

PASIAD Education System in INDONESIA – Qualitative Investigation

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ABSTRACT

The quality of education is pivotal for the economic growth of nations. The educational initiatives such as PASIAD (Pacific Countries Social and Economic Solidarity Association) in Indonesia are brilliant for socio-economic development of nations however, how PASIAD is implemented in Indonesia and countries alike is unknown to management policy makers. The current study fills this knowledge void and aims to discover the educational concept of PASIAD and its application in an Indonesian setting. The data was collected by means of a Qualitative – naturalistic inquiry by conducting interviews from senior academics, employed in the Indonesian schools. The results reveal various challenges and strengths of this system and its application in an Indonesian context. The study is unique in a sense that it is pioneer in identifying the challenges and opportunities of PASIAD education in Indonesia. The results are useful for the decision makers to further improve the delivery and quality of this education program.

Keywords: Indonesia, Schools, education, PASIAD.

INTRODUCTION

The primary aim underlying independence and establishment of Indonesia as a country is to educate the nation¹. Education as an effort in educating the nation is mandated by the Constitution passed in the Year 1945 (UUD 1945)². This then became the basis of the provisions laid down enactment of the Law No. 20 of 2003 on National Education System (UUSPN) and was executed to improve quality of education.

The global world is going through an economic crunch time where job prospects are limited. In addition to that employers are demanding and require graduates to have

various professional skills as well as moral integrity which is a product of education – university education focused on to train students to behave in an ethical way (Noddings, 2013). The Indonesian Government, through Law on National Education System (Vide No. 20 of 2003) offered an opportunity to global education providers to enter into the Indonesian territory and offer quality education which is at par with global standards maintained by other nations.

However, the problems facing Indonesian education system is not an entirely new phenomenon. The language, culture, and the pedagogical challenges are faced by foreign students who come here to attain education in Indonesian institutions (Samuelowicz, 1987). Despite a great focus of Indonesian government to instill a culture of learning in insitituions, among the many, the beaurocracy is found one of the problems which hinders the learning process (Bjork, 2005). A few others criticize Indonesian Government to have a

¹The fourth paragraph of the Preamble of 1945 Constitution, subsection 31, Paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution.

²Education grouped by track, level and kind (Article 12 of Law SPN). Educational paths are grouped into three categories; formal education, non-formal and informal education (Article 5 of Law SPN), and formal education consists of basic education, secondary education and higher education (Article 1 Paragraph 1 of the Law SPN).

blurred vision which can otherwise work as a guiding principle to ensure quality education (Welch, 2007). Academics believe that problems are found at all levels – school education to Universities is affected by bureaucracy and lack of attention to attract more foreign students. This is not only damaging the reputation of Indonesia as a strategic partner to several other neighbouring countries but is also leading private sector institutions towards a profit deficit – lower levels of returns on education (Purnastuti, Miller, & Salim, 2013). Despite these problems, the researchers have overlooked the issues facing Indonesian education system – worthy of investigation (Sofa, Fitzgerald, & Jawas, 2012).

To counter such challenges and to foster a *friendly* and *facilitating* atmosphere to attract more and more students and education experts, Indonesian Government came into agreement with Government of some other countries. This resulted into the launch of *Pacific Countries Social and Economic Solidarity Association* (PASIAD) – to foster strong ties with Government of other nations to facilitate their representatives in countries joining the organization. PASIAD education movement is a Turkey non-profit institution has great attention to education in various Pacific countries including Indonesia.

Indonesian PASIAD vision is to "build a bridge of cooperation between the people of Indonesia and Turkey in particular and the community in general, to improve the quality of self and life to form a kinship and unity in order to achieve world peace". Its mission is "to cooperate with the people of Indonesia to build and improve the quality of human resources through the development of educational, social and cultural which oriented to building the character and quality of science".³ An Agreement on cultural affairs

³ Took from *PASIADindonesia.org* website addressed on the street Warung Buncit Raya No.2,

collaboration between Turkey and Indonesia was signed in the year 1973 based on bilateral relations in the field of culture and education between the two countries,⁴ but PASIAD Education in Indonesia began attending in the year 1994. Furthermore, the cooperation between two countries was established through a Memorandum of Understanding on Educational and Cultural Cooperation which was signed on March 13, 2000. A large number of PASIAD schools in Indonesia and an extensive network throughout the world are currently operating. However, what is the current state of quality of PASIAD programs in Indonesia is largely unknown to the Government bodies and other institutions such as NGOs and educational institutions. In the face of challenges to education facing the Indonesian Government, a low return on education investment and the troubles facing students enrolled in different educational institutions in Indonesia, this study aims to explore state of quality offered through PASIAD based programs in Indonesia.

