Educational Management for Heterogeneous Schools: A Study of the Understanding of Justice Among Principals

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This study aimed to examine the understanding of the concept of justice among principals and its implementation in school management to address the academic disadvantage of students from low SES families. The problems raised are: (1) What is the understanding of justice among principals in the educational management of schools? (2) What is the effect of a principal's understanding of justice on efforts to eliminate structural inequality in education? To answer the two research questions, this study used the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method and the equity approach. The results showed that principals understood justice as giving equal treatment to all students without considering differences in gender, religion, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The impact is that students from low SES and having low prior knowledge have been left behind. When the principals were challenged to overcome these problems, they recommend establishing study groups with diverse members, so the students can help each other.

Key words: *Educational management, principal, low SES student, equity, heterogenous school.*

Introduction

Indonesia is a colourful nation in its nature. It comprises more than sixteen ethnicities with Javanese as the largest. All ethnicities and sub-ethnicities develop their specific traditions and cultures which are called local cultures. From a religious viewpoint, there are six formal religions and many indigenous religions or beliefs. Politically, there is pride in a remote past, when the Majapahit kingdom found a solution for the pluralistic conditions by developing the motto of Unity in Diversity. However, mathematically, plurality contains a high probability for

competition, conflict and even war between parties with different ethnic, religious, racial, or customary identities.

Historical experience at the end of the 20th century highlights the ethnic conflict between Dayaks and Madurese in Kalimantan, which resulted in thousands of deaths and tens of thousands of others having to be relocated (Nakaya, 2018). Conflict with violence also occurred in Ambon in 1999 (Adam, 2010), and Poso in 2000 (Schulze, 2017, 2019). Studies of the various conflicts that occur are shown to be complex causes. From an educational perspective, the inheritance of militaristic violence occurs (Purwanta, 2017) and the discourse narrative of capitalistic imperialism occurred in many lessons (Purwanta, 2018). From a contemporary viewpoint, the sharp difference in socioeconomic status was a very important factor. The jealousy of the Dayak ethnic group as the indigenous population in Borneo towards the ability of the Madurese ethnic group as migrants to control economic resources is a factor driving the conflict, which spread from Sanggau to Pontianak. The same factor causes conflict in Ambon and Poso, although among indigenous people of different religions. From this perspective, ethnicity and religion are primordial factors that harden conflict.

Although there is no longer an outbreak of war, except for separatist movements in Aceh and Papua, the potential of ethnic conflict in Indonesia is still very high, especially in big cities. The difference in economic status between poor and rich groups affects the social aspects of life. Between the two groups of people, there was striking social segregation, both in the selection of friends, organizations, and schools. The middle and upper community groups continue their study in urban schools that have complete facilities and high-quality teachers. They tend to have a high academic achievement (Gorard & Smith, 2010, p. 10). Meanwhile, middle to lower-income groups, even though they live in the middle of the city, with consideration of the cost and academic ability of children, must study in suburban schools with incomplete facilities and underachievers. The social system formed a structural barrier for people from the lower to middle classes to elevate towards the upper-middle classes.

The problem of social segregation and structural barriers is not exclusively experienced by Indonesia but is a problem faced by other nations. OECD research in Portugal found that students from low SES are three times more likely to be a low mathematics achiever than a student with high SES (OECD, 2006). Similarly, the analysis of Indonesian PISA Middle and High School PISA scores shows that students who study in schools with low literacy scores lag more than two school years behind those who study in schools with high literacy scores (Aditomo & Felicia, 2018). Inspired by the Incheon Declaration 2015 in developing the inclusive and equitable quality of education (UNESCO, 2016), in 2017 the Department of Education and Culture seeks to eliminate social segregation by implementing a zoning system. Admission of new junior and senior high school students starting in the academic year 2017/2018 no longer used academic achievement as the main criterion, but the distance

between residence and school (Depdikbud, 2017). Academic achievement is still calculated, but is only given a quota of 5%. Even in the 2019/2020 school year, the quota for the achievement track was eliminated.

