

Public Participation In Education Decentralization

(A Study about The Exertion of Basic Education In City of Bandung)

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Implementation of education decentralization in Indonesia shows that the achievement tend to be less successful. Djungdjungnan (2012) said that the effects of education decentralization has caused politicized education. The advent of decentralized education has caused turmoil in some areas. Only a few regional leader are aware with how to use the authority in the area of education. Education decentralization in Indonesia was considered not effective. In some cases, the empirical shows that the unsuccessful education decentralization has linked to a number of factors. One of the important variables in education decentralization is the participation of the society. Bray (1996) and Aikara (2011) explained that the participation of the society as one of the supporter for education decentralization. The participation of the society is very important in relation with the implementation of education decentralization which required to represent the society in the decision making.

This paper present findings from a study of the public participation in education decentralization at the basic education level in Bandung City. This research

uses qualitative approach and descriptive analysis . It explores the findings from a semi-open interview conducted with 19 participants to represent four groups of stakeholders, namely: government bodies or authorities related to implementing of education decentralization; member of local parliament; member of local education council; the school committee and the organization of the students' parents.

The research proposes some ideas to identify the potential of society participation in education decentralization, particularly in relationship with people's aspirations which channeled through the local parliament; local education council; and the school committee. The results of research concluded that the participation of the society has positive contribution to the improvement of education decentralization of basic education in Bandung.

Key words: Public Participation; Education Decentralization; Basic Education, Local Government; and Public Service.

Introduction

The implementation of government's decentralization in Indonesia is carried out with the support from Law No. 32 of 2004, which then replaced by Law Number 23 of 2014 focusing on the Regional Government role. The implications of decentralization policy sees that the governance authority is delivered from the central to local governments. Through decentralization, the local governments have the right to hold the administration and authority in accordance with the potentials, needs and problems within the local area.

Education is one of government issues which are set in particular with Law No. 20 of 2003 about the National Education System. The article of 11 of that law explained that the government and local governments are obliged to provide public services, ensure the quality education for every citizen without discrimination, and guarantee fund availability for education of every citizen from seven years old for fifteen years.

One of the education decentralization goals is to increase the efficiency and distribution of education by transferring responsibility to the local government (Florestal and Coover,1997). For example, Hanson (1998) said that through education decentralization, several countries such as Nicaragua, Venezuela, Spain, Argentina, Columbia, Chile, and Mexico are able to achieve the desired quality of education democratization, economic development, and institutional modernization through education, the increase of management efficiency, the division of financial responsibility priority to achieve education, and bargaining with the central government. The story of education decentralization in these countries indicate that education decentralization has a positive impact in the conduct of the administration in education.¹

¹More complete result of the study decentralization education related to the goal decentralization in some countries: Alec Ian Gersberg (1999) decentralization education in Mexico and Nicaragua;Tarin Rounds Parry (1997) examine decentralization education in Chile focus on education policy and

The education decentralization in Indonesia has not been successful; Djungdjunan (2012) for example mentioned the effects of decentralization education has caused politicized education. The advent of education decentralization has caused turmoil in almost all of the area across the country. Only few regent/mayors have the awareness to use their authority in the fields of education.² Education decentralization is also considered as not effective in order to speed up the improvement of the quality and education services. The phenomenon became even stronger by the intervention of the regents and mayors to teachers and school which result in miss-achievement of the purpose of education decentralization.³

Some examples show that education decentralization in Indonesia has not been successful. In Bali Province, the implementation of decentralization education cannot bring improvement in relationship to management system, maintenance, the welfare of the workers, and career. The role of government regency and city only concern to channel funds for the teacher's salary through General Allocation Fund packages (DAU) from the central government; no more funds is

macleans A. Geo-have granchild (2006) sees decentralisation education in the larger context narrow on public spending and social justice.

