A STUDY OF INFLUENTIAL GROUPS IN SOUTH TAPANULI'S ISLAMIC EDUCATION POLICY PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the intricate dynamics that shape education policy in South Tapanuli Regency, Indonesia, with a particular focus on the role of Islamic perspectives and actors. The study aims to identify and analyze the key groups influencing education policy, their strategies, and their impact on specific policy areas, such as curriculum development, teacher training, and resource allocation.Through a comprehensive library-based research approach, this study examines primary data from scholarly journals, government documents, and electronic media. By analyzing the political, social, and cultural dynamics of the region, the research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing educational outcomes.The findings of this study are expected to contribute significantly to more informed and evidence-based education policy in South Tapanuli Regency. By understanding the complex interplay of actors and their motivations, policymakers, educators, and community members can collaborate effectively to improve educational quality, equity, and accessibility for all residents.This research offers valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing education in a region with a strong Islamic influence. It highlights the importance of considering diverse perspectives and engaging with various stakeholders to ensure that education policies are relevant, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of the community.

Keywords*: Islamic Education Policy, South Tapanuli Regency, Influential Groups, Political Dynamics, Education Policy Analysis.*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki dinamika rumit yang membentuk kebijakan pendidikan di Kabupaten Tapanuli Selatan, Indonesia, dengan fokus khusus pada peran perspektif dan aktor Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis kelompok-kelompok kunci yang mempengaruhi kebijakan pendidikan, strategi mereka, dan dampaknya terhadap bidang-bidang kebijakan tertentu, seperti pengembangan kurikulum, pelatihan guru, dan alokasi sumber daya. Melalui pendekatan penelitian berbasis kepustakaan yang komprehensif, penelitian ini mengkaji data primer dari jurnal ilmiah, dokumen pemerintah, dan media elektronik. Dengan menganalisis dinamika politik, sosial, dan budaya di wilayah tersebut, penelitian ini berupaya memberikan pemahaman yang bernuansa tentang faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi hasil pendidikan. Temuan penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap kebijakan pendidikan yang lebih terinformasi dan berbasis bukti di Kabupaten Tapanuli Selatan. Dengan memahami interaksi yang kompleks antara para pelaku dan motivasi mereka, pembuat kebijakan, pendidik, dan anggota masyarakat dapat berkolaborasi secara efektif untuk meningkatkan kualitas, kesetaraan, dan aksesibilitas pendidikan untuk semua penduduk Penelitian ini menawarkan wawasan berharga tentang tantangan dan peluang yang dihadapi pendidikan di wilayah dengan pengaruh Islam yang kuat. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya mempertimbangkan perspektif yang beragam dan melibatkan berbagai pemangku kepentingan untuk memastikan bahwa kebijakan pendidikan relevan, inklusif, dan responsif terhadap kebutuhan masyarakat.

Kata kunci*: Kebijakan Pendidikan Islam, Kabupaten Tapanuli Selatan, Kelompok Berpengaruh, Dinamika Politik, Analisis Kebijakan Pendidikan*

A. INTRODUCTION

Education is the cornerstone of national development, and its quality significantly impacts the growth and progress of a nation. In Indonesia, education policies aim to address the diverse needs of its population. South Tapanuli, a region rich in cultural and religious heritage, places great emphasis on Islamic education.[1]. This paper explores the influential groups that play a pivotal role in shaping the Islamic education policy process in South Tapanuli.

The significance of this study lies in understanding how these groups impact policy-making, which in turn affects the region's educational landscape. By examining the dynamics and interactions of these influential groups, we gain insights into the strategies and decisions that guide Islamic education in the area.

The key research question driving this study is: How do influential groups shape the Islamic education policy process in South Tapanuli? Addressing this question involves analyzing the roles and contributions of various stakeholders, including religious leaders, educational institutions, and government officials. Their collective efforts shape policies that strive to balance traditional Islamic teachings with modern educational requirements.