The zoning system succeeded in eliminating the domination of students from the middle and high classes in preferred schools that have complete facilities. They are "forced" to study at the nearest schools from their homes. Meanwhile, opportunities for students from the lower middle class to study in preferred schools become wide open, as long as they are located in their neighbourhood. However, the implementation of the zoning system is only the first step in education management. The main objective of educational improvement is to increase the participation, involvement and achievement of students from marginalized groups, both from the socio-economic perspective and that of other limitations (Gorard & Smith, 2010, p. 3).

Elimination of social segregation in educational institutions through the zoning system gives birth to new problems that must be faced, both by teachers and principals. Before the zoning system came into force, students who were accepted had relatively homogeneous academic achievement and SES (Social Economic Status). In the zoning system, as a result of its implementation, teachers and principals must assist students who have diverse academic and SES backgrounds. As an illustration, the diversity of academic achievement in the national exam of new high school students in urban, suburban, village and mountainous areas in the administrative region of the former Surakarta Residency can be seen in Table 1 below:

Table 1: The national exam score of new students in Surakarta Residency

State High Schools	2016			2017			2018		
	H	L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M
Surakarta 01 (Urban)	41.4	36.0	36.9	37.9	32.7	36.15	38.8	21.2	34.9
Klaten 01 (Sub Urban)	40.7	34.9	36.6	38.7	25.9	35.8	38.1	25.4	33.9
Gondangrejo (Village)	34.9	14.3	23.9	34.6	12.0	21.6	31.6	12.6	22.2
Nguntoronadi (Mountainous)	36.3	12.1	23.0	34.2	14.1	21.7	35.8	13.9	23.2

From the above table, it can be seen that in Surakarta 1 State High School, which is to be the first rank in 2016, had to accept new students with a 32.7 national exam score in 2017 and even in 2018 decreased to be 21.2. The decline of the national exam score of new students accepted was also experienced by other schools. The difference is that the average score for schools located in villages and mountains area was increased in 2018, while in cities and suburbs the trend continues to decline. From this point of view, the impact of new students' academic achievement is felt in all high schools.

This research seeks to determine the response of principals as educational managers to the academic achievement changes of new students from homogeneous to heterogeneous. The study focused on the principals' perceptions of the justice that applied to the heterogeneous students and how students from low SES can be equal in participation and achievement with students from high SES. If participation and achievement among students from low and high SES are equal, then a breakthrough made by the Department of Education and Culture in 2017 can be said as a success. Conversely, if students from low SES still left behind from those who have high SES, it means that educational institutions have not been able to find a solution to the structural injustice that occurred.

The research questions raised in this study are:
1. What kind of understanding do principals have of the principles of justice in the educational management for schools?
2. How does the principal's understanding of the principles of justice affect the effort in eliminating structural inequality through education?

Methodology

This study involved 20 principals of state high schools with a composition of 5 principals in each category: urban, suburb, village and mountainous in the administrative area of the former residence of Surakarta. Data collection was carried out using the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The theme of the discussion was only announced in outline, namely the development of school management. The principle of justice in the management of education in schools that will be the focus of discussion is not shared in advance, so that their understanding is not biased with information obtained before the implementation of the FGD. To be effective, the principals were divided into two groups, 10 members each, based on the location of schools. Principals from rural and mountainous areas are in one group, and another is school principals from urban and suburban areas.

The FGD was carried out in two stages. The first stage of the discussion was directed at revealing the policies taken by principals during the implementation of the zoning system in the admission of new students and the reasons underlying the policymaking. The question aimed to obtain information on the policies that have been taken by principals and the reasons behind them. At this stage, the FGD was characterized by information sharing, so that each school principal knew of the policies taken by other principals.

The second stage is to examine the impact of the policies taken by the principals toward the learning process in their schools from the perspective of equity. At this stage, the FGD is evaluative in the sense of conducting policy assessments from the perspective of opportunities

for students from the low SES to obtain equal participation and achievement with students from high SES.

