by the school teachers. There is a tendency of subjectivity to give those students with the higher grade in teachers' classroom assessments. Teachers should assess students based on their learning process, based on their motivation and effort for learning. in this case, others students who haven't get a chance for additional lesson from teachers, may have the similar process with those who have additional lesson with teachers, but then have different learning outcome in its results, due to teachers' subjectivity as a result of additional lesson. But anyway, those more drive by the parents to enhance kids' opportunity for invitation line than the interest of particular teachers.	

Thursday, 11 August 2016
-an informal conversation with Pak S, a Biology teacher and Ibu Nu-
It's approaching 3.00 p.m.; I'm done with my "new job" helping teachers "guarding" the school. As some of them said that the school in its critical period of facing the pressure from both the "elites" or the "brokers.' It's crucial not to listen or admit their interest to get the kids from them get in the school. Last year experience told the teachers that once the school admits just one kid from them, then the pressure getting higher and higher.
I walk to the teacher's office, heading at the very back of it, my desk. I see Ibu Nu and Pak S, a young teacher, taught Biology subject, about the same age as me, they're having a conversation. I decide to mingle with them to listen to their conversation. Then, here is the transcribe of the conversation:
Pak S: says … why don't you let the government know that we need to build a computer-based assessment that enables us to examine students' essays … I reply with a question … are you serious or are you kidding me? … he replies yes, I mean that, here is the problem with assessment, at least in my practice. I understand that we need a form of assessment that able to capture in depth about students' ability and that only could be done in essays form of assessment. We understand that, or at least we can picture how those essay assessments would capture students' cognitive thinking in a more comprehensive way. However, that would be time-consuming for us, as we have to teach a substantial amount of students, more than 40 students in one class, and we have to teach several classes. We won't

be able to manage that considering additional tasks such as lesson plan, school's event and meeting, communication with parents, and so forth …

Ibu Nu: Yes, I agree with that, in the past when the national exam formatting in essays. I was a young teacher, and can only be "stunned" seeing how the examiner examines the student's essay in the national exam. There are three other school teachers examining students' national exam paper. However, obstacles occurred, e.g. examiner # 1 gives 9, the grade, for student a, and 7 for student b... Those grades should be re-checked by examiner # 2, but instead of making corrections refers to the examination # 1, the examiner # 2 has already been put his / her grade without looking / checking again on paper tests.

This might occur because there is no goodwill, wanted to finish the work quickly, the fee is less than satisfactory for the task. My concern is how the work ethic from those teachers, their honesty towards their job. Even from teachers conduct, at those particular activities, they did that misconduct. It was miserable …

Me: but anyway, may I know, how the policy, for example, the invitation line or the minimum score standard may influence your classroom assessment practices?

Ibu Nu: for me, the invitation line doesn't make me "mark-up" students' grade. However, its different story with the minimum score standard. It forces me to "mark-up" the students' grade. If there is no minimum score standard for students to achieve, that would be more convenience for me. For example, I would be more comfortable to put students grade whatever it is, as there aren't any consequences in students' grade. Thus, students' grade would actually represent the learning process, as a correct representation of students' ability after going through the learning process. Then, our job to build the idea student doesn't have to master all of the subjects being taught. Every kid has his/her capability and weakness in particular field or subject. Then focus on developing students based on their potentials. Its okay if student scored four in Math but got eight in Biology, just focus on Biology subject, without undermining Math off course.

The constraint I face is how to develop interval grade which represents the learning outcome. How to get students who scored 30, upgrading to 75, the minimum score standard. The problem would then, how about students who scored 90, how can I upgrade his/her score? I have to develop my pattern or formula in upgrading the grade. Usually, for teachers who taught nonscience subject, they found it difficult to arrange students grade in bell curve distribution.

Pak S: they don't have the ability to arrange students' grade in the bell curve, so then, the students' grade would be accumulated on the higher score, like 90 or near the minimum standard score, such as seventy something or eighty … high grade, ninety or more than that won't appear. They don't think about the bell curve; the important thing would be their students pass the minimum standard score, so in average the grade would be near the minimum competency score …

Ibu Nu: There are also teachers who don't understand his/her students. As teachers, they have to assess students' behavior, affective domain, in the form of grading. They would put 80 for all students because they don't understand their students one by one. My question is there should be some special students in one class; that should have a good grade. My concern is, there will be some causes, such as they don't know how to assess, or, they don't have willingness in doing that …