Background Literature

Ideology encompasses a life experience which contributes systematically to organize and bind together a block or practice where individuals shape them to act accordingly⁵. Ideology is pivotal for the success of an organization and is understood as ideas, meanings and practices that are supportive of power map meaning particular social group. Ideology cannot be separated from the practical activities of life. Guiding ideology or code of conduct providing practical and moral demands are

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⁴Based on Turkey embassy in Jakarta at http://jakarta.emb.mfa.gov.tr/ShowInfo_Notes.Asp?ID=121639 accessed on April 21, 2015.

⁵Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies Teori & Praktik*. Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2006: pages 62-63. Y.A. Piliang, *Dunia Yang Dilipat: Tamasya Melampaui Batas-batas Kebudayaan*. Bandung: Jalasutra, 2004: pages 456.

commensurate with the unity of faith between a conception of the world and norms related actions. Gramsci's ideas in the context of cultural studies not only pay attention to popular culture as the realm of ideological struggle, but also the ideological struggle and conflict within civil society as a central arena in the political culture.⁶

Magnis-Suseno decipher the meaning of the ideology on one (or a combination) of three meanings: (1) ideology as false consciousness; ⁷ Ideology in the sense that the first is usually used by the philosophers and social scientists as theories oriented to the interests of the parties propaganda. Ideology is also seen as a means of certain social class in power to legitimize his power. Second, ideology is neutral in the sense that the whole system of thinking, values and basic attitudes of a particular social group, such as "state ideology". In this second sense, good or bad depends on the contents of an ideology that ideology. The third sense beliefs are concerning scientific, normally used in philosophy and social sciences positivistic.

The importance of ideology in education, according to Widja, there are two practical pedagogic dimensions, namely the technical dimensions (strategy, processes and actions) and normative dimensions (policy and the formulation of values). He emphasized the importance of education issues from the perspective of ideological because theoretically efforts to solve the problems of education should start by correcting assumptions that are not realistic as the basis for policy making education policy. Ideology in this case culturally determine the ideas that

favor the interests of a particular social group, site of the battle of meaning and interest of the dominant groups that make ideological culture.⁸

Turkish schools in many countries, including in Indonesia had been founded by volunteers who are members affiliated with educational movement inspired Hizmet of Fethullah Gulen. Hizmet Turkish is dictionary meaning of 'serving' (service). Hizmet is a manifestation of the work done by Fethullah Gulen and his supporters, one of which services are developed in the field of education by establishing schools with the advanced science with the use of modern technology as a means of learning in these schools in order to align the learning process implemented in schools with the development of technology that continues to grow in the community, supported by the professional educators from both inside and outside the country.

Hizmet faith-based movement inspired by the teachings of the Turkish cleric Fethullah Gulen. Fethullah Gulen Movement is a non-confrontational social movements that conform to the status quo, the existing law, culture and norms of each country in which it works. Fethullah Gulen promotes establishment of cooperation towards a peaceful world civilization, as a form of opposition from disputes and conflicts in the world. He said: "Be so tolerant that your bosom becomes wide like the ocean. Become inspired with faith and love of human beings. Let there be no troubled souls to whom you do not offer a hand and about whom you REMAIN Unconcerned"(Be people who are so tolerant that your bosom like the ocean

⁶A. Gramsci, *Selections from Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publisher. 1971, p. 349. A.Y. Lubis, *Dekonstruksi Epistemologi Modern: dari Posmodernisme, Teori Kritis, Poskolonialisme hingga Cultural Studies* Jakarta: Pusaka Indonesia Satu (PIS). 2006, pages 141-142.