² <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/node/152957>. (4/21/2012)

³ <http://edukasi.kompas.com/read/2010/12/02/03562885/Otonomi.Pendidikan.Tak.Efektif>. (4/21/2012)

available from other resources. The regency/city government does not have initiatives to improve the teachers' salary.⁴

The indication of unsuccessful implementation of education decentralisation also takes place in East Nusa Tenggara Province. Similarly, in a number of areas in North Sumatra, education sector is rather worrying and not quite affordable. The minimum education infrastructure in Those areas has not been able to be overcome. For example, a number of areas still have minimum infrastructure, such as Central Tapanuli Regency, Sibolga, North Tapanuli Regency, Samosir Regency and Hubang Hasundutan Regency. The examples above indicates that education decentralization has not been successful.⁵

Similar condition also happened in Bandung City. There are some normative regulation related to the education in Bandung. One of them is Local Regulation Bandung City No. 15 of 2008 about Delivering Education. The policy set development of education in the City of Bandung that wants to be achieved:⁶ to

⁴[\(http://edukasi.kompas.com/read/2009/07/27/18212767/Otonomi.Pendidikan.Belum.Membawa.Perbaikan\)](http://edukasi.kompas.com/read/2009/07/27/18212767/Otonomi.Pendidikan.Belum.Membawa.Perbaikan). (4/21/2012)

⁵<http://www.floresbangkit.com/2012/08/pemerintah-daerah-perlu-lebih-serius-benahi-masalah-pendidikan>" (2/13/2013)

⁶ Some rules in Bandung City normative in this event islamic education among others: Local regulation Number. 15 of 2008 about Education; Local regulation Bandung City Number. 09 for 2009 about plans for rebuilding the Long-term (RPJMD) in Bandung in 2009-2013.

promote the expansion and distribution opportunity for a good quality education for all of the inhabitants of the city. The statement was a form of Government's commitment to the people in Bandung . However, the education decentralization standards and achievement of education decentralization, which is set by the local regulation, was apparently not achieved effectively.

The case of education decentralization in Bandung City gave the impression that there are a number of factors that are suspected to be the cause. An ideal concept of education decentralization in some countries presents successful indication. On the contrary, it is not the education decentralization in several districts in Indonesia case, including the City of Bandung. A different condition is very interesting to be analyzed further. A question arises in what variable must be fulfilled to achieve optimal education decentralization?

The society participation in education decentralization is important to be analyzed. Bray (1996) and Aikara (2011) explained that society participation becomes one of the supporters for education decentralization. Prud'homme (2001) and Ribot (2002) note that the education decentralization required society representation in decision-making. This indicates that the participation of the society was suspected to be a significant factor of education decentralization.

This paper focuses on education decentralization at basic education level in Bandung. The paper also attempts to show a greater understanding of an in-depth research with descriptive qualitative approach on education decentralization in basic education in relation with the society participation. The results are expected to

contribute to the body of knowledge regarding that the government policy study in this area is still limited. The discussion focuses on the role of society participation in education through decentralization scheme of the council education in the city level, the school committee and non-formal education institutions.

Literature Context

Education Decentralization

One of the success key to decentralization of government is how much people involve and participate in it. This is in accordance with the aim of decentralization to raise the role and society participation in the region. Rondinelli (1988) concluded that decentralization can be appraised as relations between stakeholders. Central Government, local government and the society have a relationship in the implementation of decentralization within an authority under their own responsibilities. The position in the decentralization implementation is an important component. They will no longer be positioned as the object of the policy but also as part of subjects that can contribute to the decision on how education policy is made and carried out in the provinces.

Implementation of decentralization in local government is interpreted as regional autonomy, meaning that the local government have authority to govern its own districts with the support of its own resources. In this context, Pratikno in Harris (2007) explained that within the decentralization scheme, local people have the autonomy in the area, not the local government. Public's aspirations distribution must be deduced from the local democracy. The public can develop the potential and its

role, both individuals and groups, in the institution in non-formal and formal institutions, including the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD).