Pak S: they might be able to do that but don't want to do that, they know the technique but unwilling to do … or they might not sure how to do that …

Me: or both of them, they don't know as well as they don't want to … laughing three of us …

Pak Sahid: that's for sure if they don't know, so how come they can do that …

Ibu Nu: the problem would be more complicated, what are we going to do, to improve teacher's professionalism, to make them as an example figure to follow and as a role model. I was wondering that it would be more enjoyable to be an "office girl" compared with a teacher, lots of responsibility with an insufficient amount of salary. We have to look good, well dressed, politely behave, be a role model … lots of demands but low salary …

Pak S: there are also demands from the society of how teachers should behave. If we improperly dressed, they would say … you should properly dress … unlike you (me), as an employee … employee, you wouldn't judge the people by how you dress up … laughing … two of us …

Ibu Nu: but over time, the function of the teacher as a role model for his/her students appear to be fading. For our colleagues who don't dressed appropriately, I feel that I really want to remind them … As I become a teacher, my profession demands me to give my students an example or a role model for them … we've got to reflect on the way we behave. The problem would be that those teachers example figure or role model for his/her students is increasingly fade or even disappear … we want to give an example for students for not being late to go to school, but we can't because in fact, we're often coming late …

Pak S: the function of teachers as a role model for students is fading …

Ibu Nu: Actually, there are lots of things and effort to improve teacher's performance … especially in the aspect of integrity and professionalism …

Pak S: I met with my colleagues in other schools yesterday, three of them, none of them have been certified (teachers who have been certified by the central government would have an additional salary), young teachers in particular school. They see that teacher's certification failed to improve its professionalism. Those who have been certified may see their job to is to fulfill 24 teaching hour a week, the obedience of the rule and regulation … and that's it … regarding nurturing students' character and moral, it depends on the students themselves … see their duties as what are stated in the policy text … lack of motivation to improve their professionalism in educating and teaching students …

who become "victim" in this condition would be those who still maintain their work ethics … feel uncomfortable in their working place …

My concern relates to this particular case would be, why don't we try to build an evaluation system, from the perspectives of students. If we refer to business context, this what they called "iso" … because indeed students are our customer who should be we serves as well as possible. We need students' assessment towards teachers' performance, criticizing teachers based on their classroom interaction and learning process. If teachers are willing to accept these students based evaluation, those would be valuable information and positive encouragement for improving teachers' professionalism …

Ibu Nu: kids … students … the have the courage to express what they think about … their opinion. They prefer to have a teacher who treats them as a "friend" … my concern, here, is when teachers let his/her students sleeping when they taught a lesson …

Pak S: how come anyway … unless he/she doesn't realize it … its weird for me when he/she knows it but ignore it … he/she also should be able to notice when one or two of students are away or don't pay attention to the instruction … but anyway, some teachers ignore it, even when the students are absent for a few days …

Me: is that happening in this school?

Pak S: Yes … to be honest …

Ibu Nu: there is a metaphor how to encourage students to learn … "we may be able to pull a goat near of a lake, but we can't force them to drink the water" … laughing … why do I make that metaphor … then we may be able to get students into the class, but we won't be able to make them learn …

Pak S: for me its different … "at the minimum level, we should pull a goat near the lake; there will be a chance for the goat to drink the water" … so they would be motivated to learn as they see their peers learning … like a Javanese metaphor "ojo cedak, kebo gupak" (don't get closer with dirty buffalo) … but if don't get close to that Buffalo, who will clean the dirt then … so that our purpose is to clean the dirt, not to get dirty" … in our practice we should remind our colleagues or to be reminded by our colleagues to improve our professionalism …

Ibu Nu: there is one teacher I know, Ibu Nu, why bother … just go to the class … taught the lesson … he doesn't really pay attention for his students … the most important thing is he fulfill his duty … even though some of them may misbehave or skip the class …

Me: how both of you see your teaching practices?

Pak S: More focus on the development of the student's character. If we talk about the knowledge, students would be able to get that … e.g. for students who reside in Papua, Timor, Java, children in different places, knowledge is not much different, but the character is not necessarily the same. Until now, in this school, I am not quite satisfied with the student's character that we build up. We can compare, for example in the hs # 2, none of the garbage scattered to the school, I was not sure it was the work of the school's janitor, there is one more value built by the teacher, so the kids to the school have the character and values... hs # 2 well known as ' cleanest ' school in this area...