Informed by Anderson's policy-making theories[2]—rational-comprehensive, incremental, and mixed scanning—the study delves into the processes and frameworks that underpin policy development. Through this

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[1]Najdah Thalib dan Umiyati Haris, Implementasi Kebijakan Pendidikan di Kabupaten Merauke (Analisis Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional), dalam *Jurnal Administrasi Karya Dharma,* Vol. 2, No. 1, 2023, h. 76.

[2] J E Anderson, *Public Policymaking: An Introduction* (Houghton Mifflin, 2003), https://books.google.co.id/books?id=jEQvAAAAYAAJ.

lens, the research aims to elucidate the complexities and nuances of policy-making in the context of South Tapanuli's Islamic education system.

There are several previous studies that form the basis for this paper, including research conducted by R Sinaga and F Tanjung.[3] In addition, D Putra, et al.[4] also conducted a similar study. The difference can be seen from the two studies above that this research is more directed at Understanding the role of these groups is essential, as they contribute to the development and implementation of policies that aim to balance traditional Islamic teachings with modern educational demands. While Dasopang et al's research[5] is more directed at the process of educational transformation in Tapanulihe

This investigation not only highlights the importance of collaborative efforts in policy-making but also underscores the need for policies that resonate with the local community's cultural and religious values. By understanding these dynamics, policymakers can create more effective and sustainable education policies that benefit the community as a whole.

In fact, in general, political science experts categorize these types of policies into substantive categories (e.g., education, labor, social welfare, civil rights), institutional categories (e.g., legislative, judicial, departmental), and policy categories according to a certain period of time (e.g., policies during the Reformasi, New Order, and Old Order). Diversity of the policy environment such as diversity of social, political, economic

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[3] Rosmaida Sinaga, Flores Tanjung, and Yuri Nasution, "Local Wisdom and National Integration in Indonesia: A Case Study of Inter-Religious Harmony amid Social and Political Upheaval in Bunga Bondar, South Tapanuli," *Journal of Maritime Studies and National Integration* 3, no. 1 (2019): 30–35.

[4] Dedisyah Putra et al., "Character Transformation of Naposo Nauli Bulung in Religious Practice in South Tapanuli Regency," *TSAQAFAH* 19, no. 2 (2023): 353–78.

[5] Muhammad Darwis Dasopang et al., "Transformative Islamic Education at Islamic Boarding School in South Tapanuli," *Jurnal Pendidikan* 15, no. 3 (2023): 3768–75, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i3.3531.

and cultural aspects; geographical environment and demographic environment; and other diversity that has variables relevant to the context of the diversity of the policy environment.

However, what needs to be noted and paid attention to for policymakers is that all stages are a series of processes that are mutually sustainable, one stage is interrelated with the other and cannot be separated. Considering the importance of the discussion, in this article the author raises the topic of "Implementation of Education Policy".

In simple terms, education policy can be interpreted as a series of concepts and principles that become guidelines and the basis of plans in the implementation of education, it's just that the education policy process is sometimes influenced by several groups, either in the education policy process in the stage of education policy formulation, the implementation of education policies or the evaluation of education policies. Therefore, in this paper, the most influential groups in the education policy process in South Tapanuli Regency will be described.

B. METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative approach, primarily relying on library-based research to gather data. The data sources for this study can be categorized into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources, such as government documents, policy papers, and educational reports, offer firsthand information on the subject matter. Secondary sources, including scholarly articles, books, and media reports, provide additional perspectives and contextual understanding.

Data collection methods are tailored to the specific data sources. For written data, a documentary analysis approach is employed, involving the

systematic examination and interpretation of documents using a coding framework. Content analysis is used to identify key themes, patterns, and contradictions within the collected materials. To enhance the depth and breadth of the analysis, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders may also be considered. Thematic analysis is used to identify and analyze recurring themes in the interview data.