Public involvement in the implementation of local government decentralization involves the delivery of government affairs. In the context of education, education decentralization is giving more important role to the public; while the government's role tends to decrease. Rohman and Wiyono (2010,p.18) explained that in education decentralization the country is no longer the only authorities, but as a partner to facilitate education process.

Public Participation in Education Decentralization

The importance of key player in education decentralization has put the role of stakeholders in education decentralization as important discussion. Dwiyanto (2005) said that the implementation of education decentralization concerned with the stakeholder society. Ackerman and Alscott, in Dwiyanto (2005), emphasized that the stakeholder society was formulated in a simple way that its members have common interests to their development. According to him, there are five key players in the stakeholders society in the context of education decentralization, namely: 1) the local society; 2) the parents; 3) the existing participants; 4) state; 5) a professional education management. Each actor has an effect to the formulation and implementation of decentralization policy of education. It appears that the fifth player becomes an important variables in the decentralization education analysis. The involvement of stakeholder society in education decentralization can be done in a number of way, including participation in decision-making in education sector.

Local societies such as community leaders and society groups have a strong political position. They have a role in decision-making that related to the importance of society. Ribot (2002) explained that the existing representation of the society must be addressed. This indicates that society groups in the area is considered as important element in the implementation of education decentralization. They were involved in the school committee or school council. Thus, it is important to see how society participates in the education decentralization through the involvement in the decision making process. Institutions, such as the school and the education council are important media for the public participation in education.

Public Education decentralization puts public as important player of education delivery in the area. The empowerment of the society in the education of the region is important. Public holds the position as one of the elements that have a role in education decentralization.

Participation as a key player with a role in the education decentralization is required. Tilaar (2009:277) views that "decentralization and education has a very big meaning as an expression for the rights and obligations of people to decide their own education for children; education decentralization requires the participation of the society as a manifestation of the education democratization. Process of education democratization provides an opportunity to the people to take a decision about the form, the process, and the educational institutions, according to the demands. In other words, decentralization and special education autonomy aims to empower people".

Public involvement in the education decentralization can determine the success of the goals. Prash (1990) mentions five stakeholders, namely, local people; the parents of the students; the learners; country; and professional education managers. This shows that public has a role in education through their participation in education decentralization. The empowerment of the society will contribute to the increase of education quantity and quality, mainly through its involvement in the decision-making process in education. Policy decisions in education is very important for the society. In relation to this, Tillar (2009) explained that "people realize that government decisions is very influential to quality education of the children. Therefore, people cannot ignore education matters".

In its relationship with the public participation, Barzelay (2002) explained that education decentralization and regional autonomy in education have two meanings, namely: first, direct involvement of public in decision-making or participation in decision-making and secondly, participation in the situational management or leadership management by the people in the fields of education. Those two things in which the public can take part is mentioned by Barzelay (2002), that it is conditional. This means that in a certain period of time the public involvement in decision-making process is related to education policy. For example, involvement can come through public representatives in the regional legislative assembly, such as education council city and the school committee. Society involvement in two participation options was able to support the successfulness of the education decentralization.

Methodology

This research uses qualitative research method with descriptive approach. This research focuses on the phenomenon of education decentralization at basic education level in Bandung. Through this method, qualitative information looks at the implementation of decentralization education at basic education in Bandung.

The qualitative methods aims to explore the meaning of society participation in the implementation of decentralization education in basic education in Bandung, the Education Council of the City, the school and an informal group in the society as elements of the implementation of education decentralization. Data collection looked at the library/documentation and an in-depth interview to some selected participants. It explores the findings from a semi-open interview conducted with 19 participants to represent four groups of stakeholders, namely: government bodies or authorities related to implementing of education decentralization; member of local parliament; member of local education council; the school committee and the organization of the students' parents. Data analysis was done by using descriptive qualitative analysis.

