

Educational Policy Analysis and Decision Making

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To Cite This Article: Hidayati, N., Baniyah, S., Ramadhani, F., Yatimah, & Fatahuddin. (2025). Educational Policy Analysis and Decision Making. *ICCCM Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(Special Issue), 93–98. <https://doi.org/10.53797/icccmjssh.v4isp.16.2025>

Received 15 September 2025, **Revised** 29 September 2025, **Accepted** 10 October 2025, **Available online** 25 October 2025

Abstract: Educational policy is the final result of a decision taken in the field of education by considering various related educational and social components. To produce the right policy, education organizers need to understand the nature and framework for developing educational policies. Educational policy analysis acts as a procedural concept in producing data and information that can be used as an alternative tool in formulating policies to address educational issues diplomatically. As an applied social science, policy analysis helps explain the problems that a policy wants to solve while predicting the impact of its implementation. This analysis is important because it is able to provide research-based information, clarify problems, reveal inconsistencies between goals and efforts, and offer various realistic policy alternatives. Its contribution lies in its ability to provide input by considering the priorities and sensitivities of policy parameters. This article was written using a literature study method, by reviewing relevant national journals from the Google Scholar database, and using a descriptive approach. The analysis was carried out by referring to applicable laws, the thoughts of educational experts, and relevant theories. The results of this study are expected to provide a general overview of educational policy and the decision-making process, as well as being the initial basis for more in-depth and comprehensive research in the future.

Keywords: Analysis, policy, education, decision making

1. Introduction

Education plays an important role in human life because it can improve the quality of individuals from cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. In an effort to improve the quality of life through education, there are various complex challenges that must be faced. Education plays a major role in improving the quality of a nation's human resources Timperly (2012), so structured and directed management is needed, one of which is through education policy analysis. Education policy analysis is a systematic approach to explaining, assessing, and providing alternative solutions to problems in the field of education. This process includes collecting and processing relevant data as a basis for consideration for policy makers. Fattah (2012) emphasized that policy analysis explains the direction and priorities of education in the context of global factors, while according to Dunn (2016), policy analysis is an applied social science discipline that relies on scientific methods to produce relevant information for solving policy problems.

Policy and decision making are two complementary aspects. Policy is conceptual and theoretical, while decision making is practical and applicable. Without a strong theoretical basis, decisions taken can lose their scientific value. Conversely, policies without real implementation will have no impact. Therefore, policy analysis is needed to avoid the dominance of power or political considerations alone, by offering objective, rational solutions that are acceptable to the wider community. The success of policy analysis is highly dependent on the proper identification of problems and policy objectives. However, in practice, these objectives and problems are often not clearly communicated by policy makers, resulting in ambiguity in the analysis process. Evidence-based decision-making is very important to translate the results of the analysis into concrete policies that are effective and efficient, including in terms of resource allocation and policy implementation. Unfortunately, although the role of policy analysis and decision-making has been widely recognized, its application in education management still faces various challenges. Education organizers must understand the nature of policy well so that the decisions taken have a positive impact on society at large (Bakry, 2010; Winarsih, 2017). Therefore, an in-depth study of the integration between policy analysis and the decision-making process is important so that the education system can be managed more effectively in achieving educational goals.

2. Method

The study used in this research method is using the library approach method or Library Research, this method is an activity of collecting library sources and combining them into one part. The steps of this activity are reading sources, appreciating and understanding the discussion and then recording the results (Sari & Asmendri, 2020). The process of collecting research sources usually uses various kinds of literature, books, articles, journals, personal documents, magazines, and other references. The first stage of conducting this research is choosing a theme that is in accordance with the discussion. Then explore the information in order to focus on the research objectives. Then collect various sources of data and read in depth and explore the material actively and critically. The next stage is to take notes, this stage can be said to be the most important stage in compiling an article. Then process and compile the material that has been obtained. The last stage is to make a conclusion at the end of the article (Aziz et al., 2024).

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Education Policy Analysis

The definition of policy in education is the entire process and results of formulating strategic educational steps, which are described from the vision, mission of education, in order to realize the achievement of educational goals in a society for a certain period of time (Tilaar, 2008: 140). Policy according to the term can be interpreted as politics, programs, decisions, rules, conferences, provisions, strategic plans, and other appropriate opinions. In a policy there are other terms in different descriptions. Policy can be termed intelligence, decision, skill and wisdom. Policy is an activity of political activities within an organizational group that can provide and create thoughts wisely in accordance with the goals that have been planned and agreed upon in the organization to provide thoughts to be well-directed, these thoughts aim to decide problems so that decisions can be made in accordance with the goals (Risnawan, 2017).