Triangulation is used to ensure the validity and reliability of the research by combining data from different sources. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent and confidentiality, are strictly adhered to throughout the research process. By incorporating these additional details, the methodology becomes more comprehensive and provides a clearer understanding of how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted..

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. A. The Nature of Education Policy

SISDIKNAS Law No. 20 of 2003 Chapter I Article I explains, education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state.

Margaret E. Goertz stated that education policy is related to the efficiency and effectiveness of the education budget. This issue has become important with increasing public criticism of the cost of education. Education policy is a policy aimed at achieving the country's development goals in the field of education, as one of the overall development goals.[6]

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[6] As'ad As'ad and Firmansyah Firmansyah, "A New Paradigm on Human Resources Management in State Islamic University," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 14, no. 1 (2022): 71–84, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i1.1513.

Mark Olsen also explained that education policy is the key to excellence, even existence for countries in global competition, so education policy needs to get the top priority in the era of globalization. One of the main arguments is that globalization carries democratic values. Democracy that gives results is democracy supported by education.[7]

Riant Nugroho[8] said that education policy is a public policy in the field of education. Educational policy is concerned with the set of laws or rules that govern the implementation of the education system, which includes the goals of education and how to achieve those goals. Education policy must be in line with public policy. In the context of public policy in general, namely development policy, education policy is part of public policy. Education policy is understood as a policy in the field of education, to achieve the goal of nation development in the field of education, as one of the goals of the nation as a whole.

Based on the description above, simply define education policy is what is said (decided) and done by the government in the field of education. These policies can be in the form of government decisions or actions related to education investment choices, which contribute to students as a whole and to society as a whole. And the goals of education policy must be in line with the national education goals that have been set, so that these goals can be achieved effectively and efficiently, and can change the behavior of the population, institutions, and sub-sub-government for the better.

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[7] Fathul Anwar Sugeng Edy Saputra, "Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar Dan Implikasi Pada Pendidikan Agama Islam Sebuah Analisis," *Jurnal Ar-Rahmah* 2, no. 1 (2022): 37–50; Winda Fionita et al., "Monitoring Dan Evaluasi Kebijakan Pendidikan," *JIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 7, no. 6 (2024), https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v7i6.4535.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

2. The Most Influential Groups in the Education Policy Process in South Tapanuli Regency

Before the author explains about the most influential groups in the education policy process in South Tapanuli Regency, the author will briefly describe the profile of South Tapanuli Regency which is the subject of this paper.

The South Tapanuli Regency is located at the line 0o 58'35" – 2 o 07'33" North Latitude and 98o 42'50" – 99o 34'16" East Longitude. The area of South Tapanuli Regency is 4,335.35 Km2. While the altitude ranges from 0 – 1,985 m above sea level. South Tapanuli Regency has 14 sub-districts, of which Saipar Dolok Hole District is the largest sub-district with an area of 54,057.7 hectares and Marancar District is the smallest sub-district with an area of only 8,911.4 hectares. According to the level of education in South Tapanuli Regency, the Pure Participation Rate (APM) for the elementary education level is 99.06% and the Gross Participation Rate (APK) is 113.53%. For the junior high school level, the Pure Participation Rate (APM) is 78.10% and for the Gross Participation Rate (APK) is 90.76%. Meanwhile, for the high school/vocational school level, it is 64.02% for the Pure Participation Rate (APM) and 82.92% for the Gross Participation Rate (APK). For universities, the Pure Participation Rate (APM) is 16.31% and the Gross Participation Rate (APK) is 22.24%.[9]

To enhance the education sector, the South Tapanuli Regency government continuously formulates and implements various policies, including improving physical educational facilities and increasing the number of civil servant and honorary teachers. These efforts aim to boost

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[9]https://northsumatrainvest.id/data/pdf/publication/BAB%203%20D%20TAPSEL%20pg%2074-104%20(FINAL).pdf

school participation rates and the overall quality of education at every level.[10]