Findings and Discussions

The research found that people experience some problems related to the basic education in Bandung City. This is especially experienced by the parents of students, teachers and students in schools. Complaints from the people often happen. Some issues in basic education in Bandung arise, namely:" education decentralization policy in Bandung City in general still cause some problems; among others they are: (1) the rights of teachers (for example: incentive allowance, certification) tend to be late,

because of internal problems in the educational department in Bandung (2) fees/school fees are not consistent, and (3) the implementation of free education is not in line with the government policy".⁷

Some problems were revealed by informers that complaint often appears from the society. Public generally argued that people should take more active role in helping the basic education in Bandung. Society involvement in decentralization of basic education in Bandung City is implemented through education finance, monitoring, and evaluation of education process,⁸ as well as in doing evaluation achievements standard of disciples/schools, school construction, facilities and others.⁹

Institutionally, public participation in education decentralization can be done through involvement of the public or the parents of the students directly in such a school committee or council of regional education. These two institutions represent a place for people's aspirations in the improvement of the education quality and

⁷ A Member of Commission D, the parliament of Bandung City, may 15, 2013.

⁸ Informant (Her), the parents of the students from the State Junior high school in the City Bandung,⁷ May 2013.

⁹ Informant (Mila), the parents of the students from the State Junior high school in Bandung, may 24, 2013.

quantity. Both the school and the education institution¹⁰ founded by the city are expected to contribute to decision-making process in every education policy in Bandung. There are some institutions as a examples of public participation in education in Bandung such as Education Council, the school, and the union students' parents. These institutions are a mandate of the people. This agency exists as a media for the public to participate in decision-making in relation to education. This is in line with the policy regional autonomy, regency/city position as the holder authority, and responsibility in delivering education.

The goal of education decentralization is not only the responsibility of the central government, but also it is under the responsibility of the provincial, district/city, and the staff of the school, parents, and society or education stakeholders. These groups can contribute to achieve the education decentralization. This is in accordance with the concept of society-based participation and school based management that carried out as implementation of education decentralization in Indonesia. The following section explains the analysis of society participation in education decentralization in the Council on Education of Bandung, the school, and the parents of the students organization.

¹⁰ As stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, PP No. 19 / 2005 on National Education Standards and Local Regulations No. 15 of 2008 on Education in Bandung.

Public participation through The Education City Council

Education decentralization in Bandung on basic education shows the society involvement in it. However, public participation in education in Bandung City was not optimal. Research results show this condition. One of the institutional where the public can take part in the event education in the region is through the Board of Education. An informer describes "that the Education City Council represents the society participation in the education sector. The role includes supporting, advisor, means controlling and initiative. These roles were in synergy. In the development of the education policy, the education council becomes the partner of the Government City of Bandung in providing input before the policy implementation".¹¹

Education Council is the institution in which society participation have a role in improving the quality, distribution, and even efficiency of education management in the district/city. In short, the informer insisted that the Education City Council of Bandung as representation of the society in normative way plays a role as a partner of the Government of Bandung in the formulation of education policy. The normative concept of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the national education system explains that the education council is an independent institution, which consists of various elements of the society who care about education. It is clear that the institution becomes a media for society participation that cares about delivering education.

¹¹ Informers, the Secretary of Education City of Bandung, may 29, 2013.

It is important to understand how big the role of education council in order to support education policy that appears overwhelmingly in public interest. If these problems and society concerns over the basic education in Bandung disappeared, the partnership between Education City Council with the Government of Bandung would have been running well. This means that the education policies were made to be accepted by the society, because their interests have been seen by the Government of Bandung. However, the finding shows that there are still many problems in the fields of education in Bandung, that has not been able to be overcome through the government policy. This condition indicates that education policy has been developed with various political interests and not given priority to society interests. It shows the imbalance in the decision making process between the various community. Basic education development policy in Bandung has not yet been able to bring people's aspirations. Most of the policy in education was made with strong sense of political interest. In relation to this, Rohman and Wiyono (2010) explained that "research result in some countries shows that the problem in the education seems to be carelessly influenced by the politics. The result shows a growing situation of imbalanced and inconsistent policy with regard to the relationship between bureaucrats, politicians, and society".

