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## Analysis of the implementation of education democracy in Indonesia (regulations, models, problems, and future prospects)

Sembodo Ardi Widodo 

Department of Islamic Education, Faculty of Education, State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Indonesia  
sembodoaw@yahoo.co.id

The study reported on here was intended to reveal the existence and direction of education democracy in Indonesia with regard to the regulations, the implementation models, problems, and future prospects. The data were obtained from various written materials of official government policy records, namely, laws, ministerial regulations, curriculum implementation guidebooks, discourses and policy criticisms on the implementation of education democracy in Indonesia published in mass media, articles and research journals. The data were analysed using philosophical-dialogical analysis. The findings indicate that in terms of practice, the regulations related to education democracy in the form of education autonomy still could not be implemented properly because of several constraints such as a lack of teachers' professionalism, poor and less effective management of education and learning systems which are not in line with the administrative prerequisites and principles and spirit of education autonomy. Moreover, through its policies, the government still controlled education nationally resulting in autonomy that should provide maximum freedom to the community to manage education is being eroded, which limits the autonomy of education.

**Keywords:** democracy; education; education democracy; implementation; model; problem; prospect; regulation

### Introduction

Democracy is not a theoretical construct, but rather a result of interaction, namely, the way the system and its institutions interact with the cultural setting and the individuals who actually participate in the interaction. Institutions and practices are embedded in culture, therefore, schools that carry out educational practices cannot be separated from the problems of democracy (Feu, Serra, Canimas, Lázaro & Simó-Gil, 2017). Democracy and education are two entities of which the use is often combined in concept and practice and their existence is associated with social and political problems and how democracy manifests itself – specifically in the context of education (Simpson & Dervin, 2017). The linkage of educational democracy with social, political, and educational practices in this field often creates complex problems that need more in-depth study.

All progressive education systems in the world adhere to democracy as a tenet that represents several kinds of active engagement from all elements and components in the educational context such as learners, parents, teachers, staff, and society (Haraldstad, Tveit & Kovač, 2022). On the other hand, education democracy has fundamental principles, namely independence, freedom, and responsibility. The application of education must be based on these principles in order for learning to be independent and free and grow to be more so (Maksum, 2021). The principles of democracy must truly form the basis of practice in education and not always be understood as an abstract concept (Reşceanu, Tran & Magnússon, 2020). To maintain democratic principles in education, it is essential to inform citizens about the role of democracy within the educational system, as well as in general governance, through civic education programmes. A democratic society needs to rely on civic education and political commitment (Yoldas, 2015).

In Indonesia, education is still regarded to be influenced by political rules. Political influence in education is stated in mandatory rules or instructions that must be carried out by schools or teachers which, in practice, often cause difficulties or problems. Education practice in Indonesia is controlled by the government's political education policies. The centralisation of policy creates a dominant power in education (Khoiri & Zaini, 2021).

The implementation of education democracy by the government is carried out through government policies, laws and regulations in a democratic, national education system. However, democracy, which is perceived as the basic principle in the life of the state and society can only be achieved by effective and democratic education. The application of democratic fundamental values can only be achieved in educational institutions that combine democratic educational practices with a democratic and effective education administration system (Alshurman, 2015). In this context, a discrepancy often exists between government rules and policies in realising education democracy and the implementation thereof at lower levels at schools and universities. Herein lies the importance of research related to the implementation of education democracy which is viewed through the aspects of regulations, models, problems, and future prospects.

### Literature Review

Several existing studies related to education democracy have still not revealed the basic problems, especially those related to the model, field problems and future analysis. The application of education democracy in a country gives birth to a unique model which is much influenced by the political system and human resources. A study conducted by Alemán and Kim (2015) emphasises that increasing the education level of a country's

population positively influences the level or quality of democracy (Alemán & Kim, 2015). In addition, Davids (2018) shows that the professionalism and identity of teachers also contribute to realising democratic education and citizens through the learning process of education democracy in schools. The two studies have not touched on regulatory issues, models, basic problems and future directions. However, every country has its own model and problems regarding the implementation of education democracy, which applies to countries that adhere to a democratic system in their government, such as Indonesia.