According to Putt and Springer in Syafaruddin, there are three key policy processes:Policy Formulation: Developing policy options and strategies.Policy Implementation: Executing the chosen policies.Evaluation: Assessing the effectiveness and impact of the policies. The author will describe the three processes in detail, namely:[11]

a. Policy formulation

The first stage in the education policy process begins with policy formulation. Formulation means formulation, while policy means a series of concepts and principles that become the outline and basis of the plan in the implementation of a job, leadership, and ways of acting (about government, organization, and so on), a statement of ideals, goals, principles, or intentions as a guideline for management in an effort to achieve goals.[12]

Formulation or policy-making in government includes political activities. In this context, political activity is described as visualized policymaking. The political activity contains a series of stages that are interdependent and arranged in chronological order, agenda preparation, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation and policy assessment. The policy formulation contains several important contents that are used as guidelines for actions according to the plan which include the

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[10] Tri Wahyudi Ramdhan, "MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT MODEL," *Al-Insyiroh: Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2019), https://doi.org/10.35309/alinsyiroh.v5i2.3516.

[11]Syafarudin Alwi, *Analytical Tools in Learning* (Yogyakarta: Andi Offset Publisher, 1989, p. 81.

[12]Abdul Rahman BP et al, Educational Policy Formulation, in *Jurnal Pilar: Journal of Contemporary Islamic Studies,* Vol. 13 , No. 1, 2022, p. 47.

interests affected by the policy, the types and benefits produced, the implementation of the program and the resources deployed.[13]

In the formulation of education policy formulation, of course, it is not determined just like that, but considers many factors and several conditions that must be adjusted to the climate of a nation's society. With the hope that the formulation has been prepared in such a way that it can really contribute to producing a superior generation of the nation and able to compete globally. The factors that affect the formulation of education policy are as follows:[14]

1) There is an influence of external pressures. Although there is a policy formulation approach with the name "*rationale comprehensive*" which means that administrators as decision-makers must consider alternatives to be chosen based on rational assessment alone, the process and policy formulation cannot be separated from the real world, so that external pressure also affects the policy formulation process.

2) There is an influence of old habits. Old organizational habits such as the habit of investing capital, resources and time for the activities of a particular program tend to always be followed, even though these decisions have been criticized as wrong and need to be changed, especially if an existing policy is seen as satisfactory.

3) There is an influence of personal traits. Various kinds of decisions made by decision-makers are greatly influenced by their personal characteristics, such as in the process of accepting or appointing new employees, often the personal characteristics of the decision-maker play a big role.

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[13]Syafaruddin, The *Effectiveness of Education Policy* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2008), p. 81.

[14]BP dkk, Formulasi, h. 48-49.

4) There is an influence from outside groups. The social environment of decision-makers is also very influential, and often decision-making is carried out by considering the experiences of others who were previously outside the policy formulation process.

5) There is an influence of past circumstances. Previous training experience and work experience affect decision-making or even people who work at the head office often make decisions that are not in accordance with the situation in the field, this is due to concerns that the delegation of authority and responsibility to others will be abused.

The parties involved in the formulation of education policy formulations are people who will provide support and demands and become the target of policies produced by the policy system. The most dominant group in the policy formulation stage with internal demands, in the sense that they have the power or authority to determine the content and give legitimacy to the policy formulation, is called policy *makers*. Meanwhile, groups that have qualifications or other characteristics with external demands, are known as interest groups, political parties, professional elite leaders and others. The groups involved in the education policy formulation process are divided into:[15]

1) Making. The legislature is often meant to be a lawmaker and policymaker. Their role is very decisive, because the ratification of a regulation to become a policy such as laws, government regulations, and regional regulations is in their hands. The legislature is referred to as the main actor in formulating/ratifying policies, the legislators are at the level of the MPR, DPD, DPR, DPRD I, and DPRD II.