The imbalance pattern of relationships between bureaucrats (government), politicians (including members of the Regional House of Representatives) and the society leads to the beginning of poor education policy in Bandung. Therefore, in regard to in the involvement of public participation in drafting the education policy in

Bandung, it the education policy needs to consider public interest. In relation to this. Rohman and Wiyono (2010) emphasized the importance of consensus and commitment of the authority in education decentralization.

Education Council as a media of city society participation is hoped to be able to contribute to improve the quality and quantity in Bandung education; apparently this has not been well achieved. The facts on the field show that the participation of the society is not optimal in education decentralization . The participation of the society through the Board of Education has not yet been able to promote education policy. This condition is in line with the Decree of the Minister of National Education No. 044 2002 which concerns with the formation of education board and school committee. Ideally, the purpose of education in the city council is formed as an organization in distributing the aspirations and initiatives to give birth to policy and educational programs, as well as to improve their responsibility and active participation from the entire society level in delivering education. It is all with the final aim to create the atmosphere and a transparent, accountable and democratic in delivering a good quality education services for the society. The current condition shows that sometimes the society concerns over the low basic education services in Bandung.

Society concerns about the existence of education council of Bandung links to a number of basic education policies in Bandung that have not been fully support the people, both students and parents. Some complaints from the society related to education in Bandung appears such as: 1) imbalance composition between the number

of schools and the number of classrooms with the number of students; 2) in ideal the ratio of the teachers and students; 3) quality of educators (teacher); 4) new cluster system for students enrolment¹²; 5) the new students enrollment process; and 6) inconsistent taxes/fee for students. This shows that the Council Education City of Bandung has not yet had an optimum position as a partner of The Government in Java in delivering the education. It indicates that the Education Council of Bandung has not yet been able to perform its function¹³ as independent public organization (Tilaar, 2009).

The success of education council as a public organization partner the Government of Bandung in education services for the society is determined by the health organization and the leadership of education council. The finding implies that that Education Council of Bandung City cannot be included into the category of having a healthy organization and good leadership in carrying out their duties and function. To support this argument, the informer from the City Legislative Assembly in Bandung said "Education Council ideally should be a partner of the district education office in determining any policy in education. Currently, this Education Council only agrees the education policy. I think, relatively there is no argument. This means that Education Council needs to improve its role to be working more with the

¹² Local regulation No. 9 Year 2009 about RPJMD City of Bandung in 209-2013.

¹³ Punch Line *Focus Group Discussion (FGD)* Forum the society Cares About Education City Bandung, may 16, 2013.

education offices in relation to the improvement of the quality of education in Bandung City".¹⁴

This statement shows that the partnership between Board of Education of Bandung City with the Government of Bandung City for education sector is not yet going along in a good manner. The quality of basic education services improvement has not been able to be achieved. The Education Council in Bandung should have better position against the Government City of Bandung. Every education policy made by the Government City of Bandung was not discussed comprehensively with the education council. As a result, many education policies in Bandung tend to create new load to the society and cause new problems.

Weak education council bargain power on education policy set by the Government City of Bandung results in monotonous education services. Ineffective solutions to problems were the result of education policy that irresponsive to complaints by the society. The independency of Education Council of Bandung City needs to be questioned. Aspirations of the society that is delivered either directly or through various media has not yet been able to be implemented through the education policy.

Education Council of Bandung City has not yet been able to act as a participative institution and accommodate aspirations of the people in education

¹⁴ Informers, the member of DPRD City of Bandung who handled education Commission, may 15, 2013.

sector. The Education Council tends to be the institution which justifies almost any policy made by the Education Department of Bandung.