To analyse and evaluate the policies that have been taken by the principal and the underlying reasons, this study used a justice approach. The approach was used because public schools have the potential to eliminate structural inequalities that exist both in the school environment and in social life outside of school. Before the zoning system, the school has developed justice in the sense of giving equal treatment to all students without considering differences in gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or religion. The action was good but it was unable to overcome the problem of inequality in participation and achievement between students from low and high SES (Stewart, 2009, pp. 87-88). From this point of view, principals as educational managers need to transform justice from equality into equity.

The principle of equity is a fair opportunity and takes account of the difference. Rawl explained that the policy is fair if it is not only based on the equality of treatment but also provides an equality of opportunity (Rawls, 1999, pp. 68-69). Equality of opportunity means that everyone should have the same opportunity to drive, regardless of variations in the circumstances into which they are born (UNESCO, 2018, p. 17). On the other hand, a fair policy must also be based on awareness of the differences among individuals who affected the policy. Differences in this context must be understood broadly, whether economic, political choices, cultural, or social strata. Thus, the policy can be called as ideal if it can provide the greatest tangible benefits for the oppressed, marginalized, suffering, or poor groups, which are collectively called the most disadvantaged groups (Rawls, 1999).

According to Field, Kuczera, and Pont, the development of equity-based education management can be carried out in ten stages (Field, Kuczera, & Pont, 2007), namely:

Design

1. Limit early tracking and streaming and postpone academic selection.
2. Manage school choices to contain the risks to equity.
3. In upper secondary education, provide attractive alternatives, remove dead ends and prevent dropouts.
4. Offer second chances to gain from education practices.
5. Identify and provide systematic help to those who fall behind at school and reduce year repetition.
6. Strengthen the links between school and home to help disadvantaged parents help their children to learn.
7. Respond to diversity and provide for the successful inclusion of migrants and minorities within mainstream education.

8. Provide strong education for all, giving priority to early childhood provision and basic schooling.
9. Direct resources to the students with the greatest needs.
10. Set concrete targets for more equity, particularly related to low school attainments and dropouts.

These ten points are used in this study to arrange FGD questions. The point eighth was modified because there were statements that are less relevant to research on high school principals, especially the words "early childhood provision and basic schooling."

Findings
The first stage of the FGD

Shortly before the first stage of the FGD began, principals were given questionnaires with open questions that they have to answer in writing. The questions asked were about the awareness and concrete actions they have taken towards students who are less able to take lessons, do not have a good learning system at home, and are part of a minority group. The responses of the principals were then copied, and the original was handed back for discussion in the FGD.

From written answers, it was found that principals tend to adopt policies applied to all students, such as sanctions for students who are late for class or violate school rules. The principal has never taken a special policy to help students who have low academic achievement. The reason given is that solving all academic problems of students has been handed over to the supervisor and subject teachers. Structurally a principal has three assistants, namely vice-principal for academics, finance, and student affairs. Problems that arose, if not solved by the supervisor and subject teachers, will be tackled by the vice-principal who deals with the problem. The principal's responsibility is to take policies that concern all students' interests.

In the first stage of the FGD, each principal was allowed to represent innovations that they had made to increase student participation and achievement. They explained that attention was mainly given to the provision of adequate learning facilities, so students could follow the learning process comfortably. In written answers, principals direct their thinking towards improving educational facilities and infrastructure, such as buildings, laboratories, and information technology equipment.

When the discussion was directed to the impact of the zoning system on their school, all principals began their response by stating that the system was good, because the goal is to distribute equally the quality of the school. However, when describing the conditions of students who are accepted into their respective schools, their views can be separated into two groups. The first group are principals from schools located in urban and suburbs area. They complained that the academic quality of accepted students is very low and are getting more and

more in number. Conversely, the number of high-quality students is getting smaller. Principals from the preferred high school ranked 1 to 3 explained that they are a little lucky because students with very low academic quality did not dare to enrol. They are afraid of not being able to follow the learning system applied. Nevertheless, the principals felt that due to the implementation of the zoning system, the new students were increasingly heterogeneous, both in terms of academic ability and SES.