Thursday, 18 August 2016

-a conversation with the school principal-

As usual, I arrive at the school at 8.53 a.m. see some teachers at the security office. I approach them, curious what might be happening there at the security office. At the security office, teachers are gathering there, Pak T, the vice-principal in the curriculum, Pak A, the vice-principal in public relations, and some teachers. I ask what is going on in this school today? Worried about the problem with school admission. Luckily, nothing happens, the school circumstances is getting more stable, they explain. They are just preparing for a school meeting.

It has been two to three weeks I am waiting to talk with the school principal, Pak F. He always away from his office, avoiding the pressure from both the "elites" and the "brokers" for school admission. I ask teachers there at the security office, do the school principal available at his office, I want to talk with him? Pak T tells me, yes, he's there, just go straight to his office, if you want to talk with him.

I go there, to the school principal office, I see Pak F is talking with his guest. I sit in a set of a couch in the middle of the principal office, begin observing the room. The room is very large, roughly half size compared to the teacher's office, where about 60 teachers stay there. At this office, only the school principal stays there. Often I saw school's guest or teachers go to this office for meeting or discussion. On the right side of the couch, a set of chair and desk is available, a place for Pak F to work, to talk with the guest for example, but without a desktop, as always I find in any office. I get a sense that the room is too wide for just one person to stay there, but maybe this function to enable the school principal host the school guest so that it could be more convenience.

Then eventually, after about fifteen minutes, Pak F calls me, he finished talking with his guest. I open the conversation, with the possibility for the school to get funding form the ministry for additional classrooms, as this school need it, continue with a conversation about assessment practice in this school. Here is the transcribe of the conversation:

Data	Analysis
Me: could you please tell me about school's philosophy for educating students from the beginning of the schooling process until they graduated?	
Pak F: the school consists of people, as a social organization, where there is "color" and character shaped by the individual, group of	

Data	Analysis
people, and its interaction in this school. Then we have to understand its "color" and "character" – its culture, where we're heading? What is our purpose? This aspect specified on the school vison and mission. It's clear that we, in this school, our vision is to develop "akhlakul karimah" for students, means that to nurture students' moral, character and behavior. On the other side, we have to prepare and equip students with academic ability through content stated in the curriculum. However, before we deal with the academic content, firstly we have to nurture students moral and character, their mentality, foster students' behavior, so then they would be able to be disciplined, diligent, politeness, so then these would facilitate and support the academic process, teaching and learning activities. It's very influential when for example students are ignoring teachers. This means that there is a problem with students' behavior, their politeness, or some similar misconduct. Those would influence teaching and learning process. Then we put the development of "akhlaqul karimah" as a value that underpins the schooling process, fostering students' moral and character as our priority then focus on the development of academic achievement. For sure, students, kids themselves, they have particular talents, not just in academic context, so then we facilitate those through extracurricular activities. We want to nurture values such as patriotism, nationalism, and other soft skills like leadership, creativity, cooperation and collaboration and so forth. Students' learning not merely happen at the classroom site, not just from the content of the textbook and the stated curriculum, not always in academic content. So we hope that when kids graduated, after a long process of schooling and learning, they would be what we called in Sundanese language "pasagi" (literal translation: "square'). The whole aspect of kids' development, nurturing the moral, character, skills, academic ability, so then they would be able to adjust and position themselves properly to interact with the context of social life, and in their professional life, whether in the university or the world of work. One important caveat, after high school, I'd say, that the development of students' character will be a little bit loose, while kids at that age, they still in the process of finding themselves, who I really am? There are possibilities that they will be influenced by the dynamics of social life context, may be negative influence from their peers, so it should be "pasagi" … As we our role here not just as an educator but also as parents for them, we educate them based on the core values of the religion and academic / knowledge. Those aspects should be supporting each other. Based on the values in our religion, we attempt to interpret those values in our daily life and instill those for the development of students' moral and character.	So it is school policy – and it does mean compliant behaviour. This is important. The classroom is just ONE site for the curriculum – whereas national tests assume it is THE site (i.e. where activity can be best controlled). "religion and academic knowledge." Is there never a tesnion between those two?
Me: is that the values that underpin how the school educates students as well as how the school assesses students' development?	
Pak F: yes, definitely, the assessment in the cognitive and affective are closely linked, in a general case. Kids who exemplify good behavior would normally show good academic achievement. However, there are tensions in some cases. For example, when we put student's grade on the report card when a kid, for example, get low final score 4.00 but shows a good attitude, we would judge, it just not fit. Eventually, we'd use our "conscience" and at the end the final score in the report card for this kid would be 6.00, considering some caveats, his/her attitude, discipline, attendance, and so forth … on the other way around, in some cases, kid got 9.00 for his/her classroom test, but shows misbehavior, teacher would make sure about the grade, assess deeper, he/she might be cheating … those case indicate that, when teacher assesses, we need	