Based on these above discussions, it can be concluded that the Education Council of Bandung organization and its function has not yet been able to become a vessel for public aspirations and society participation. Its role as an independent partner of The Government of Bandung City in distributing aspirations of the society has not yet been optimally done. The Education Council of Bandung institutional weakness of commitment and minimal effort shows that it has not been functioning in supporting education in Bandung. A weak bargaining position of Education Council of Bandung City against the government City of Bandung results in a situation where basic education development policy in Bandung has not yet been able to overcome some of the problems.

Public participation through the school

The school committee is an official institution that has to present in every school, either private or state schools. The school committee is an expression of participation in education at the school level. It is formed as an organization to accommodate and channel participation and aspirations of the society. Based on the Decision of National Education Minister Number 044 year 2002 concerning The Formation of Education Board and School Committee, it is mentioned that schools are independent bodies which embody the role of the society in the context of the improvement of the quality, distribution, and the efficiency of education management in education units, in pre-school education, either in formal education system or the

education outside the school system. In a simple way, the school was understood as as a partner of the school, particularly the head of school, in planning and formulating the education policy of the school. This condition is not yet optimally applied in Bandung City. The story about the school committee was revealed by an informer as follows: "Ideally, school committees have a role as the advisor, supporting, mediation and controlling. The control function of the school committee tends to be weak because the school committee tends to be a sub-ordinate to the school principal".¹⁵

The informer indicated that the independence of the school committee as a control power in delivering education represented by the parents of the student has not been achieved. If the school presented as a sub-ordinate to the school principal, the school committee would have been passive. This means that in decision making process, the school committee members tend to be agreed upon the school decision.

Based on the decision of National Education Minister Number 044 of 2002, the school is conceptually a body or non-profit agency and non-political, it is formed in the basis of mutual democratic consultation by the education stakeholders in education units as representation of various elements that are responsible for the improvement of the quality and the result of education process. school normatively means as an independent body that support the improvement of quality and the end result of education at school level. School has a role in providing

¹⁵ Informant (major part are women carried by), one head of the school committee, may 16, 2013.

input through monitoring and evaluation process and activities in the improvement of quality education. In relation to objective of the school, an informer insists on a weak position of the school as follows:"As an institution, schools are weak when referring to Government Regulation Number 17-Year 2010 on the Management of Education. One of the article mentions that the school committee is nominated by the school principal. Therefore, the school committee is no longer independent body particularly to monitor the implementation of school policy.¹⁶

The informer clearly shows that there is a formal dependency from the school committee to the principals. Its independency to the school in giving suggestion on educational implementation process to improve the school's quality becomes difficult to carry out. Such condition would be quite disturbing the role and initiatives of the school in conveying the aspirations of students' parents and in making decision related to the programs education in schools. The school, that should present an independent body, has not yet been able to position itself as a partner in decision-making process at the school. In line with the analysis, one of informant from the City Legislative Assembly in Bandung explained that: "The school committee should become a good partner. It means that the school committee should provide a balance power to the school related to problems solving in the school. Some cases shows that there are schools which have dominant school committee; on the other hand many of them do not have any role. In some cases, there is also a school committee which acts

¹⁶ Ibid

formality support to the school, it only agrees over the program proposed by the school principal. The member of the school committee mostly comes from public figures who support the collection of education fees from the society. The school committee should be helping the school to face this problems".¹⁷

It can be analyzed that the school committees in Bandung City shows some indications: 1) the school committees have not yet been able to provide a counterweight institution to the school; 2) some schools appear to be dominant in the decision making process at school; 3) some schools present formality support over the decision of schools policy; 4) membership of the school committee tend to base on reputation of the person in the society and not represent the parents of the students in schools in general. Considering the above discussion, school committees are likely to be a formality support in decision-making process that related to the determination of school fees taken from students or parents of the student or related to the program planned by the school. Even though formally the school committee presents in every elementary public school and junior high school, but in practice these institutions have not been able to overcome various issues of education, even at the school level.