Education democracy in Indonesia is mandated by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which emphasises that the government will create an education system that educates the people. Education that educates the people is education that involves its citizens as members of a democratic society. Such educational process is not a process of indoctrination, but makes people aware of their rights and gives the people the ability to jointly realise justice and mutual prosperity (Tilaar, 2012).

The democratic model of education in Indonesia cannot be compared to models in other countries. The study and theoretical review conducted by Sant (2019) states that there are eight models of education democracy, namely: elitist, liberal, neoliberal, deliberative, multiculturalist, participatory, critical, and agonistic. None of those education democracy models mentioned by Sant (2019) represent the democracy model implemented in Indonesia. The Indonesian government policy on education development is generally focused on two new paradigms, namely autonomy and democratisation models (Sihono, 2011). This autonomy model is confirmed in statute No. 32 of 2004 pertaining to regional autonomy in which education, along with other regional-based development sectors, is regarded as one of the sectors to be autotomised.

Several other studies (for example, Suratno, 2014) have been done on the concepts of autonomy and decentralisation in education, but most are descriptive in nature and do not show the analysis and evaluation of the implementation thereof. Suratno (2014) emphasises that since 2001, the central government has delegated management of education to the local level with the aim of strengthening equity in the quality of education (Suratno, 2014). Furthermore, Susetyo (2020) disclosed some problems of the implementation of education democracy, however he did not reveal shifts in the implementation model of democracy in Indonesia and he did not provide predictive analysis for the future. Research conducted by Yuliani (2020) was limited to educational autonomy in relation to competency-based curricula with no reference to in-depth regulatory

issues, models, problems, and future directions. In terms of practice, the autonomy or decentralisation of education (democratic model) causes many problems regarding the regulatory aspect, the division of authority between the centre, regions, and educational units, as well as operational techniques in determining the curriculum in each educational unit (Susetyo, 2020). The impact of these problems can lead to a new version or a new form of educational autonomy. The basic problem discussed here is what model of education should be implemented and how the realisation of education democracy in Indonesia should occur.

Education democracy in Indonesia may in practice be a limited form thereof, in the sense that certain policy areas in education are managed by the central government (through legislation) and creative freedom by educational units (through autonomy policies or decentralisation of education). In the implementation of education democracy, this creates a conflict of interest and a fairly serious problem between the central government and educational units. The central government still wants to control education nationally and educational units, that are mostly managed by the community, want to create education freely and creatively to develop the quality of their education. Herein lies the very basic problem that I investigated in this study – whether education democracy in Indonesia will change to a liberal form with full freedom for the community or return to being centralised with limited autonomy to the community.

### **Method and Data Analysis**

The main research methodology in this study was the literature review. Data were obtained from various written sources or official government policy documents such as laws, ministerial regulations, and curriculum implementation guidebooks. Data were also extracted from discourses and policy criticisms related to the implementation of education democracy in Indonesia published in the mass media, articles and research journals. I employed a philosophical-dialogical approach to examine the discrepancies between the theoretical ideals as stipulated in educational and democratic policies (the “rules”) and the actual practices observed in educational institutions (the “field”). In the analysis I specifically focused on identifying and interpreting the contrast between the idealised principles of education democracy outlined in national and international educational frameworks, and the real-world implementation observed in schools, colleges, and universities. To conduct this analysis, a various data sources were used, including policy documents, academic literature, case studies, and observational reports from educational settings.

The philosophical-dialogical approach involved a critical examination of these sources, engaging in a dialogue between the theoretical concepts and practical observations. The analysis was structured around key themes such as equity, participation, and quality in education, as these are articulated in the policies, and how these themes manifest in everyday educational settings. This method enabled a holistic understanding of the complexities and nuances in the application of democratic principles in education. It also facilitated the development of a model that aligns the ideals of education democracy with practical, field-based realities, offering predictions and recommendations for future implementations and research in this area.