⁷ Frans Magnis-Suseno, *Filsafat Sebagai Ilmu Kritis*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius. 1992, p. 229

⁸G. Widja, *Pendidikan Sebagai Ideologi Budaya: Suatu Pengantar ke Arah Pendidikan Kritis*. Cultural Study, Universitas Udayana. 2009, pages 1 and 5. Dani Cavallaro, *Critical and Cultural Theory: Teori Kritis dan Teori Budaya* (Trans.). Yogyakarta: Niagara. 2004, page 135. John Storey, (Trans.) *Cultural Studies dan Kajian Budaya Pop, Pengantar Komprehensif Teori dan Metode*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2007, p. 4-5.

extends and is guided by faith and love for fellow human beings. Do not let the souls who suffer and are not neglected get a helping hand).⁹ As a follow-up to the ideology, birth PASIAD organization that stands for *the Pacific Ulkeleri Sosyal ile ve Ikhtisadi Dayanisma Dernegi* (Turkish) or in the English language are: *Pacific Countries Social and Economic Solidarity Association* (i.e. the Social and Economic Solidarity Association Countries Pacific). Although this association in charge of social and economic problems, but the work started or focus more on education, in accordance with the views Gulen. Gulen argues that the upliftment of the Muslim world will happen if the Muslims are better educated. The ultimate purpose of education upliftment vision is to improve a Golden Generation, the generation of individual universal, ideal, love of truth, integrating spirituality and knowledge, work that is beneficial to society. Gold is the nation's next generation of smart, not just the mind but also has a superior personality.

Problem Statement

Education – primary and secondary has its importance in Islamic traditions. The schooling system offers an insight to pupils regarding the pillars of Islam and the worldly knowledge (Hefner & Zaman, 2007) while the higher education grooms individuals to be able to serve businesses and industry by keeping an eye on the ethical standards. However, even on this pertinent issue, there is contradiction and academic debate among the scholars as what is more important – ethics or education? (Alam, Ismail, & Mishra, 2010). To most, however, education with an ethical approach seems more appropriate so as to instill a spirit among educated community to stay ethical in a post education life. With the advent of *globalization* in almost everything we do, the education also seem to be influenced by the spirit. The world renowned Gülen model

⁹Fethullah Gulen, *Criteria or Lights of the Way*. London: Truostar at <http://fgulen.com/id/profil/biografi-fethullah-gulen>.

encapsulates a blend of global and local forces – Glocalization to enrich the education experiences in Indonesia (Johnson). The study builds an argument based on two theories – theory of resource mobilization and organization commitment and theory of Fethullah Gulen movement as a civil society movement were framed. Funding for this Gulen movement has come from his students and sympathizers of Gulen whom fostered as Hizmet (service, waiters) for humanity and devotion as a servant of God. Hence the launch of a model which enriches the local education experience to a more regional or glocal level is really admirable. However, on the contrary, there are a few people who are nationalists and oppose the influence of forces such as PASAID to further improve the Indonesian education system and its reforms (SALLY & Panggabean, 2015). These people regard PASIAD education in Indonesia and its role in Turkey-Indonesia relations as a soft power phenomenon. The goal behind investment is to market Turkish regime to Indonesian society. PASIAD initiative has also been identified as a contributor to economy, trade, investment, tourism, education and healthcare. Furthermore, the researchers (Osman, 2007) discovered Gulen's Contribution to a moderate Islam in Southeast Asia. The research highlighted relevance of the Gulen movement as an extreme ideology in light of inter-religious relations spirit within Southeast Asian countries. Their work concluded that the PASIAD schools in Indonesia are equipped with moderate and tolerant attitudes that can contribute to realization of a harmonious relationship of inter-religion as Gulen's teachings¹⁰. However, is it bad for an economy such as Indonesia? How can it be helpful for the community and

¹⁰Muhammad Nawab Osman, *Gulen's Contribution to A Moderate Islam in Southeast Asia*. Uploaded on September 25, 2007, pages 334-346. See: <http://gulenconference.org.uk/userfiles/file/Proceedings/Prd%20-%20Osman,%20MN.pdf> accessed on April 21, 2015.

the bilateral relations among nations? How it is performing in the Indonesia? These are the questions yet to be answered which this study aspires to answer by virtue of qualitative, in – depth analysis of the current situation and future prospects of PASIAD in Indonesian settings. Overall these previous studies have not highlighted the problems of the origin of the ideology behind the movement of PASIAD education in Indonesia neither the implementation of ethical standards as well as the relevance and implications for improving the quality of Indonesian education system in a global world. This is where current study contributes to the body of knowledge.