Data	Analysis
them to assess both cognitive as well as the affective domain of students' development. The assessment we build, not merely see on the academic aspect alone but in the attitude and behavior as well, should be in line. The practice of teacher's assessment function not merely to assess the academic achievement but also function in developing student's moral and character. In this particular case, we focus on to nurture the value of honesty and integrity. This is important considering our problem with corruption. If we don't pay attention to foster honesty, we feared of deviant behavior, in particular for kids' future, to prevent corruption when kids enter their world of work.	Which makes sense of his policy of denying access to "brokers" – I guess.
Me: how about the tension or dilemma that teachers face when it comes to the policy from the government, concerning certain standard of cognitive assessment?	
Pak F: I'd say that the standard function as a reference or target. To achieve that standard, we need process. If we've through the process but we haven't achieved that, there we need to through another process to achieve it, for example through remedial teaching. If we follow the process, patiently go through it, the standard shouldn't be a constraint for our practices.	But this speaks of asessment-led curriculum….
Me: How about the teachers' role as parents who put emphasize on the moral and character development while the standard has its stake regarding students' promotion and retention? The tension between the moral and character development and achievement towards the standard?	Good question at the right moment.
Pak F: that's interesting, in that case, we need to consider the feasibility of students for his/her promotion/retention. We often refer to our "conscience" for the decision. Well, if it is just based on academic achievement that won't be sufficient enough for students' development. Need to consider on the process of students' development, regarding their attitude, their motivation and effort in their learning process, including how they deal with teachers' assessment. In the case of student "a" and "b," for example, if both of them got score 6.00, below the minimum score standard. Student "a" shows his willingness and effort to do the remedial, while for student "b" unmotivated to do the remedial for example. In the end, the end score or result would be so much different. This is my concern. Definitely, teachers know better about their students compared to anyone else. They should be trusted, have some extent of freedom to assess students, no need rule, and regulation that undermine the process of students' development. We need standard as a reference but in a broad way, not too strict standard.	The tension between formal assessment and teacher judgement ('conscience') …and here Again – the focus on assessment for teacher development.
Me: How about assessment in the form of the national exam?	
Pak F: I think that exam gives us an advantage to some extent. In fact, for school, the result of the national exam remains to function as a benchmark of school's performance, in its academic achievement, a measure of school's learning outcome after a period of time. For its fairness, I'd say, if we take a look at the process that we've gone through that would be appropriate. For this school to have our current achievement, we've had a walk through a long process, for those, low-achieving schools, pay attention to the process to improve school's performance.	"after a priod of time" – an important condition.Parents might pay attention to last year's scores – but he's saying (is he?) that it is the pattern of scores over time that reveals something.
Me: how about if you become principal in a low-achieving school?	

Data	Analysis
Pak F: I would focus on the process. How we develop the school according to its "color" and character. My concern here is, it's not appropriate when the result of the national exam function as a single measure of school's performance. In fact, the reality, parents, and society view school's performance more on the result of the national exam. This perspective is built since the implementation of the policy, about a decade ago. To some extent, it's reasonable. For example, if this school, hs #3 got the best score in the exam, parents would view this school as the best school. When next year for example hs #1 get the best score in the exam, society will consider hs #1 as the best school. That's logic; it's unreasonable if then the first layer, consist of hs #1, #2 and #3 become a school that ranked in 13 for example, given its process, the input of students, teachers, facilities, culture and so forth. But I don't really agree if we view the school quality just based on a single criterion, the national exam for example …	

Unfortunately, when the conversation is getting more and more interesting, Pak F has to attend a meeting in the district education office … I would attempt to have a follow-up conversation with him, maybe next week …