Analysis of an education policy can be defined as a concept of a procedure for producing information in the form of a collection of educational data as a direction as an alternative tool for formulating policies in making diplomatic decisions in overcoming education problems (Hanisy, 2013). There are three forms of policy analysis, namely:

- a. Prospective Type
This type is the type that carries out policy analysis before the policy is implemented
- b. Retrospective Type
This type is the type that carries out policy analysis after the policy is implemented (Dewi, 2020)
- c. Integrative Type
This type is the type that carries out policy analysis before and after the policy is implemented (Aziz et al, 2020).

In the policy analysis process, there is a process that must be carried out by policy makers. This process aims to ensure that the policies that are born are in accordance with the problems faced. The policy analysis process is, (Muliawaty, 2021):

- a. Inisiasi
- b. Estimasi

- c. Seleksi
- d. Implementasi
- e. Evaluasi
- f. Terminasi

There are characteristics in educational policy analysis that we need to know, namely, analyzing educational policies which is a process, path, or synthesis activity that comes from various sources of information about services in education. In addition, it is also information that directly becomes the main source in a policy analysis study and is also an output. Policy analysis can be in the form of advice, technical instructions, standard operating procedures (SOP). Characteristics of educational policy analysis, among others:

- a. A process or activity of synthesizing various information about educational services. Educational policy analysis combines various types of incoming information, including the results of research that has been carried out by experts or specialists. So that a conclusion will be produced that is in accordance with the request and objectives of the research.
- b. Information is the main source. The study of educational policy analysis is a result of conducting research. The results obtained from the research are the output of the research data processing stage which will later be ready to be used to determine decisions and design educational policies.
- c. Output. Policy analysis is a recommendation for choices and decisions that can be in the form of policy designs. Other educational policy outputs can be in the form of an advisory message, technical instructions SOP in the form of sequences, flows, materials, and targets for making decisions on educational articles. Because of this, educational policy analysis must be delivered or formed in the form of a clear, complete, concise, and concise report.
- d. Client (user). Educational policy analysis is a person or group who is basically tasked with determining or making decisions on existing educational policies. Usually the users are specific, and are directly related to the expenditure or output of educational policy analysis, for example advice, direction and guidelines on the policy itself.

In education policy there are actors in formulating the policy. The study and discussion that will be discussed by the policy actors is about the formulation of the education policy itself, which discussion will be a very interesting discussion. Moreover, with the actors behind the determination of the content of the policy colored by the dynamics of the stages and processes in the formulation of the policy. There are several education policy actors, namely individual actors, groups, and education actors who are involved in various conditions as a unit in the education policy system. In various actors formulating and forming this policy, especially this policy involves few participants when compared to the agenda setting stage. In stages like this, more is needed, namely work, to formulate alternatives, this policy is taken outside the attention of the general public (Sidney, 2017:79).

Implementation of policy analysis must be done, because it is able to support in drawing conclusions in order to obtain information related to the conclusions to be drawn. The policy analysis process can be carried out by observation, explanation and separation of cases that are able to identify inconsistencies between objectives and efforts to present new ways, and propose ways to express ideas in policy making. The main involvement based on the policy analysis implementation process is to provide suggestions for decisions by calculating the sensitivity and priority of predetermined parameters. Policy analysis is not the core of the interest-taking process, but it is important because it is a component of the institutional evaluation procedure.

The analysis of educational policies implemented as a guideline for taking action for decision-making functions as:

- 1) achieving orderly services in education
- 2) every citizen is guaranteed basic rights to receive educational services
- 3) the effectiveness of educational service activity programs
- 4) education actors can carry out education
- 5) the realization of administrative order (Arwildayanto & Sumar, 2018).

According to Anderson (2014) states that policies have the following values, namely:

- 1) political values, including the interests of groups and classes and the place where educational policy actors affiliate,
- 2) organizational values including maintaining the existence of educational organizations, expanding programs, and activities of educational organizations
- 3) personal values, including a person's values because of their personal life history
- 4) policy values include moral values, justice, independence, freedom, and togetherness
- 5) ideological values include values that are logically connected to form a mindset about the world and guide their actions.