Research Method

The study on ideology and ethics need qualitative space with representative methodology. Out study require an in – depth understanding of the issue which was the perceived impact of PASIAD on the education quality in an Indonesian settings. The researchers recommend adopting a qualitative method of inquiry where detail is imperative and the issue is not well grounded in local culture (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). Among the various methods available to further procedd with the research, the *phenomenology* was opted as a method. The *phenomenology* is used by researchers where lived experiences of individuals are to be presented to the world (Langdridge, 2007) which was the major reason behind selection of this method.

The data was collected from individuals working currently in Turkish schools in Indonesia. The data collection method involved semi – structured interviews from respondents who were employed in the Turkish schools through PASIAD in Indonesia. The researcher mainly asked about the real time experience of the informants to gain an understanding of the issues and challenges involved while implmenetation of PASIAD in Indonesia. The respondents were interviewed in schools where the researcher himself sought prior approvals from them to

conduct interviews. Once an ethical approval was sought, the respondents were contacted to conduct interviews in separate offices. A snow ball sampling approach was opted to collect data – the respondents were requested to share their links in the organization to conduct interviews smoothly. There were 50 senior level individuals who were interviewed when the data started to saturate. The researcher further proceeded with the interviews and then finally stopped the interviews with 60 senior level people by reaching at the maximum level of saturation point – as proposed by qualitative researchers (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

The interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed to establish detailed notes. The detailed notes were analyzed by following the thematic analysis method of data analysis in qualitative research. In education related studies, where data is collected by interviews, the researchers strongly recommend using the thematic analysis as a premier analysis – much better and detailed in this case than the content analysis (Seidman, 2013). The written transcribes were read several times to reach at a stage where first order categories were developed. On further reading, the second order categories were also develoed which led to the development of themes presented in the findings section of this study.

Findings

The findings were developed by means of a thematic analysis where ---- themes emerged out of the detailed analysis explained above. The themes are explained below.

Scienticism and Morality – The Gülen Model

At the very initial phase, the respondents were asked to comment on the background of PASIAD education which they attributed and linked to the world renowned Gülen model. One of the respondents explained;

“Education is the heart and soul of a society and can be attributed to spreading love and joy through knowing the link between science and religion. Both may be separate – their link is imperative and is stressed in PASIAD programs which is actually borrowed from the spirit of Gülen” (Male, 40 years).

Another interviewee explained in this way;

“The Gülen model is the heart and soul of understanding the links between science and religion. Although these are important, the model also stresses the need to partake the spirit of “instructor as a role model”, dedication of the instructor, technological understanding of the instructor to transfer the technical skills in the students” (Female, 35 years).

These two interviewees stressed the importance of Gülen model for the development of education based on his teachings. On the other side, the interviewee also suggested the role of instructor, his / her skills such as technical and soft skills to impart a culture of learning among the students – ultimately in the schools and colleges where these instructors are teaching.

In addition to these understandings, the college principles who were interviewed had a bit different understanding of the Gülen model in Indonesian settings. One interviewee explained it in this way;

“The success in education is important however, it would be unfair to attribute this success only to study of science and technology. Morality, ethics, religion, and commitment are the softer, intangible, and subjective things but are extremely important” (Male, 53 years).

Another respondent also highlighted the ‘ideal’ role of education providers and students in this way;

“The major problem which I observed in the education system is that students merely study the education belonging to morality – this is not enough. There must be a combination of the study of science and morality which easily can lead to development of an ethical mindset in the years coming ahead in a post-degree life. We need citizens who are capable of running institutions based on the spirit to be ethical” (Female, 37 years).