Monday, 22 August 2016

-a conversation, again, with the school principal-

Data	Analysis
Me: in your practices as an educator and school leader how do you define assessment?	
Pak F: the education assessment, its an important aspect of schooling. It functions to measure how much students master the content being taught. Second, to reflect on how did our teaching? It functions for both, for teachers to reflect on their practices and for students to measure how much they learn. For example, in one class, the majority of students score at grade 4.00. We may reflect on the effectiveness of our instruction, or understanding the constraint with students' ability to understand the particular content area. The assessment also functions to measure students' ability, then to determine students' graduation. For example, in the form of the national exam. Those assessment function for selection to the next level of education. The national exam might not serve the function as a single criterion for students' graduation, but it may benefit for education mapping, to determine what kind of educational resources to be allocated to a particular school, area, or region. Here is my concern with the national exam, regarding item question development. There are some steps to construct the item question in tests. First, we analyze the exam content outline, then construct the test item question, trial the test item question for its validity and reliability, then assign those item question as material for the test. I'm quite sure that the way teachers construct the item test question rarely consider those steps. And the national exam is capable of doing that. It means that the validity and reliability of national exam are more convincing than the teachers' test … then when the test is conducted within different schools and different areas, with the difference in its educational resources, then we'd be able to map the outcome of the educational process in particular school or context … which one have better outcome … Reflect on my practice as an educator and a school leader, assessment more function as a standard measure, whether students achieve that standard or not? Then the problem would then, in its implementation, like academic dishonest practices, in general, the majority, the result of the national exam doesn't reflect on students' learning process due to "cheating" which may significantly contribute to the result of the exam.	This is the reciprocal argument to that which says that tests are referenced to abstract (i.e.median) norms, whereas teacher judgement is contextualised, In fact, as teachers develop test iteems for their own use, they will draw from prior, extensive knowledge in order to mediate and moderate the item. Moderation and referencing does go on, but in a more concealed way. One good analytical tool here is Stake's "Criterial" and "Experiential" approaches to evaluation, which also serve to analyse assessment: Stake, R. E. (2004). *Standards-based and responsive evaluation*. Sage.

Data	Analysis
Me: But then how do you deal with the various background of students'? Say those who slow-learners and fast-learners for example? If you view assessment as a standard measure of achievement?	
Pak F: instinctively when we assess students' progress, our "heart" / "conscience" become more involved. When kids get low score, we don't emphasize on their cognitive domain, but on their attitude and behavior. Each kid is unique, different with others, in its psychological development. There will be a period of time when their cognitive ability is really well developed. Therefore, teachers should have the capability of understanding students' psychological development. Take a look at regular and "additional" classes in this school; we couldn't compare them with the similar standard. In the case of students in the "additional" classes in this school, we would help them increase their grade, to be promoted, to give them the opportunity for their development and improvement psychologically and academically, to give them a chance to evolve, to help them to be promoted to the next grade. This is the tension and dilemma with standardization. Equal treatment, one-size-fits for all, for all students with the different background. This might represent the logic of industry, the product, and machine. We're dealing with students, human; standard can't be applied completely. I'm not saying that standard is useless. It could be a benefit for us as a reference or target, but we need flexibility in its implementation. Let say, the standard for promotion or retention would be … "a,' "b,' "c" and" … we would use that for our practices, but we need some extent of consideration, it shouldn't be too strict. There needs to be some flexibility in the standard itself.	Nice statement.
Me: could you explain the way educator assess students' attitude or the affective domain? What the purpose of it?	
Pak F: As I mentioned before, assessing the students in the domains 'affective' is broadly in line with the psychological development of students, where it is supporting students' cognitive achievement The aim for educators to assess students ' in their attitude and behavior is to foster moral and character development. This is an important aspect to preparing students' futures when the graduated from this school and ready to, for example, go to college, enter the world of work and overall plunge together in public. Then it 's important for us as educators to pay attention for that, for example, to foster honesty and integrity. That will be very important when they are working. As we know that this nation has a huge problem with corruption and other social problems. As educators, we are concerned about it, and we attempt to prepare the future of the nation, "InShalloh" our future would be better.	This school, throughout your data, nicely shows the futility of separating "cognitive" and "affective" domains – which modern cognitive theory and neuroscience would refute anyway.
Me: what are the constraint of assessing students' attitude in your practices?	
Pak F: one of the main constraints in assessing students' attitude would be the different level of understanding of how to assess students' attitude among teachers. For example, kid, he got his score below the minimum standard score, won't be able to be promoted, shows a good attitude. We want to help him for promotion by assessing his attitude. I'm quite sure, teachers, they have different views about how to assess students' behavior. This depends on the interaction between teachers and students. We need teachers' agreement, common understanding, how to assess students' attitude when we need to make a crucial decision regarding students' development within the learning process applied in this school.	Good argument here for a whole-school approach based on reflection and negotiation, rather than the imposition of standards, rules or leadership decisions. This reflects well the Ibu Nu's concerns with, for example, mgmp and teachers reflecting together n their practices and student outcomes.