## Discussion

### Regulation

The legal basis for implementing education in Indonesia is contained in Article 31, paragraph 3 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia concerning education and culture: "The government seeks and organises a national education system, which increases faith and piety as well as noble character in the context of the intellectual life of the nation, which is regulated by law" (Republic of Indonesia, 1945). This is the main source for the laws on the National Education System and other regulations. The following is stated in Article 32, paragraph 1: "The state advances Indonesian national culture in the midst of world civilization by guaranteeing the freedom of the people to maintain and develop their cultural values" (Republic of Indonesia, 1945). This article of the Constitution emphasises that there is a value of freedom guaranteed by the state as the reflection of democratic values in education.

The other basis for implementing education democracy in Indonesia is the decentralisation or autonomy of education, which began with the enactment of Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning regional government, in which the central government has given regional governments powers to help them innovate, create, and improvise in their attempts to promote regional development, including in the field of education (*Undang-Undang Republic Indonesia Nomor 32 Tahun 2004 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah*). The expansion of the authority of local governments after the implementation of autonomy demands a higher capacity from local governments to manage education. The Education Office of the regional government has sufficient capital and capacity to carry out these new tasks. Decentralisation in Indonesia also provides opportunities for local governments to be able to develop more effective institutional management, bureaucracy and staffing systems (Nurkholis, Zauhar, Muluk & Setyowati,

2020).

According to the Law of Regional Government, Article 7, paragraph 1, regional authority comprises power throughout all domains, with the exception of power over foreign policy, defence and security, judiciary, fiscal, and religion, as well as other special regulated authorities. In this study I analysed Government Rules Number 25 of 2000, focusing on its impact on Indonesia's education and culture sectors. This policy governs aspects such as curriculum development, learner competency standards, educational financing, and cultural heritage management. The analysis highlights how these rules shape Indonesia's educational system across various levels, including primary, secondary, and higher education (Republic of Indonesia, 2000).

Meanwhile, the provincial government's authority covers the following matters: establishing policies regarding the admission of learners of minority, underdeveloped, and/or underprivileged communities; providing support for the procurement of basic modules for kindergarten, primary and secondary education, and non-formal education; supporting the realisation of higher education in terms of curriculum arrangements, accreditation, and the appointment of academics; providing consideration of the opening and closing of universities; organising special schools and training centres or upskilling teachers; organising provincial museums, historical heritage reserves, historical studies and traditional values, as well as maintaining regional languages and cultures.

The realisation of decentralisation in education should meet the following criteria: (1) democratic management and implementation are required; (2) the primary objective should be community empowerment; (3) community involvement needs to be a fundamental component of the management system; (4) services need to be more effective and efficient than those in the era of centralisation for the benefit of learners and the people at large; and (5) the diversity of aspirations, local values and norms must be respected within the national education system's framework and for the sake of strengthening the system (Harahap, 2016).

Decentralisation of education officially began with the enactment of Law Number 20 of 2003 pertaining to the National Schooling System (*Undang-Undang Republic Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*). A crucial issue in the National Education System Law is community participation in the development of the education sector (Article 9) which states that the right to participate in the development, execution, oversight, and assessment of educational initiatives belongs to the community. This article is a continuation of Article 4, paragraph 1 that

education in Indonesia is carried out in a democratic and just manner. Education democracy is the implication of policies that encourage the management of the education sector in the regions which are implemented at school level (Sihono, 2011).

The shift in the national education system from centralised to decentralised aims to empower schools as the spearhead of educational autonomy. Schools are seen to be more aware of their strengths, weaknesses, available resources, and needs so that they can optimise resources to improve the quality of education (Yuliani, 2020). Educational autonomy means returning the responsibility for education to the community. Therefore, the autonomy of education requires support and participation of the community in the provision of education because the community has reliability to achieve quality education (Yuliani, 2020).

In reality, these democratic values have been listed and embodied in 18 national education values sourced from the character education values developed by the Ministry of Education. These ideals are taken from national education objectives, Pancasila (the Indonesian state philosophy), religion, and culture, namely: religious, sincere, tolerant, self-disciplined, hardworking, independent, democratic, curious, patriotic, loving the country, honouring accomplishments, outgoing, peaceful, socially conscious, mindful of the environment, and responsible (Pusat Kurikulum Balitbang Kemendiknas, 2009). The nation's character is shaped by those 18 values, however, the education unit can choose its development priorities based on a few of the 18 prioritised values listed above (Rahman, 2017).