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[15]BP dkk, Formulasi, h. 50-52.

2) Executive. The executives here are the implementers of the law as well as play a role in formulating policies so that policies made or formulated by the legislature can be implemented in accordance with conditional and situational factors. The executive usually reformulates policies made by the legislature in the form of a policy statement. The executive has the power to implement or not implement policies made by the legislature and to reformulate or not formulate for certain reasons. Executive actors here include the President, Ministers, Governors, Regents, Mayors, and Heads of Agencies. Meanwhile, executive actors in the field of education are the Minister of Education, Minister of Religion, Director General, Head of Service, and Rector.

3) Administrator. Administrators as policy formulators and implementers play an important role in achieving the State's goals that will be implemented in every real program that will be felt by the community, with the main goal of a prosperous society.

4) Political Parties (Parpol). A political party is a group of people who are organized and seek to control the government in order to carry out its programs and place its members in the ranks of the government. In Indonesia, the role of political parties is so large that almost all policy aspects, including in the field of education, will involve political parties. The role of political parties here is to place their members in the legislature and state and regional leaders.

5) Interest Group. An interest group is a group consisting of people who have the same interests, such as labor groups, fishermen, farmers, teachers, and other professional groups. This group seeks to influence formal policy makers so that the interests of their group can be

accommodated in the policies formulated. This group usually has specific, narrow, and specific demands.

6) Community Organizations (CSOs). CSOs are a group of people who have the same ideals and desires, are non-political in nature even though in their work they often come into contact with political interests. CSOs can stand alone (independent) or be affiliated with certain political organizations. In the formulation of education policies, CSOs have hopes and aspirations that are then conveyed to formal policy makers. In Indonesia, there are several mass organizations that have a great influence on the formulation of education policies by the government such as NU, Muhammadiyah, ICMI, HMI, PMII, and KAHMI.

7) College. Higher education is an institution where the academic elite is located, universities are often used as the spearhead in fighting for the aspirations of the community that will be included in policy formulations. The role of higher education is very important because this is where the values of idealism are still maintained, and in pursuing various policies will not be separated from intellectual content. Good policy formulation should contain academic texts that are discussed with academics in universities.

8) Individual figures. In various constellations, individual figures play a vital and sometimes decisive role, he can also be a central figure. Individual figures can come from various fields such as religion, politics, economics, education, culture, art, and so on.

Based on the description above, the policy formulation process is a political process that takes place in the stages of political policy-making, where this political activity is described as a policy-making process, and

visualized as a series of stages that are interdependent with each other, arranged in chronological order.

The most influential group in the education policy process in the education policy formulation stage in South Tapanuli Regency from the government is based on the theory presented by BP about the groups involved in the education policy formulation process, the main one is the Legislature, namely DPRD II South Tapanuli Regency.

DPRD II of South Tapanuli Regency is the most influential group in the formulation of education policies because the rights owned by DPRD II of South Tapanuli Regency are, among others,

1) The right to interpellation, namely the right to ask the regent or mayor for information about the policies of the district or city government that are important and strategic and have a wide impact on the life of society and the state.

2) The right of inquiry is the right to conduct an investigation into the most important and strategic district or city government policies and have a wide impact on the lives of the community, regions, and the state that are suspected of being contrary to the provisions of laws and regulations.

3) The right to express opinions, namely the right to express opinions on the policies of the regent or mayor regarding extraordinary events that occur in the region accompanied by recommendations for their resolution or as a follow-up to the implementation of the right of interpellation and the right of inquiry.[16]

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[16]https://www.kompas.com/skola/read/2020/02/13/120000869/perbedaan-dprd-provinsi-dan-dprd-kabupaten-kota

The most influential groups in the education policy process in the formulation stage of education policy in South Tapanuli Regency from non-governmental parties are NU and MUI, as an example of the contribution from NU and MUI is the proposal of the ORMAS about fighting for the rights of teaching staff in order to improve the quality of education, so that the South Tapanuli Regent Regulation Number 21 of 2O2O was issued, Chapter II about the allowance for the addition of school honorary income Article 2 explains that the allowance for the addition of honorary income.