Data	Analysis
Me: how do this assessment in affective domain relate to the development of academic achievement?	
Pak F: Yes, there is an interplay between assessment in the affective and academic domain. In this case, affective assessment function to develop moral and character as well as soft skills such as motivation, creativity, collaboration, for dealing with teachers' assignments. For example, by establishing study group formed by students itself. That case shows how assessment may have a positive contribution to developing students' soft skills. However, there are kids who don't have willingness and motivation to learn and to deal with teachers' assignments. For example, those who are cheating or copying their peers' assignments. In this case, in their assessment and assignment, teachers' attempts to assess not merely on academic achievement, but also to assess aspects such as honesty and integrity. Those also considered as an important contributing factor for students' grade. Thus, its not a matter of succeeding or failed, high or low grade, right or wrong, but how kids deal to work on the assignments, their process of learning. In this case, grade given by teachers will contain subjectivity, in which teachers would have their own consideration in the process of assessment and grading for students' assignments. That understanding which may vary among teachers. There are teachers who do not consider the elements of the process. As there are teachers, who do consider the process and effort of the students in completing the tasks assigned. For example, student "a" got all correct in his assignment, but did cheating, while student "b" got only four correct question answer, but she works herself... teachers need to consider students' effort, pay attention to the process instead in the result. But, here, this constrained by the number of students, that is too many.	Indeed! As again – there is an interesting approach to cheating and misdemeanours – the school sees these are causes and sources for education, rather than punishment. Gene Glass again – "improving" or "worsenening,'
Me: how do you overcome this constraint?	
Pak F: I'd try my best to understand the process, how kids are dealing with the assignments. From our interaction, I may be able to see the process, their character, and ability in doing the assignments. Comparing data, students' scores from classroom tests and assignment is something that I consider would be helpful to make sure that the final scores I give to students represent their learning process. It supposed that kids grade from tests and assignments would slightly different. I am also doing item questions in tests that I assign for my students in our "mgmp" (teachers group discussion). How it works in practice, including examining students' work.	
Me: how do you see teachers' ability to construct item questions in the classroom tests?	
Pak F: the process of item test questions starts with analyzing the exam content outline. In one particular content area, there should be one or two item questions. For example, let's say about the digestive system, try to mention or show gastric organ? Is this appropriate for the content area you want to capture, or like this... try to explain how the gastric organ works. Here we take into account, the ability of students if we are going to capture students' ability in the exam. It is not easy to prepare questions that will represent the ability of students, what are we going to capture by the content areas that have been taught by the teacher.	
Me: how the assessment in the form of classroom assessment might function for both teachers and students?	

Data	Analysis
Pak F: One of the functions of classroom assessment, for me, one of its functions is to give feedbacks to students, especially in the form of 'grading," Another thing, the feedbacks for students is in the form of reward and motivation, such as 'wow, your works, that's outstanding," although we do not see right or wrong with students' work.... another form of feedback would be 'reward' to students through the words of motivation; I put in the work / assignment completed by the student. So in addition to the value, we are more likely to appreciate what has been done by the students. Regardless, its result, right or wrong, we still appreciate the work. Even though, when they do not perform as good, we still appreciate their work. We tend to direct them to evaluate their work and guide them to solve problems in the form of tests or assignments. We never judge that they were not able to finish the job, instead of encouragement, like saying... maybe it's like this how to resolve the problem you should try again in this way … Kids, they're unique, different. They learn according to their unique characteristic. I tell you one story about that. A boy, who has difficulties to pay attention to the lesson. He always sits at the back of the classroom. I get him to sit at the front side of the classroom, but still, he didn't pay attention to the lesson. I looked at his notes. It was neat, but he just wrote a few of the lesson I taught, sometimes he missed understood what I taught, I knew it from his notes. I told his parents about his problem, attempted to take a look what the problem was? … then, eventually, we found the problem. It was simply that he has to use glasses. After he was wearing his glasses. He managed to follow the lesson well. So, our assessment is dynamic, complex, couldn't refer to a particular-strict framework, there should be flexibility in it. Not merely in academic, we have to pay more attention to kid's psychological condition and development.	
Me: then how do you see, standardization come from the policy from the central government?	
Pak F: in educating our kids, we have to pay attention to the various aspect of kid's development. Their psychological development, not just their academic progress and achievement. Thus, when the result of the national exam to be used as a single criterion for students' graduation, that's a big mistake, I against that. However, if the national exam couldn't be one of the several criteria to decide students' graduation, I also don't agree with that …	
Me: why, can you explain it more?	
Pak F: one of my consideration would be the validity and reliability of the national exam. Those would be more valid and reliable compared to the school-based exam, prepared by teachers, with less attention to its validity and reliability. On several occasion, I found that teachers develop the exam materials only within one or two days. So then, the national exam, could be considered as a valid measure of students' achievement compared with school-based tests.	
Me: as a school's leader, how do you see the function of the national exam?	
Pak F: As consideration for determining the graduation of students along with students' learning process from grade ten to twelve, teachers' classroom assessment and school-based test. Here is my concern, regarding students' graduation. To graduate students has to pass the minimum standard score, 75, from the school-based assessment, also considering the result of the national exam. There is	