#### Implementation in the School-based Management Model

The decentralisation of education differs from that of other domains of governance. While decentralisation in education occurs not only at the district or city level but also reaches schools as the forefront of education implementation, decentralisation in other areas is the responsibility of the government at the district or city level. In the practice of decentralising education, school-based management (SBM) was developed (Harahap, 2016). Since 2003, the Government has formulated a school-based education management paradigm, which prioritises community involvement in formulating education policies. SBM is an attempt to raise the standard of education by giving autonomy to schools to determine their policies in order to improve the efficiency, quality and equity of education so that the community's needs and interests can be accommodated and the community empowered effectively at the same time (Harahap, 2016).

The objectives of implementing SBM are 1) to achieve a better quality of education through independence and school initiatives to manage and empower available resources; 2) to raise community and school members' knowledge of the provision of education through collaborative decision-making; 3) to give schools more accountability for the quality of their education to the government, the community, and parents; 4) to increase healthy competition between schools (Umiarso & Gojali, 2010).

For the past few years, the numbers of educational institutions in Indonesia has risen significantly from primary, secondary, to higher levels. However, this increase in number has not been accompanied by an increase in quality. Therefore, the decentralisation and autonomy policies of education by the government also carry a mission and task to improve the education quality in Indonesia (Mukhsin, 2019).

Policies related to SBM also apply to madrasa (religious Islamic schools). However, in practice, some madrasa have not been able to manage their policies properly to raise the standard of education by maximising the involvement of parents and community leaders. On the other hand, some madrasa, especially superior madrasa, implement SBM effectively to improve the quality of their education (Parker & Raihani, 2011).

#### Implementation in the Education Unit Level Curriculum and 2013 Curriculum Models

Responding to the educational autonomy mandate of the Law of National Education System, the Ministry of National Education issued a policy in the form of the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) in 2006. This KTSP is an operational curriculum that is prepared and implemented in each education unit. Thus, each primary and secondary education unit is required to compile and develop its own curriculum according to the needs, characteristics of the education unit, regional potential, and socio-cultural conditions of the local community (Sihono, 2011). As a policy that emphasises competence, KTSP provides opportunities for learners to become competent (Sihono, 2011).

The implementation of the KTSP is a manifestation of educational autonomy, which, in its implementation, accommodates the diversity of learner characteristics, regional conditions, culture, customs, socio-economic status, and the availability of funds in the schools (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan, 2006).

However, in practice, both teachers and schools have no professional ability to develop the curriculum independently and professionally in line with the principles and spirit of educational autonomy. Moreover, not all schools and madrasa have adequate human resources, facilities and

infrastructure. They also lack adequate funds and are thus unable to prepare and develop the curriculum properly (Asriati, 2010). This means that a policy and implementation gap exists regarding administrative prerequisites between the centre, the regions, and the educational units in their capacity to develop KTSP.

Through the government policy, the KTSP 2006 was replaced by the stipulations of the 2013 curriculum. This was predicated on ideas concerning upcoming difficulties, public opinion, the advancement of knowledge and pedagogy, upcoming competencies, and unfavourable occurrences. According to Ministerial Regulation (*Permendikbud*) No. 69 of 2013 (Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia, 2013), Governing the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Senior High School, the goal of the 2013 curriculum is “[p]reparing Indonesian people to have the ability to live as individuals and citizens who are faithful, productive, creative, innovative, and affective and able to contribute to the life of society, nation, state, and world civilization.” The 2013 curriculum is an effort to simplify the previous curriculum, using the thematic-integrative model, and emphasising natural, social, artistic, and cultural phenomena. The emphasis is on improving learners’ ability to be better at observing, asking questions, reasoning, and presenting the knowledge gained at school. Nevertheless, the government needs to address certain issues as a matter of urgency to successfully implement the 2013 curriculum. These include training of teachers and other education personnel to implement the curriculum, the availability of teacher and learner handbooks, and readiness in governance at the education unit level (Anwar, 2014).