Decentralized education management in Indonesia allows for the formulation of policies and decision-making involving elements of the central government and local government (Aulia, 2012). In the education process, opportunities and authority are given to education stakeholders and the community to actively participate in advancing educational institutions (schools). The practice of education policy is outlined in a management known as school-based management (SBM) (Athiyah, 2019). In this SBM system, there is a transfer of authority to manage schools to schools and related stakeholders. So, it is necessary to know the strategy for managing education in schools even though the management concept is decentralized. The stages are (Fitrotun et al, 2019):

- 1) socialization stage

- 2) piloting stage and
- 3) dissemination stage.

3.2 Decision Making

Decision is the end of the thought process about what is considered a "problem" as something that is a deviation from what is desired, planned or intended by dropping. According to Avianti (2022), decision making is a systematic approach to a problem faced. It can be interpreted that decision making is choosing and determining one alternative that is considered the most appropriate from several alternatives that are formulated. The decision must be flexible, analytical and possible to be implemented with the encouragement of available facilities and resources (in the form of humans and materials).

The basis for decision making varies, depending on the problem. Decisions can be made based on feelings alone, or decisions can be made based on reason. In addition to depending on the problem, decision making also depends on the individual making the decision. Based on this, Terry (2006) put forward several bases for decision making, namely:

- a. decision making based on intuition,
- b. decision making based on rationality,
- c. decision making based on facts,
- d. decision making based on experience and
- e. decision making based on authority.

Types of decision making seen from the person who does it can be divided into two, namely: individual decisions and group decisions. Individual decisions are decisions made by a leader or manager alone; while group decisions are decisions made by a group of people based on the results of consensus.

Group decision making can also be divided into several forms, namely: (1) a group of leaders, (2) a group of people with their leaders and (3) a group of people who have the same position and group decisions. Some of the advantages of group decision making are: (1) decisions can be determined or taken more quickly because there is no need to wait for approval from other colleagues, (2) reducing the possibility of conflicting opinions and (3) if the leader or manager who makes the decision has high ability and extensive experience in the field to be decided, then the decision is likely to be correct.

In addition to the advantages above, there are also several disadvantages to group decision making, namely: (1) no matter how high the intelligence and ability of the leader or manager, there are still various limitations, (2) decisions that are taken too quickly and without asking other people's opinions are often less than ideal and (3) if an error occurs in decision making, it can become a heavy burden for the leader himself.

According to Sastraatmadja (2023) there are at least three stages taken in decision making, namely: (1) Investigation stage; this stage is carried out by studying the environment for conditions that require decisions. At this stage, the raw data obtained is processed and tested and used as a guide to find out or recognize the problem. (2) Design stage; at this stage, registration, development, analysis of possible action directions are carried out and (3) Selection stage; at this stage, the activity of selecting action directions from all that exists is carried out.

Decision-making styles and models are closely related to several stages taken in decision-making. This means that the decision-making models carried out by a leader or manager can be seen from the three stages of decision-making that have been explained previously, namely: the investigation stage, the design stage and the assessment stage. However, the important thing that needs to be discussed regarding this decision-making model or style is that a leader or manager needs to meet several requirements, namely: (1) knowing all alternative devices and all consequences or results that will be obtained, (2) knowing the method in making the order of importance and all alternatives and (3) choosing the most profitable alternative to be implemented.

According to Ekowati et al. (2019) identified at least three types of leadership, namely: (1) normative type, assuming that the goals outlined will accelerate the achievement of the institution's goals in its leadership. The most possible path to achieving goals is more determined by the organizational structure than using certain people. When associated with administration, good administration is characterized by organizational effectiveness that is more prominent than time efficiency. (2) personal type, assuming that the best way to realize goals is more through individual involvement than just relying on the organizational structure. This means that the determinant of good or bad administration is not organizational effectiveness, but the efficiency of the individual. (3) transactional type, is a temporary style to achieve another style that is very dependent on the situation. This style emphasizes the need to shift while changing in a better direction without changing the order of the organization or the individuals involved in it. The measure of good or bad administration in this type of leadership is determined by organizational effectiveness and individual effectiveness. Decision making by a leader or manager can be influenced by the following factors:

- a. First, individual dynamics. Individuals and organizations influence each other. Likewise, between one individual and another individual there are also differences in making decisions for their personal interests. A person in making decisions for an organization is always influenced by his personal interests.
- b. Second, group dynamics. Group dynamics are greatly influenced by the number of individuals as members of the group concerned. The norms held by the group have a very large influence on the way of thinking, responding to social symptoms and a person's behavior. Changes in attitudes, opinions and behavior in responding to social

stimuli will be adjusted to group norms. The influence of group norms is important for managers to pay attention to because their subordinates consist of individuals who are members of the organization they lead.

- c. Third, environmental dynamics. The environment is the situation, conditions and factors related to a decision. The decision taken is the answer to a challenge or a problem faced which arises as a result of changes, situations and conditions. Changes in the situation and conditions are greatly determined by the degree of the decision taken. The degree of the decision is also greatly determined by the type and scope of the organization.

Apart from the factors above, there are several other factors that also influence a person in decision making, namely:

- a. The value system that applies in the relationship between individuals and society.
- b. A person's perception or view of a problem. This perception is also influenced by the prevailing value system and the experiences they have/have had.
- c. Human limitations include the inability to gather information directly.
- d. Political behavior, power and strength that occurs. Many decisions are not taken optimally, but only formulate certain political behavior.
- e. Time constraints, busyness, resulting in the information obtained being very limited to be used in decision making.
- f. The leadership style that a person has will also color the pattern of decisions taken.

Policy analysis is the process of implementing social science using forms of thinking, reasoning, proof, assessment and problem solving related to the wider community. In order to produce a rational view, an analysis procedure is needed. The procedures are: 1) Policy Information. In the policy information process, there are 3 types of information that must be produced, namely information about (Afifah and Yuningsih, 2016); 2) Value. Information about values relates to how the value process is contained in the policy; 3) Facts. Information about facts relates to whether the thing being discussed exists or does not exist; 4) Action. Information about actions relates to what should be done about the problem.

The decision-making process is a rational effort by administrators to achieve the goals that have been set at the beginning of the planning function. The process begins and ends with consideration. It requires creativity, quantitative skills and experience. The sequence of steps is as follows:

- a. Problem determination,
- b. Analysis of the existing situation,
- c. Development of alternatives,
- d. Analysis of alternatives,
- e. Choice of the best alternative.

The decision taken can be assumed to be good if it meets the provisions in Rahayu (2020) as follows:

- a. Decisions are taken as a solution to the problems faced.
- b. As fast and precise as possible.
- c. Are rational, meaning they can be accepted by common sense, especially for the implementers who will later be responsible for the decision.
- d. Are practical and pragmatic, meaning they can be implemented with existing capabilities.
- e. Have minimal negative impacts.
- f. Benefit many parties for the sake of smooth work and the direction of the goals to be achieved.
- g. Decisions taken can be evaluated for the future.

Something that can determine goals, identify options, analyze information, and determine choices. Boeh (2002) suggests the steps in making decisions include: writing questions, determining options, collecting information, making a list of pros and cons, and making decisions. While Adair (2007) suggests five steps in decision making, namely defining goals, collecting relevant data, producing feasible options, making decisions, and implementing and evaluating. The decision-making process as follows:

- a. Problem Formulation
- b. Data Collection and Analysis
- c. Making policy alternatives
- d. Selecting the best alternative
- e. Implementing the decision
- f. Monitoring and Evaluation of Implementation Results

4. Conclusion

Educational policy analysis is a branch of applied social science that is systematically arranged to identify the core problems in the education system. Its main purpose is to provide a strong basis for policy makers in understanding the problem in more detail and determining the right approach to solving it. In this context, policy analysis not only functions as a tool for clarifying problems, but also as a means to formulate instructive strategies in dealing with potential problems that arise from the implementation of the policy. The main basis for policy and decision-making in the world of education is the vision and mission of education itself. All policies and decisions must always be based on these directions and objectives, without ignoring the values contained therein. Decision-making in education is also ideally carried out through

a process of deliberation to reach consensus, so that the decisions taken can be collectively accounted for and have a wider positive impact on the education system.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the fellow authors and organizations whose intellectual properties were utilized for this study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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