The Regulation of the Regent of South Tapanuli issued based on Number 21 of 2O2O, Chapter II concerning the allowance for the addition of school honorarium income Article 2 explains that the allowance for the addition of school honorarium income referred to in Article 1 is Rp. 150,000,- (one hundred and fifty rupiah) per month. And Article 3 concerning the allowance for the addition of school honorarium income is given to teachers and education personnel who serve in the school, so in this case the DPRD II of South Tapanuli Regency has the right to interpellate the Regent or submit a questionnaire, even expressing an opinion regarding the policy of the South Tapanuli Regent.

Meanwhile, the most influential group in the education policy process at the stage of education policy formulation is the executive played by the Regent, Mayor, and Head of Service, Minister of Education, Minister of Religion, Director General, Head of Service, and Rector if any, because this executive group plays a role in reformulating policies made by the legislature in the form of a policy statement. The executive has the power to implement or not implement policies made by the legislature as well as to reformulate or not to formulate for certain reasons.

b.   **Policy Implementation**

The second stage in the education policy process, according to Syafaruddin, is policy implementation, which in principle is a way that is implemented so that a policy can achieve its goals. And Putt and Springer also explained that policy implementation is a series of activities and decisions that facilitate policy statements in formulation to be realized into organizational practice. [17]

Wibawa[18] said that policy implementation is a form of embodiment of decisions regarding fundamental policies. It is usually contained in a law. However, it can also be in the form of important instructions or legislative decisions. Ideally, these decisions explain the problems to be addressed, define the goals to be achieved and in various ways "describe" the structure of the implementation process.

Policy implementation is a dynamic process, where policy implementers carry out an activity or activity so that in the end they will get a result that is in accordance with the goals or objectives of the policy itself. The implementation of public policies occurs because of government actions in overcoming problems that arise in society so that these decisions are born. This policy is seen as a policy formulation process that is implemented, implemented and evaluated through stages.[19]

The long step of a policy process boils down to the implementation of the policy itself. In fact, the policy implementation process is the most important final determinant of the overall policy making, including in the

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[17]Syafaruddin, *Effectiveness,* p. 86.

[18]S. Wibawa, *Public Policy: Process and Analysis (*Jakarta: Intermedia, 1994), p. 77.

[19] Gabriele Lakomski and Colin W. Evers, "Theories of Educational Leadership," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.603; Sri Rahayu, Abd Hamid Wahid, and Maulidatun Nafizatuz Zahro, "Independent Learning Curriculum Policies and Challenges in Building Children's Character," *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2023), https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v7i2.5464.

field of education. This means that no matter how good the formulation and policy formulation produced, it becomes meaningless if the formulation is not continued with the implementation process. Therefore, no matter how simple it is not to say that the formulation and formulation of policies are bad or bad, if implemented, it will have a beneficial value.[20]

The process of implementing education policies is not an easy problem, especially in achieving common goals. If it is difficult to make a good and fair policy, then it is even more difficult to implement it in a way that satisfies everyone, including those who are considered clients. Another problem is the difficulty in meeting the demands of various groups which can lead to conflicts that encourage the development of political thought as a conflict.[21] Brian W. Hogwood and Lewis A. Gunn are the originators of the theory of policy implementation with *the top down approach.* Based on the description above, implementation is the most important factor of a policy carried out, especially education policy, because it is a process that is related to the behavior of the administrative body as the person in charge of implementing the program and causing obedience to the target group. The purpose of the implementation of education policy is to set the direction of the goals of education policy can be realized. The most influential groups in the education policy process in the implementation stage of education policy in South Tapanuli Regency based on the explanation of the theory above, one of them is the holder of power in the educational institution itself, such as the principal. [22]

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[20]Elih Yuliah, The *Implementation of Educational Policies,* in *Journal at-Tadbir: Media Law and Education*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2020, p. 130.