Data	Analysis
an assumption from the district education office, if, in case, the school decide that some of its students won't be able to graduate. The office questions how the school effort and performance in getting students to graduate. The district like put a "pressure" and demands schools to get all of the students to graduate. So, for example, there are three at-risk students for graduation, considering academic achievement from school-based assessment and the national exam. The school has the responsibility to have "special" treatment for those students, such as build communication with parents to motivate them, to help them deal with teachers' assignment, to prepare them to graduate whether on the school-based test and the national exam. There will be some programs conducted by the school, with the purpose of helping students pass the exam, whether, school-based exam and the national exam, such as additional learning hour, exam preparation. Those function to get all students pass the exam and to be able to graduate. Eventually, if the school think that those three students won't be able to graduate, considering their academic achievement and attitude, then the school would recommend them to move to another school which set a lower standard for its students to graduate.	
Me: how do you prepare students to succeed in the national exam?	
Pak F: we would have additional learning hour, starting at 6.00 a.m. The purpose of the program would be to prepare students to succeed in the exam through re-learn the content from grade ten to twelve, and drilling or practicing the exam material. For students in grade twelve, we emphasize more on getting them ready and pass the exam than concern in learning or character development through the extracurricular program. Especially in the last semester, for students in grade twelve, we would stop extracurricular activities, focus more on academic achievement, both in the form of school-based test and the national exam. Here is my concern, might be a critique, just my thought, might be irrelevant, in this case. I don't think its appropriate, if we focus more on academic achievement and get rid of achievement on non-academic activities, such as extracurricular activities. For me, students' achievement not merely on the academic achievement. I believe that the main goal of education would be the development of students' moral and character as well as their academic achievement. The purpose of the national exam which emphasize on students and schools' accountability is not fit with the values that the school attempt to nurture here in this school.	
Me: for you as a school leader, do you set any particular target regarding achievement in the national exam?	
Pak F: for me personally, I'd want this school to outperform the hs #2 in the result of the national exam. Considering slight gap of achievement in the national exam among hs # 3, hs # 1 and hs # 2 are. Moreover hs # 3 sends more students to public universities compared to hs # 2. Anyway, we face more challenges to achieve that. Especially, the additional classes, which are now in the eleventh grade would be problematic for us, because of the input of students. It would be hard for us to get them score well on the national exam due to the limitation in the learning process for students in the additional classes.	
Me: refer to our previous conversation, regarding parents' and society's perspective, how they define school achievement?	

Data	Analysis
Pak F: In this case, parents and society still consider that the national exam results determine the quality of the school. It is formed in the community since more than ten years ago, especially when national exams determine students' graduation. It is inherent in the people mind and difficult to be erased. There is a dilemma here, that we do not consider the results of a national exam as the only variable determinant of the schools' quality. There are still many other things that could be considered as a determinant of school's quality. However, we also can not rule out society's thinking. Although we are also trying to try to straighten out people's views on how the school 's success can be seen from the other side, not only on the national exam results alone.	
Me: how do you see the result of the national exam as a source of school's comparison and competition?	
Pak F: in fact, it followed the market mechanism. How the market sees schools, in this case, school's achievement and performance. Indeed, this already embedded in how the society views the school. For example, they believe that hs #1 in level 1, hs #2 in level 2 and hs #3 in level 3. In these schools, I can be sure that the teacher would be very proud of school's achievement in the national exam. Moreover, for the school principal, the national exam is considered as a measure of his/her success as a school leader. This schools' comparison has its benefits to motivate schools to work harder in preparing students for national exams. But, anyway, I think that this is not the only measure of the success of the school. There should be other success criteria should that determine the performance of the school in addition to the national exam. The process of learning and moral development and character of the students themselves who should be considered as criteria for determining the success of the school.	
Me: how would the government do differently to improve the national testing policy to help school's improve students' learning?	
Pak F: I would attempt to improve the school-based assessment, the teachers' capacity to assess students' learning. How teachers might improve their ability to assess students learning and the development of students' moral and character. So then, the teachers, based on the assessment outcome could better determine appropriate strategies to improve their teaching as well as students' learning. This will be the biggest challenge for me, to improve assessment practice, won't be easy.	