The second group are principals from high schools located in rural and mountainous areas. The zoning system resulted in a larger number of the student body with few students having high academic achievement. However, most of them are relatively the same, namely middle to low academic abilities. With a larger student body, financial support received from the government increased, and the development of quantity and quality of student activities at school could be arranged, such as adding students' extra-curricular activities.

The written answers showed that the principals did not attempt to identify various problems that arose due to the implementation of the zoning system. The reason is that they are not in the position to select new students so that any quality of input must be accepted. Their responsibility is to carry out the education process as well as possible.

The principals show that their way of thinking is structural-formal. Their attention and action are to fulfil only the formal responsibilities that have been determined by the Department of Education and Culture. This way of thinking is very dangerous for the educational process because students are only positioned as one component of the school system. In the thinking of the school principals, students are no longer individuals and are instead turned into numbers and percentages to calculate the type and number of activities, as well as the facilities and costs required.

The study of educational management carried out by school principals in Indonesia shows that their leadership functions are less developed. The principal's energy is largely spent on fulfilling structural tasks demanded by the district and provincial education offices (Abbas, 2017). The relationship between the principal and the teacher is like the boss and servant (patron-client) (Mashudi, 2017).

The leadership practices of principals are far from adequate for managing education in heterogeneous schools. Theoretically Principals have responsibilities in (1) building a vision for academic success based on high standards, (2) creating a friendly and comfortable environment that enables the implementation of education, (3) building harmonious cooperation and interactive conditions, (4) developing leadership harmoniously that allows teachers and students to understand their responsibilities as a manifestation of the school's vision, (5) managing subordinates, data, and processes to improve school quality (Harvey &

Holland, 2013). Borrowing Jacobson's view, in order to realize his responsibilities, the principal today is no longer occupies an officially appointed position, but is a leader whose responsibilities can be distributed through the making of relationships and networks through the creation of good relationships and networks with stakeholders teachers and support staff (Jacobson, 2011). Schools will improve the quality of the process and learning outcomes if the principal gives a wide space and even encourages teachers to innovate and develop their professional ability. In other words, student learning outcomes will improve if leadership is distributed to all parts of the school and community, and when teachers are empowered in areas they believe to be important.

The limitations of managerial and leadership competence of the principal in Indonesia are due to the absence of higher education institutions that have training programs that teach students to be school headmasters. Requirements for becoming a school principal are teachers with a BA degree, and 100 hours face to face training and 200 hours on the job learning (Direktorat Jenderal Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan, 2019). The face-to-face training is done twice, which is 70 hours or one week at the beginning, and 30 hours or three days in the end. While 200 hours on job learning are also divided into two stages. on the job learning takes place in one school for 150 hours, and a different school for 50 hours. With only this short training being undertaken, the school principal in Indonesia is defined as a teacher who is given an additional task in managing education in schools.

In the second stage of the FGD, the problem was to evaluate the policies taken by the principals from the perspective of equity. The question posed was whether the policies that the principals have adopted fulfil the sense of justice? Which group gets benefits the most and which group doesn't benefit?

From the responses that occurred during the second round of FGD, it can be assumed that the groups affected by the principal policies are the school, the board of teachers, students, and their parents. Schools as educational institutions become the biggest beneficiaries. All school principals have physical development programs in the form of educational facilities and infrastructure, such as classrooms, new school types of equipment or renovation of old buildings. Financial support was obtained from the parent association and the Government/ Office of Education. The result is that educational facilities become more complete and better so that the school accreditation can be upgraded.

The second group that benefits from the principal's policies is the board of teachers or teaching staff. With a reason to develop students' academic achievements, interests, and talents, the principal designs various activities for students overall and for students of a certain grade. Through the provision of various co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, teachers can obtain additional income from accompanying and mentoring students.

In the third place are students. They benefit because they can carry out various activities, both to support academic abilities, and to develop individual interests and talents. Problems arise in students who come from low SES. Most of them are not interested in being involved in co-curricular activities held by schools to support the development of academic abilities. From this perspective, their involvement is only a minimum and only to fulfil the obligations given by the teacher.