**Implementation in the Independent Learning Model**  
Independent Learning – Independent Campus is a policy proclaimed by the Minister of Education, Nadiem Makarim. One of the programmes grants learners permission to study for three semesters without adhering to a set curriculum. The programme is directed by a number of laws and legislative frameworks pertaining to higher education to enhance the standard of education and graduates, such as: 1) Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System; 2) Law No. 12 of 2012 on Higher Education; 3) Law No. 6 of 2014 on villages; 4) Government Regulation No. 04 of 2014 on the Implementation of Higher Education and Management of Higher Education; 5) Presidential Regulation No. 8 of 2012 on the KKNI (Indonesian National Qualification Framework); 6) Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 3 of 2020 on National Higher Education Standards (Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and

Culture, 2020). Additionally, the primary initiative of the Independent Campus is to facilitate flexible and autonomous learning in order to foster an inventive, unrestricted learning environment that meets the needs of all learners. The main programmes of Independent Campus are providing facilities to support the opening of a new study programme, changing the accreditation system for higher education, assisting state universities to acquire legal status, and guaranteeing the freedom of the learners to take credits for three semesters outside the study programme (Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020).

Independent Campus offers chances and challenges for the development of personality, capacity, creativity, and innovation. This also meets the learners’ needs, and develops the learners’ independence in looking for and obtaining knowledge through field dynamics and realities, such as skill requirements, actual challenges, social contact, teamwork, self-management, performance expectations, goals, and accomplishments (Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). Learning methods in Independent Learning must meet education in the era of the fourth Industrial Revolution. Learners are required to master new literacies, namely, data, technological, and human literacies. If learners are able to acquire these new literacies, they will develop into highly skilled human resources who can help Indonesia develop in the future. The Independent Learning education method prioritises character development for learners in addition to new literacy. These qualities include honesty, religion, diligence, hard effort, responsibility, justice, discipline, and tolerance. The goals are to develop learners’ critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, creativity and innovation, teamwork and communication abilities, and character (Yamin & Syahrir, 2020).

#### Problems of Implementation

The main demand of the educational autonomy model or educational decentralisation is the demand for the ability of every curriculum developer that must spread from the central, regional to the level of education units in schools. The current gaps are a result of a lack of understanding of curriculum implementation at regional and school levels so that when regions are given the authority to develop curriculum in line with environmental conditions and educational resources in each region, regional curriculum development teams tend to wait for implementation instructions from the centre.

The central government attempts to address this gap through the Curriculum Centre of Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of National Education by providing briefings to

schools and school committees on the preparation of the education unit level curriculum and the development of its syllabus. However, because there are many schools in Indonesia, the Curriculum Centre struggles to provide technical guidance and assistance to all schools in Indonesia in limited time. Therefore, the Curriculum Centre saw the need to empower the curriculum development team which was once formed in every Provincial Education Office. In addition, the Ministry of National Education established a “curriculum network” as a forum that can bridge the gap between the centre and the regions (Pusat Kurikulum Balitbang Depdiknas, 2006).

The position of the curriculum network in the regions is increasingly urgent because of its strategic function. The curriculum network has two functions, namely, (1) as a local content curriculum development team, (2) providing technical assistance to both educational institutions and individuals in order to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate curriculum in the regions (Pusat Kurikulum Balitbang Depdiknas, 2006).

Furthermore, research shows that teachers face various problems and challenges when implementing the 2013 curriculum in practice. The government, organisations, educators, parents, and learners are the sources of these issues. The government presents challenges with regard to curriculum implementation standards, socialisation, time management, book distribution, assessment, teacher administration, and learning activities in learner books. Institutional obstacles include infrastructure and facilities, and teacher rotation. Teachers’ obstacles include understanding the curriculum, making learning media, integrating lesson content into thematic learning, and becoming proficient in information technology. Problems related to parents and learners include report cards and adaptation to thematic learning (Krissandi & Rusmawan, 2015).