Tuesday, 21 August 2016
-A conversation with Pak T, the school's admission problem-
Yesterday, at the school, I read the news in the local newspaper about the problem with the school's admission. This happens with the high school (hs) #10, similar to what was happening here in hs #3 last year. The schooling has been running for about one month. This means that, ideally, there won't be activities held by the school or district in regards to the school's admission. But, the news tells the different story. At the hs #10, there are about more than 120 students "rush" to the school. They claim that they already have the right to be the student at that school. As the "brokers" tell them that the school would provide "bench" for them as students there. Although, the school never said that. That would be a problem for the school itself. The lack of classroom available for the school is the main concern, not to mention how the school has to manage the teaching and learning process. As a consequence, the school would have to increase the number of the pupil in one class which already packed. Then, in one class, there will probably about 50 students or the school has to open additional classes with no classroom available. This was happening in the hs #3 last year.
Today about 11 a.m. I meet with Pak T, the vice-principal of the school at the security office, and we discuss about that issue and what might be done differently to overcome the problem. First, he explains the role of the "brokers" in this case. The school admission is an "easy way" for the "brokers" to get a substantial amount of money without having to work hard to obtain it. The amount is huge, could be hundreds of million rupiahs (equal to more than tens of

thousand $ New Zealand). Pak T guesses that the "brokers" already have a "recruitment" strategy far before the school's admission period. The "brokers" may already have the data from anywhere in regards to kids who have their middle school national exam score below any schools' passing grade. And the parents of those kids would be an easy target for them to be deceived. They promised to the parents to get their kids admitted to any high schools they want in exchange for money, range from 8 million rupiahs (900 $NZ) to 16 million rupiahs 1,800 $NZ). What happening in the hs #10 is an "exit" strategy from the "brokers" due to the pressure from parents who already give the money for them. They may fail to send the kids to the high-achiever schools, such as hs#1, #2, and #3.

Pak T also expresses his concern to improve the schools' admission system in the municipality. The school should have been accepted kids from its surrounding area regardless their score in the national exam. He further explains that this might create more challenges in his teaching. Because he has to deal with different background and cognitive ability. He believes that, it's his job to educate students regardless their background and ability. He said if the government implement that regulation this could save time and energy for students. The short distance between the home and the school would also potentially minimize traffic jam which is a major problem in the municipality.

Thursday, 23 August 2016

-an attempt to negotiate data for information exchange-

Today, at about ten a.m. while I'm heading to the teacher's office, Pak F calls me, to discuss the possibility to get the funding from my office. He feels that the school lack of classroom available and the number of students in one classroom which already packed. He plans to add more classroom, about two to four additional classrooms for the school. I reply that it would be helpful for the person in my office if the school develop a proposal to allocate the funding. And probably, the funding would be allocated next year, since, for this year, we have a budget cut.

After we discuss the school possibility to get the funding, I attempt to discuss the purpose of my research. I explain the purpose of the research for my doctoral thesis. This research attempt to see how the educational assessment policy is shaped at the different level of administrative system and the school. Throughout the research processes, I am collecting story of what is happening with educational assessment at the different level of educational stakeholders, how each level of administrative system and the school views and interact with the educational assessment policy. I will need to tell the story from the school to the different layers of the administrative system and another way around, and I will not make any judgment.

He replies with his statement, "to the extent that the purpose of your research is to improve the education, any data and information you found, whether positive or negative aspect, I don't think this would be a problem to communicate the data to the ministry. As long as the purpose of the information exchange would be to improve or to complement the assessment policy and practices. You can discuss the data at the ministerial level, and I even hope to get the finding that might be useful for us in this school. Given the discussion, it's likely we'll get an input,"

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