Not much is different from co-curricular activities, the participation of students from low SES in extra-curricular activities is more due to participation, rather than consideration of interests and talents. The reason that surfaced was that they did not know their interests and talents. As a result, their involvement in extra-curricular activities cannot be optimal. For those extra-curricular activities that low SES students are involved in, their motivation is to have fun, enjoy free time from learning activities in the tedious classroom.

The group in the last position is the parents of students. The only advantage for parents is that their children can be involved in various activities arranged by the school. But they suffered a financial loss. Although the government has budgeted the operational costs of school education processes, the reality shows that various activities and work programs of public schools are still ask for parents to contribute. Therefore, from a financial viewpoint, the parents suffered losses, because they have to pay the operational costs of education.

The involvement of parents in funding education programs is one of the questions raised by the principal in the second phase of the FGD. The opinions raised in the discussion was the lack of funding from the government to pay the expenses of the school's programs. In other words, there are too many work programs in schools when compared to the funds provided by the government. Meanwhile, the principals wanted all programs that he has designed to be implemented.

Another opinion that emerges is that parents incur expenses for their child's education as fairness. The cost of education is understood as a parent's investment for their child's future. That opinion is based on the assumption that education is the responsibility of parents. When confronted with the view that children's education in Indonesia is the responsibility of the state, principals show disapproval. Some of them point out the fact that parents pay for children's education fees from playgroups to post-graduate studies. Through developing discussions, an understanding was gained that for state schools and colleges, most of the education funding components were borne by the state.

The discussion was then developed based on the position of students as the third beneficiary, under the school and teacher. The question is whether it is fair in terms of the objectives of

education? The problem cannot develop into the discussion, because the school principals, in turn, reveal that their policies are unfair. They realize that students should benefit the most from all the policies implemented by the educational institutions they lead.

The final problem raised at the second stage of the FGD was the principal's policy on activities for students, both co-curricular and extra-curricular. Is their policy fair for all students? All school principals viewed their policies are fair and never discriminatory. They do not feel that they privileged a group of students and ignored another. At their school, all students are treated equally, regardless of their parents' origin, race, ethnicity, religion or socioeconomic status. It is recognized that students who are Protestant, Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian are grouped in one class because there are only a few in number. This step was taken not to discriminate them, but with consideration for their religious studies, which could be carried out together without disturbing and being disturbed by other lessons.

The discussion heats up and opinions become diverse when the understanding of justice as an equal treatment confronts the reality of the diversity of students' prior abilities. Provision of learning with a moderate level of difficulty will be able to be followed well by students who have prior knowledge in middle to upper level. However, students who have low prior ability will find it difficult. The question is whether learning is fair, especially for students with low prior knowledge? The principals' views can be grouped into three. First, there are those who viewed the learning process in their school as the fairest possible. The reason is that the Department of Education and Culture requires schools to develop high order thinking skills. Accordingly, the school is also wanted to keep the quality high.

The second group also considered that learning was the fairest. The difference between the first group lies in the reasons stated. For them, if the level of difficulty is lowered, learning comes at the expense of students with high academic ability because they do not make meaningful progress. Meanwhile, it is a fact that the students with high ability have raised the good name of the school with their incredible achievements. If the level of difficulty is reduced, their high achievements are lost and no longer elevate the school.

The third group views learning with medium to high difficulty as not fair for students with low prior ability. They will not be able to follow the learning well and obtain new knowledge/skills optimally. However, from the experience of principals when becoming teachers and stories heard from teachers, low-ability students have complex problems, namely low learning enthusiasm and a learning system at home that does not support academic achievement. Therefore, they feel it is unfair if the school is fully responsible for fixing children's learning systems at home.

The problems discussed in the FGD then developed into how to help students with low prior abilities, so that they can follow the learning well? Among the ideas emerged, the most is establishing learning groups whose members are heterogeneous, from students of high, medium and low academic ability. Thus, there is mutual learning between peers. The principals agreed that the establishment of learning groups became a recommendation and would be applied in all schools.

From the two stages of FGD that have been carried out, there are at least two points that are important to drive school management towards more equitable education. First is the injustice in the educational management that has occurred so far, both in terms of program aspects and budget allocation, as well as in learning. This awareness is important to foster concern for students, especially those with low prior abilities.