[21] Syamsu Nahar Muhammad Syahripin, Candra Wijaya, "Principal Planning Management in Increasing Teacher Work Productivity," *International Journal of Islamic Education, Research and Multiculturalism (IJIERM)* 3, no. 3 (2021): 184–87.

[22] Tri Wahyudi Ramdhan, Saifuddin Saifuddin, and Bustomi Arisandi, "Religious Moderation Education Through the Study of Tafsir of Moderate Verses at the Jombang

A simple example is the policy on independent learning, the education policy on government regulations to implement the independent curriculum, so the principal can choose two options in its implementation, namely the school is still using the 2013 curriculum, by applying several principles of the Independent Curriculum or implementing the full Implementation of the Independent Curriculum, meaning implementing graduate competency standards (SKL), content standards (SI), learning outcomes (CP) according to Independent Curriculum. So in this case, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) South Tapanuli chose to implement an independent curriculum in its teaching,[23] while MTs.S Superior Integrated Darul Mursyid South Tapanuli, the head of the madrasah still chose to use the 13 or K13 curriculum.[24]

c. Evaluation

The third stage in the education policy process is evaluation. Literally evaluation comes from the United Kingdom, *evaluation* which means assessment and evaluation. In Arabic, the term *imtihan* is found which means exam and khataman which is a way of assessing the final result of the activity process. Meanwhile, in terminology, there are several opinions, but they are basically the same, only different in their redactions, as according to Oemar Hamalik evaluation is a process of assessing the progress, growth, and development of students for educational purposes. According to Abudin Nata, evaluation is a process of comparing existing

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Porch Learning House," *Dharma: Journal of Community Service* 3, no. 2 (2023), https://doi.org/10.35309/dharma.v3i2.6666.

[23]https://mantapanuliselatan.sch.id/

[24]Husni Mubarok, Analisis Kurikulum Madrasah Tsanawiyah Dan Madrasah Aliyahpesantren Modern Unggulan Terpadu Darul Mursyid Sidapdap Simanosor Kecamatan Saipar Dolok Hole Kabupaten Tapanuli Selatan, dalam *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Pendidikan Indonesia*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2023, h. 309

situations with certain criteria in order to obtain information and use it to compile assessments in order to make decisions.[25]

Education policy evaluation can also be interpreted as a series of actions or processes to determine values related to education policy. In other words, the evaluation will be known the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, performance, or productivity of an institution in implementing the policy as well as to improve it, so the importance of the implementation of evaluation activities is to review whether a program in an education policy has been implemented effectively in accordance with the plan and achieve the expected results, so that based on the results of the evaluation activities will be known things that have been achieved and whether a policy can meet the criteria that have been determined.[26]

According to Dunn[27], policy evaluation can be equated with appraisal, *ratting, and assessment*. Thus, evaluation is related to the production of information regarding the value or benefits of policy results. Policy evaluation provides true and reliable information about policy performance, i.e. how far needs, values, and opportunities have been achieved through public action. Here the evaluation contributes to the clarification and criticism of the values underlying the selection of goals and targets.

Based on the description above, one of the urgency of the evaluation is to ensure that the implementation of the policy runs according to the plan, and the evaluation to find out the obstacles and obstacles faced and to find out the results or impacts caused by the policy as the basis for the

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[25]Naila Nur 'Azizah et al, Evaluation of Education Policy, in *TA'LIM: Journal of Islamic Religious Education and Islamic Education Management*, Vol. 2, No 2, 2023, p. 48.

[26]Azizah et al., Evaluation, p. 49.

[27]Syafaruddin, *Effectiveness*, p. 89.