Based on these artifacts pertaining to Gülen model in educational settings, it can be inferred that the hallmarks of the model are (1) progress in science and technology education, (2) a pool of motivated and committed instructors to deliver education programs, (3) and the role of students to help others groom them as being moral and ethical citizens of a Muslim state such as Indonesia. These are pretty new findings in an Indonesian context and must be focused by other institutions within and outside the country to be able to achieve desirable results from education.

The Human Resource – Daring problem in PASIAD Schools

The interviewees highlighted the human resource related issues in the schools where PASIAD education programs are implemented in Indonesia. For example, one respondent explained it in this way;

“There are several schools which are based on the Gülen model in Indonesia. However, the shortage of human resource to teach and administer in these schools is evident. For example, as a matter of law, there are only 50% of teachers who are foreigners. However, we need people with an international exposure and current Indonesian staff does not truly meet that requirement” (Male, 58 years).

Another respondent explained it in this way;

“There are highly motivated individuals who are well trained by the PASIAD education

system which I think is beneficial for the country – Indonesia. It is beneficial in a sense that it trains the locals to adjust in a glocal education system” (Female, 38 years).

Another respondent highlighted the links between businesses model of PASIAD schools with the compensation plans and strategies adopted by these schools. He explained;

“These schools highly rely on the tuition collected from the students to manage their funds. However, the salary of local staff needs to be justified and be fairly designed to establish equity – at least an internal equity” (Male, 51 years).

These respondents highlighted the problems associated with the management of human resources in these schools. It is evident that workload, compensation plans, and on the positive side few people perceive the system to train the individuals to learn the glocal environment in a local setup while being on the job.

Quality and Cultural Congruence – Gülen Schooling in Indonesia

A large number of informants admired the Gülen system and its implementation in Indonesian territory. One respondent said;

“The school infrastructure in Indonesia is excellent and offers students and staffs an opportunity to work in a congenial environment. The class rooms are well furnished; with an internet (high speed) facility to all the staff and students is available. There is a boarding system, and also recreation centres which offer ample opportunities for students and staff to excel in an ideal learning environment” (Female, 47 years).

Another respondent highlighted the cultural congruence between infrastructure and the social system of Indonesia. He explained;

“There are many rituals celebrated on the campuses such as Iftar dinners, prayer rooms, Qurbani holidays, and assistance to orphans which are strongly linked to the Indonesian culture. This is something really impressive by the PASIAD education network – an understanding of cultural adiphora and exclusives always regard success to international firms” (Male, 50 years).

Another respondent detailed the quality of education offered at PASIAD schools in Indonesia. The respondent explained;

“We employ modern methods and techniques to design and deliver the quality of education. For instance, discussion based school instruction, use of internet, innovative assignments which instill a practical learning experience, and the industrial collaboration all add a real world ‘value’ to the PASIAD schooling in Indonesia” (Female, 46 years).

“The study methods inspire and offer students the ability to think as a ‘global’ citizen – getting themselves ready to study at the world renowned universities to match the local needs. Our students, by virtue of the system where they study, think of institutions at an early stage of their schooling to go abroad and to attain a degree which will offer them better career opportunities” (Male, 39 years).

Finally, a few respondents highlighted how these schools are able to ‘customize’ themselves to cater to local needs of the country. One respondent said;

“The PASIAD schools located across the globe do not offer religious education. However, to meet the legal standards in Indonesia, the schools in Aceh and other locations offer religion based education especially to Indonesian girls which is a

cultural imperative. This is what I think so special about the PASIAD education network in the country” (Male, 44 years).

In this section, all the respondents appreciated the idea to further strengthen the PASIAD schools in Indonesia which are based on the thinking of Gülen. It is evident that cultural congruency, awareness of local rituals, delivery of education on international standards, and the religious teachings are all hallmarks of quality.

Homophile – teacher and student based learning

There are a significant number of informants who shared the benefits of PASIAD education based on the student – teacher relationships. Although this is another hallmark of quality, the research team identified it as a separate theme to further highlight the teacher and student relationships.

One informant said;

“The core characteristic of PASIAD learning is the closer ties between teachers and their students. We work in close collaboration with the students; help them in learning the nuances and practical aspects of academic knowledge” (Male, 39 years).