Various studies show that, in general, students' abilities have a linear correlation with their parents' SES. In language learning, the condition of parents' SES has a significant influence on both foreign and national language mastery (Butler & Le, 2018; Sanjurjo, Blanco, & Costales, 2018). The same pattern also occurs in students' abilities in reading. The difference in SES level has a strong influence on students' reading achievement (Jehangir, Glas, & Berg, 2015). Barr's study also found that SES's high ability to prevent children from serious illness and improve math achievement (Barr, 2015). Not only in classical lessons, but SES also influences self-development through extra lessons. Research conducted by Zhou and Wang on students in Shanghai, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao found that high-SES students were more likely to receive extra lessons and also invested more time each week in such lessons (Zhou & Wang, 2015).

The attempt to give more attention to students from low SES manifested in the enthusiasm of the principal to develop study groups in their schools. The idea of developing study groups that emerged in the FGD can gradually be developed as a solution for low SES students' academic problems. Studies on methods to help students from disadvantaged families have been carried out by many experts. One way is to utilize the Community Service and Service-Learning programs from various tertiary institutions. Studies of schools from poor areas, both in cities and rural areas, show that the presence of the Community Service Program arranged by higher education institutions has significant positive effects on increasing student academic achievement (Scales, Roehlkepartain, Neal, Kielsmeier, & Benson, 2006). From this perspective, the Community Service Program becomes an alternative solution to develop the learning system of low-SES students at home, so that they can participate better in the learning process at school and achieve higher academic achievement.

Efforts in helping low-SES students not only involve improving the learning system at home but also those at school. In learning math, Lubienski suggests, in applying problem-solving

methods, the note that "teachers need to take extra care to ensure that their students, especially low-SES students, learn what is intended from such problems" (Lubienski, 2007; Lubienski & Stilwell, 2003). In Indonesia, the last ten years also developed realistic math learning methods that are considered capable of directing students to meaningful learning (Marpaung, 2011). The efforts to develop learning occurred also in other subjects. Judging from the diverse conditions of students, both SES and ethnicity, the jigsaw learning technique developed by Elliot Aronson to overcome inter-ethnic tensions in Austin, Texas (Aronson, 2002), became one of the solutions that could be considered for low-SES students.

Another important issue is maintaining the commitment to develop equity-based management to be sustainable. From this viewpoint, the development of equity-based classroom management skills to become a course in higher education for prospective teachers in Indonesia is an urgent need. The target is to instil commitment and skills to the prospective teacher so they can assist students from disadvantaged families and be able to find solutions to various problems faced by their students (Assaf, Garza, & Battle, 2010). There are at least three aspects that need to be considered in a university course to prepare prospective teachers for diverse classes: professional preparation, the content of courses in teacher education programs, and instructors who conduct teacher education programs (Alismail, 2016).

Conclusion

The analysis shows that the establishment of equity-based education in Indonesia still needs considerable time. The breakthrough initiated by the Department of Education and Culture through the implementation of the zoning system in the admission of new students was not followed by the training of the principal to respond to the changes that result. As a result, they are unable to respond adequately to the diversity of the prior abilities of students. Their policy as education managers is more to meet the demands of the County and Provincial Office of Education. This situation requires quick and appropriate action so that the quality of Indonesian education does not decline.

One step that must be taken is to train principals and teachers to conduct programs that can develop the learning capabilities of Low SES students, both at school and at home. In schools, principals must encourage teachers to innovate learning that can increase motivation, participation and learning outcomes of Low SES students. Also, through the co-curricular program, principals need to conduct mentoring programs for them to have a good learning system and a disciplined attitude. To improve learning skills at home, FGD recommendations to form study groups need to be realized immediately. Also, school principals need to collaborate with universities to hold Community Service Programs in areas where students live in the low SES category.

To ensure the establishment of equity-based education, an equally important aspect is periodic assessment and evaluation. From this perspective, the Office of Education at the provincial and district levels needs to be developed to become a trusted school quality assurance agency.

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