The results also show that teachers face various problems such as complex assessments, the large number of material to be taught, the application of scientific approaches – especially in reasoning and analysing, the difficulty of integrating material into integrated social science studies, and the lack of infrastructure (Wijayati, Degeng & Sumarmi, 2016). In addition, teachers face various problems regarding the implementation of the 2013 National Curriculum, namely: 1) educators are not ready in the sense of socialising the 2013 National Curriculum since the trainings are too short; 2) teachers face problems in preparing the learning implementation plan, although a syllabus and teacher handbooks exist; 3) teachers find it difficult to assess or evaluate. Meanwhile, to be able to implement the 2013 National Curriculum, teachers hope for several things: (1) the assessment system should be

simplified; (2) a concrete example of a thematic model should be available; (3) strategies for connecting material and students’ thinking abilities should be provided; (4) social science lesson hours need to be increased from 4 hours to 6 hours; and (5) training for teachers in order to equalise perceptions should be carried out longer and more intensively (Ruja & Sukanto, 2015).

Another study shows several weaknesses in the 2013 curriculum. In the first instance, the 2013 curriculum is contrary to the law of the National Education System because it emphasises only pragmatic orientation. In addition, the 2013 curriculum is not predicated on an assessment of the implementation of KTSP of 2016, therefore, confusing teachers and learners. Secondly, teachers were not involved in developing the curriculum. Thirdly, the orientation of the learning process is not in balance with the outcomes. This is due to the enforcement of the national examination policy which only highlights the results and ignores the learning process. In the fourth place, at the basic education level, the government integrates natural and social sciences into Indonesian Language Lessons (Telaumbanua, 2014).

Of the many obstacles impeding the implementation of education democracy in Indonesia, a fundamental problem needs to be address. This is not only about the lack of funding, human resources, and administrative prerequisites that support quality education, but also about the political policies and the problem of ensuring that the education system runs well through political support and power. This is in line with Andrew Rosser’s explanation that the problem of the quality of education and learning in a country is rooted in problems of politics and power (Rosser, 2018).

In line with the above statement, Woodward (2015) also emphasises that schools are a product of social and political decisions, even though schools can shape and create future generations of leaders and, therefore, can broadly shape social and political decisions. The quality of democracy and education democracy is, therefore, also influenced by the extent of the influence of the vast majority of Indonesian citizens, namely Muslims, through their work in education. The quality is also determined by the extent of the role of the central government in advancing and controlling the implementation of education in Indonesia. Meanwhile, this role of the central government is sometimes fraught with conflicts of interest. For example, the Ministry of Education and Culture’s programme for educational organisations could not work properly because a few Islamic organisations withdrew from the programme on the grounds that the programme was not implemented democratically and transparently in terms of determining which participating organisations deserved grants (Widyanuratikah, 2020).

In addition, Indonesia still faces difficulties in fulfilling the guaranteed right to education for all Indonesian citizens who live in remote and marginalised areas. The issue of equal distribution of rights and access to education for all citizens has not been seriously addressed through policies or consistently implemented administration (Manan, 2015).

#### The Prospects of Educational Democracy in Indonesia in the Future

What is the future direction of the implementation of education democracy in Indonesia? Predictions related to this issue cannot be separated from the socio-political problems in Indonesia. Socio-political life in Indonesia within the framework of constitutional democracy since the reforms started has not been fully in line with the ideals of actual constitutional democracy. The values, principles and rules of democracy cannot be correctly implemented by all components of the nation and with full awareness. In the course of life as a nation and state, there have been deviations which have destroyed the foundations of democratic life. This reality, often called “undemocratic democracy”, is a way of life for the country and state when democratic institutions and structures already exist, but the spirit and practice of democracy are still far from ideal (Yuniarto, 2018).