Another informant said,

“The students, in collaboration with their teachers, not only compete in academic events of the year instead, they also partake the Olympics and other sports events and win several medals. This is attributed to the student – teacher homophile and a close collaboration” (Female, 35 years).

This close collaboration not only produces good results in academic and sports events; instead, principles highlighted the moral character building of the students. One informant said;

“The close collaboration helps students to groom their moral character and builds a strong personality. This increases their satisfaction with the schooling system in place and helps in attracting more and more students in future” (Male, 42 years).

The close collaboration between students and their teachers results in several benefits such as building academic strength, moral development, and grooming students in matters pertaining to extra curricular activities – sports in particular.

Discussion

There is absence of studies which addressed the PASIAD education – current issues and benefits of such a system to Indonesia. This study fills this void and is first of its type to acknowledge the perceptions of senior educationists in Indonesia to reflect their thinking on this education system. It is evident that Gülen Movement in Indonesia is a highly customized form of education which can easily be assumed as a ‘Glocal’ education system in the country. This can be attributed to the fact that both countries are moderate – Indonesia and Turkey and also have cultural ties which helped a smooth implementation of the system in Indonesia. Hence, the success of this system is not a ‘one shot’ phenomenon, instead it is due to dedicated teachers, well groomed staff with a spirit to serve, excellent infrastructure, and a strong cultural collaboration which exist in between the two countries.

Results reveal that Gülen model is successful replication of an international education system. There are many positives – grooming of students, development opportunities for teachers and other staff members, and an international educational standards with a ‘local’ relevance to the local settings. However, there are a few elements which need further development. One of the areas of improvement is the availability of human resources in PASIAD schools. There is a

strong need to hire more staff so that to lessen the burden of other individuals. This also will increase the staff productivity. On the other side, training of staff, especially the locals employed in the PASIAD schools must be trained by keeping abreast with international standards. This will add to the productivity of local staff as equal to the international staff. Another area of improvement seems to be the compensation strategies. There must be fairness in terms of paying salaries and benefits to local staffs equalant to the salaries and benefits offered to international staff. It will definitely motivate the locals to explore further opportunities for development.

The research concluded a few points of departure. First, the education of PASIAD in Various countries including in Indonesia is the business of religion – centered ideology based on Hizmet movement, inspired by the teachings of the Turkish cleric Fethullah Gülen. In order to unite the knowledge with religion in creating the golden generation, the intelligent nation must not only be focused on the heart and mind of individuals but also their personality. Therefore, in terms of business, PASIAD education is not only a profit-oriented or commercial enterprise, instead, a cultural and social collaboration between two cultures. Second, Business ethics of PASIAD education through cooperation with the central government, local government and private educational foundation are wearing plus national curriculum, bilingual (Indonesian and English) as the language of instruction, boarding school, supported by modern technology-based facilities, competent educators from Turkey and Indonesia, emphasize the mastery of science and technology in various national and international competitions to appreciate the local culture and character of students. Third, Business ethics of PASIAD education has a

value that is relevant to the objectives and national education standards enriched by international educational system, thus helping to accelerate national development in preparing generations of intelligent and able to compete in the face of global challenges. The high cost of education is fairness, by means of adequate educational facilities, excellent services and the resulting output. Fourth, PASIAD education has implications for progress in various fields among others: in the field of Human Resources increase in the quality of Indonesian people who excel in science and technology and good character. In the economic field can increase investment, trade and tourism. In the field of social and religious culture can foster togetherness and tolerant attitude towards multiculturalism and religion. And in various other fields, schools PASIAD have a positive impact on improving the quality of Indonesia, both in the private sphere, society, and the state and nation.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the significant contextual contribution, the study has several limitations which open further avenues for future research. First, the data is collected only from the school principles by means of a qualitative inquiry – the interviews which limits the generalizability of findings to other populations such as school teachers, students, and policy makers in Indonesian Government. The generalization was never the purpose of this study. Future researchers are recommended to consider other audience such as school teachers and students to frame their views about PASIAD education and its implementation in Indonesia. Another area of future research is to further operationalize the findings of this study and to quantify the construct and its measures with a much larger audience.

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