As an institution that directly links the staff of the school and parents of the student, the school committee should be able to play a role as a good liaison/mediator. It should provide mediation for students based on input from the parents of the students who will be discussing in a meeting with the representatives of the school.

¹⁷ Informers, the member of DPRD Bandung City in the Commission education , may 15, 2013.

Nor when there is a plan/initiative program coming from out of the school, the school committee should play a role in communicating this matter to the students' parents. That hope was expressed by an informer representing the elements NGOs who concerned with education in Bandung as follows: "One of the tasks of the school committee is to provide mediation between parents and schools. For example, the school committees would explain various needs such as in focus (LCD projector), or other equipment which is not available at the school. So the committee plays an important role to communicate this to the students' parents".¹⁸

This statement implies that the parents of the students as part of the society of Bandung City will be helped by the school committee if it could provide good communication between the parents of the students with the schools. It is important to know about the issue and the need that faced by the school and how the students' parents contribute to solve the problems. It is therefore necessary to identify ideal role of school committees which carried out by each member of the school committee in each school unit. This ideal position of the school committee has been explained in the Decision of National Education Minister Number 044 in 2002 that the role of the school committee includes: *Advisory agency*, in the determination and implementation of the policy education in education unit; *Supporting agency*, either supporting the asset provision financially, thinking, or labour power in the event of education in the

¹⁸ Informers, the Chairman of non-governmental organizations (FGII) Cares About Education City of Bandung, May 16,2013.

unit education; *Controlling agency*, in order to ensure transparency and accountability of the organization and the output of education. A Mediator between the government (executive) and the society in education unit.

The finding shows that many problems occurs in relation to the process and the output of educational implementation at school level. Based on this research in Bandung City, it is known that some agenda school committee meetings, from elementary to junior high school, often discusses some issues such as are: 1) a discussion about voluntary contributions in the beginning of the academic year for new students; 2) school program on intracurricular and extracurricular activities, and 3) means of support for student learning. Those issues become a common important agenda in the most school committee meeting for every parent of the students. Parents often are not all able to pay the additional fee which is determined by the school committee and the school. Transparency of decision from the school principals and school committee members to the students' parents¹⁹ became important. An informer from NGOs said that: "The most important thing for the school is transparency from the school committee and the school to the students' parents. Currently, this problem is not opening up in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the activities especially related to the budget ".

The lack of transparency from the planning up to the evaluation process of school's program has made parents feel not satisfied. The school committee, which is

¹⁹ Informant (Rinna), from one parent junior high school students in the City Bandung, 27 May 2013.

expected to become a vessel of society participation (the students' parents), in fact has not been able to bring the aspirations of the parents of the students in decision making related to education process in the school. This issue shows the importance of transparency between the school committee and the school to the society. This is important to understand in order to grow trust from the society to the school. The indication that the role of school committee is not optimum in the delivery of education at school level has been put forward by an informer as follow: "The school rarely talks about education process in the school. Typically, they discussed some issues related to voluntary contributions at the beginning of an academic year ".²⁰ "So far, very few the meeting the school committee take place during the academic year; the meeting usually take place in classroom, or the meeting take place on the same day with the issue of student's school report and it talks about the achievement of students".²¹

The discussion of some statement from the respondents above shows that school committee is not optimal to carry out its role. The main functions as an independent body to the school in the event of education learning process has not yet been able to be carried out. The role of school committee is still being limited to the formal demand of the regulation that school committee is obligatory in every school.

²⁰ Informant (Ry), the parents of students Junior high school in Bandung City, may 25, 2013.

²¹ Informant (Emma), the parents from elementary school students in Bandung City, may 6, 2013 .

The policies are mostly carried out by the school principal with approval from the school committee as a representative of the parents of the students in order to know the program held by the school.