Minister Nadiem Makarim’s decision on 23 August 2021 through Ministerial Regulation (*Permendikbudristek*) No. 28 of 2021 regarding the Organization and Work Procedure of the Ministry of Education to dissolve the National Education Standards Agency (BSNP) is regarded as reducing education democracy in Indonesia (Makdori, 2021). The BSNP was replaced by the Educational Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency which reports to and is overseen by the education minister, whereas the BSNP was independent. This means that there was a decline in democratic values in education. This has also caused criticism among the public, which was conveyed by Ali Zamroni, a member of the Indonesian Parliament commission X. He emphasised that the dissolution of the BSNP showed that Nadiem Makarim did not understand that the implementation of education required the participation of many parties. The policies taken actually seized the right of community participation in the implementation of education (Aditya & Rastika, 2021).

The friction between the national government and the society continues in other aspects. Saputra (2021) reports that the Association of Indonesian Private Health Universities (HPTKES Indonesia) sued the minister, Nadiem Makarim, in the Constitutional Court regarding the obligation to test the competence of health workers by third parties (without involving universities). This is considered to have reduced the authority of universities to that

of mere pawns (Saputra, 2021). This means that one of the authorities of private universities that reflects the implementation of education democracy in Indonesia has been eroded and taken over by the central government.

These two cases are indicators that the future prospects of implementing education democracy in Indonesia will be marked by frictions between the interests of the central government and the education community triggered by the centre’s policies which are inappropriate and undermining the values of democratic education.

The above conditions were further strengthened by the emergence of criticisms in the mass media for the declining quality of democracy in Indonesia during the second term of the leadership of President Jokowi. Fatia Maulidiyanti, coordinator of the Commission for Disappearances and Acts of Violence, stated that the implementation of democracy in Indonesia died slowly during the 2 years of President Jokowi’s leadership. This decline in democracy can be seen in the deteriorating situation of civil liberties marked by massive attacks on human rights defenders, the issuance of the ITE (Electronic Information and Transactions) Law and the cyber police, that in practice tend to regulate and crack down on citizens’ right of expression. In the case of the use of the ITE Law, most of the actions taken are because of criticism of institutions, and most victims are civilians (Chaterine & Prabowo, 2021). KH Abdussalam Shohib of the East Java Nahdlatul Ulama Regional Board, stated that Indonesia’s democracy index has declined in recent years. He used the repressive way in which expression of opinions are handled as an example. This condition is exacerbated by the large number of political parties supporting the Jokowi-Ma’ruf government. This is very worrying as an opposition that could reign in government actions is almost non-existent (Baihaqi, 2021).

The above cases show that a significant relationship exists between political conditions and policies in national education. More specifically, there is an effect between the decline in the quality of democracy in Indonesia and the decline in the quality of its education democracy through government policies that weaken public participation in education. To strengthen the realisation of education democracy, decision-making processes which involve all educational stakeholders are required. Moreover, educational democracy should create education in which all members of society receive education and teaching fairly (Irawan & Hermawan, 2019). Democracy should also allow everyone the chance to actively engage in state affairs and politics. Schools should be the key components to promote democracy (Kiess, 2022).

## Conclusion

Previous descriptions and studies show that in practice the regulations related to educational autonomy still cannot be implemented properly because they are constrained by the lack of teacher professionalism. Moreover, the implementation of effective education management and learning systems by schools is still not in accordance with the administrative prerequisites and not in line with the principles and spirit of educational autonomy. The government is still dominant in controlling education nationally through its policies so that autonomy, whose substance provides maximum freedom to the community in managing education, is eroded and limits educational autonomy. The decision to dissolve the BSNP shows that the government is still controlling education democracy. Furthermore, the recent decline in the quality of democracy in Indonesia has also contributed to the deterioration of democratic education, which is marked by government policies that reduce the role of society in education. This further strengthens the indications that the prospects for democratic education in Indonesia are eroding and decreasing in quality even though the government has made educational policies that demonstrate democratic principles and values in education.

To address the challenges in Indonesia's education system, key recommendations include strengthening the capacities of local governments and educational units for effective resource management and curriculum development. Emphasising teacher training, particularly for the implementation of the 2013 curriculum, is crucial to enhance education quality. Additionally, fostering greater community involvement in educational decision-making is essential to ensure that local needs and cultural values are integrated into educational practices. Finally, ensuring adequate political support and resource allocation for educational policies is vital for aligning them with Indonesia's broader democratic values and goals.

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