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formulation of new policies,[28] Because policy valuation is essentially carried out as a process to find out the extent of policy effectiveness in order to be accountable to all stakeholders. In other words, the extent to which the policy objectives have been achieved. On the other hand, evaluation is used to determine the gap between expectations or goals and the reality achieved after the implementation of education policies.

An evaluation in education policy is not just about collecting facts about something, but showing that something has value when compared to the criteria or references that become guidelines.[29] Therefore, the actors or groups involved in the evaluation of the education policy process are as follows:

First, the official actor or group. Official actors or groups are policymakers (legislative), policy implementers (executives) and administrators from the national to local levels. The involvement of makers and implementers in the evaluation of these policies depends on the nature of the relationship between policy makers and implementers. In a technocratic relationship, the authority of policymakers is very large and even almost absolute, the evaluation carried out by the makers must be accepted by the implementers. In contrast to bureaucratic private relationships, the involvement of policymakers is very small, because most of this evaluation authority lies with the implementer. In fact, the right to control the implementation of this policy is very much determined by the implementer. The involvement of administrators in policy evaluation, generally based on the authority granted by the policy implementer. Accountability for the results of policy evaluations formally and legally is

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[28]Jumira Warlizasusi and Sumarto, *Analysis of Islamic Education Policy* (Bengkulu: Literacy, 2022), p. 2.

[29]Sumarto, *Analysis*, h. 41.

in the hands of the implementer even though it is materially in the hands of administrators.

Second, actors or non-official (informal) actors. The non-formal actors included in the policy evaluation are: political parties, mass organizations, interest groups, intermediary groups, policy implementation partners, individual figures, and mass media. Meanwhile, the involvement of informal policy actors is generally outside the arena. Because, if they intend to provide a formal assessment through the ring, it must be through formal policy actors. The mass media is often a mediator in the assessments carried out by these informal policy participants. Thus, the results of the research finally reach the implementer, either slowly or quickly.

In the assessment process, it is not uncommon for formal and informal actors to work together or form a forum. The forum was deliberately formed and created in order to provide a comprehensive assessment of the policy. With the forum, assessment results will be obtained from many variants of views, so that more comprehensive assessment results will be obtained.

Based on the above explanation, the most influential groups in the education policy process in the education policy evaluation stage in South Tapanuli Regency are official groups such as policy makers (legislative), policy implementation (executive) and administrators from the district level and non-official (informal) groups, such as political parties, mass organizations, interest groups, intermediary groups, policy implementation partners, individual figures, and mass media and others.

One example is the evaluation conducted by the National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasah (BAN-S/M) which carried out an assessment at MAN Tapanuli Selatan for two days, namely October 10-11, 2023. BAN-S/M is an independent evaluation body that determines the

feasibility of programs and educational units at the primary and secondary education levels in the formal pathway by referring to the National Education Standards, as stated in Article 1 paragraph (2) of Permendikbud Number 59. One of the results obtained from this activity will be the determination of Accreditation of Schools/Madrasah by referring to several indicators in accordance with the National Education Standards and receiving A accreditation.[30]

E. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The essence of education policy is what is said (decided) and done by the government in the field of education. These policies can be in the form of government decisions or actions related to education investment choices, which contribute to students as a whole and to society as a whole.

The most influential group in the education policy process in South Tapanuli Regency as the education policy process is divided into three: formulation, implementation and evaluation, so the most influential group at the formulation stage is the DPRD II of South Tapanuli Regency and the executive group played by the Regent, Mayor, and Head of Service, Minister of Education, Minister of Religion, Director General, Head of Service, and Rector, while in the implementation process are the holders of power in the institution education itself, like the principal. And at the evaluation stage are official groups such as policy makers (legislative), policy implementation (executive) and administrators from the district level and non-official (informal) groups, such as political parties, mass

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[30]https://mantapanuliselatan.sch.id/2023/10/14/ban-sm-laksanakan-asesmen-di-man-tapanuli-selatan/

organizations, interest groups, intermediary groups, policy implementation

partners, individual figures, and mass media and others

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