Public Participation Through Other Institutions

Public who cares for basic education in Bandung City also participates through other institution apart from education council and the school committee. Almost many schools in Bandung have groups or the parents of the student groups in the school. The group of parents usually exists in every class. The parents groups are rather non-formal and it could change in accordance with their needs. Some informers mention that they call it 'the union of students' parents '. There is no requirement or regulation about the group/group of the students' parents. They are mostly appear as an informal organization of the parents in each class that have a role in helping education process and achieve the learning process. Related to the existence of this body, an informer from the students' parents said: "The union of the student's parents is in every class. It provides a bridge for the communication between the school (through the class) and the parents of the students."²²

This non-formal organization is a media for participation of the parents of the students. The parents of the students can channel their aspirations in order to improve the quality of education especially in class where their children sit at the school. This non-formal institutional form can be made as a positive media for the school

²² Informant (Mia) parents of students of elementary school, may 22, 2013.

committee and the school. This organization is directly related to the parents of the students, teachers and students for the class operational especially in the event of student learning.

This organization exists beyond the formal organizational structure of the schools and school committee. It is based on the needs of the parents of the students and students themselves. So the formation is based on the initiative of the parents of the students. According to an informer from the parents of the students, the agencies are very helpful: "For me, the organization is very helpful, especially to know the program/activities available in the schools, especially in the classroom of my children. I can find their needs and activities in the school, in intra-curricular and extracurricular activities".

The existence of the union parents of the students is beneficial for the parents of the students; and even they made this as an organization or media to directly participate in the education process. The development of children education quality can be well monitored through the union of the students' parents. Usually, in this non-formal organization effective communication is going to happen between the parents of the students and the teachers. In this case, the parents indirectly help to improve the quality of education for the students at the school. The statement from an informer provides an information related to the union of students' parents existence: "Agenda that is usually discussed in the meeting of parents union related to the programs and activities in school. For example, talking about the activity related to intra curricular

and extracurricular activities such as *study tour*".²³ "The parents union usually has a voluntary contributions from every member of parents who will be used to support learning process of the children (the students), for example for skills activity and for providing support to student who is less capable; it can provide cross subsidy ".²⁴

The initiative of the parents of the students through non-formal organization of the students' parents union is a good thing to help educational implementation at school level. Since that the nature of this institution is non-formal and was formed based on the initiative and the need of the parents of the students to ensure children's education, its long term and functionality is effective enough. The organization founded by communities on the needs and problems basis tends to be last for a long time. Directly and indirectly, the parents of the students as part of the public can optimize its participation in this institution-. The contribution from the parents of the students association really help to improve the quality of education especially for their children.

Conclusion

The public participation in basic education decentralization in Bandung City shows significant contributions. Aspirations of the public in have been channeled through the education council and the school committee. However, the institutions that is expected to host aspirations of the society was not yet able to perform their

²³ Informant (Rinna) parents of students Junior high school in Bandung City, may 27, 2013.

²⁴ Informant (Emma) , the parents from elementary school students in Bandung City, may 6, 2013.

function properly. This can be seen that the public concerns over the low quality basic education services. The aspirations of the public are not responded optimally in policies and basic education development programs in Bandung City. Education council position as a partner of the Government of Bandung City to provide controls, evaluation and input policies and programs to improve education services appears to give legitimacy to any education policy in Bandung.

Weak commitment of Education Council of Bandung City and the School Committee has led to the emergence of initiatives from the students' parents to form a non-formal association for the parents of the students. The nature of this institution is simple, it directly links the students' parents, students and teachers. Non-formal institutions presents as a bridge to communicate the learning process . The institution is beneficial for the parents of the students because they could participate directly in the improvement of the quality teaching and learning process students in schools.

Overall it can be said that the potential of society participation in education in basic education decentralization has not been optimized by Government of Bandung City. As a result, it has an effect on the low basic education services quality in Bandung City. This phenomenon is shown by limited accessibility of high quality basic education service for some part of society.

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