

Connectivity of Accreditation Instrument Strengthening Policy in Realizing Excellent Primary and Secondary Education Services in Banten Province

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji konektivitas kebijakan penguatan instrumen akreditasi dengan upaya mewujudkan layanan pendidikan bermutu pada jenjang dasar dan menengah di Provinsi Banten. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, penelitian ini melibatkan informan dari unsur pemerintah daerah, asesor BAN-S/M, kepala sekolah, guru, pengawas, komite sekolah, dan orang tua siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun Instrumen Akreditasi Satuan Pendidikan (IASP 2020) telah diperkenalkan, integrasinya dalam perencanaan, penganggaran, dan pengawasan pendidikan daerah masih terbatas. Sebagian sekolah mampu menerjemahkan indikator akreditasi ke dalam praktik manajemen mutu, namun mayoritas menghadapi kendala dalam pemahaman, koordinasi antarlembaga, serta tindak lanjut hasil akreditasi. Faktor penghambat lainnya meliputi ketiadaan mekanisme koordinasi formal antara BAN-S/M dan Dinas Pendidikan serta belum adanya kebijakan teknis di tingkat daerah. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya konektivitas kebijakan lintas jenjang pemerintahan sebagai prasyarat penguatan akreditasi, yang masih jarang dieksplorasi dalam kajian sebelumnya. Rekomendasi penelitian diarahkan pada sinkronisasi kebijakan pusat, daerah, peningkatan kapasitas tenaga kependidikan, serta penyusunan regulasi operasional di tingkat daerah agar akreditasi berfungsi optimal sebagai instrumen peningkatan mutu layanan Pendidikan

ABSTRACT

This study examines the policy connectivity of strengthening accreditation instruments in relation to efforts to realize quality education services at the primary and secondary levels in Banten Province. Employing a qualitative approach with a case study method, the research involved informants from local government officials, BAN-S/M assessors, school principals, teachers, supervisors, school committees, and parents. The findings reveal that although the School Accreditation Instrument (IASP 2020) has been introduced, its integration into regional education planning, budgeting, and supervision remains limited. Some schools are able to translate accreditation indicators into quality management practices, yet the majority face challenges related to understanding, inter agency coordination, and follow up on accreditation results. Additional inhibiting factors include the absence of a formal coordination mechanism between BAN-S/M and the Education Office, as well as the lack of technical policies at the regional level. This study highlights the importance of cross level policy connectivity as a prerequisite for strengthening accreditation, an issue that has been rarely explored in previous studies. The recommendations emphasize synchronizing national and regional policies, enhancing the capacity of education personnel, and formulating operational regulations at the regional level to ensure that accreditation functions effectively as an instrument for improving the quality of education services.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted: 04 07 2025

Revised: 20 08 2025

Accepted: 27 08 2025

Published: 06 10 2025

KATA KUNCI

Konektivitas Kebijakan; Akreditasi pendidikan; IASP 2020; Pelayanan Prima; Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah

KEYWORDS

Policy Connectivity; Educational Accreditation; IASP 2020; Excellent Service; Primary and Secondary Education

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping individuals and driving societal progress. Beyond serving merely as a means of acquiring knowledge, education functions as a catalyst for social change, a unifier of values, and a driver of economic advancement (Adams et al., 2024; Carpentier & Courtois, 2024; Halim et al., 2024; Mohamed, 2024; Rice et al., 2024; Yamaoka, 2024). Accordingly, every Indonesian citizen is entitled to proper education as mandated by Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution. To fulfill this right, education is delivered through formal institutions such as schools and madrasahs, which are obligated to maintain and improve the quality of educational services (Islami & Azizatulhathro, 2025; Puspa et al., 2023; Sudarma, 2022).

Efforts to improve education quality are carried out by the government through quality assurance policies, one of which is accreditation, implemented by the National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasahs (BAN-S/M). Accreditation serves both as an external evaluation mechanism and as an instrument to encourage quality improvement in schools and madrasahs (Dinihari et al., 2021; Iskanto, Liyas et al., 2022; Koto, 2024). However, the implementation of accreditation at the regional level, including in Banten Province, faces a number of challenges.

Table 1.
School Data in Banten Province

No	District	SD			SMP			SMA			SMK		
		Amt	N	S	Amt	N	S	Amt	N	S	Amt	N	S
1	Pandeglang Regency	1,052	743	309	492	95	397	189	32	157	209	15	194
2	Lebak Regency	746	707	39	206	90	116	87	27	60	96	12	84
3	Tangerang Regency	784	755	29	226	173	53	68	42	26	74	23	51
4	Serang Regency	873	850	23	175	115	60	46	20	26	102	18	84
5	Tangerang	422	271	151	197	34	163	88	15	73	120	11	109
6	Cilegon	345	157	188	218	24	194	101	12	89	78	8	70
7	Serang	270	221	49	82	29	53	32	8	24	45	8	37
8	Tangerang Selatan	184	149	35	54	16	38	22	5	17	28	4	24
Total	Banten Province	4,676	3,853	823	1,65	576	1,074	633	161	472	752	99	653

Source: BPS, 2025

Data from BPS (2025) indicate that Banten Province has thousands of schools ranging from elementary to senior high/vocational levels spread across eight districts and cities. The scale and diversity of these schools demand an effective implementation of accreditation. However, several fundamental issues remain. First, the synchronization between central and regional policies in strengthening accreditation instruments has not yet been optimal. Second, many schools still perceive accreditation as a mere administrative formality rather than a tool for reflection and quality improvement. Third, there is often a misalignment between accreditation indicators and the actual conditions in the field. Fourth, the capacity of school human resources to implement accreditation remains limited. Fifth, the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating accreditation policies at the regional level are still weak.

These conditions highlight a research gap, namely the absence of in-depth studies on the extent to which policy connectivity between central and regional levels in strengthening accreditation instruments genuinely contributes to improving the quality of educational services. In fact,

policy connectivity is a crucial factor to ensure that accreditation is not merely procedural but serves as a driver for achieving excellence in education services.

Based on this background, this study seeks to answer the following research question How does policy connectivity in strengthening accreditation instruments contribute to the realization of quality primary and secondary education services in Banten Province?

Literature Review

1. Excellent service

Excellent service is an indicator of service quality that refers to an institution's ability to deliver satisfying, consistent, and high quality services. In the context of primary and secondary education, excellent service encompasses the learning process, administrative support, interpersonal relationships within the educational environment, and the comprehensive fulfillment of students' needs. A. Parasuraman (1985) formulated five key dimensions of excellent service reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles which are relevant for assessing the quality of educational services. These dimensions have been widely applied to link service quality with the context of strengthening accreditation policies (Abdullah, 2025; Astenia et al., 2020; Awaludin, 2017; Eden, 2018; Fitriah et al., 2024; Iskanto, Jeli Nata Liyas, et al., 2022; Mustika Yanti et al., 2023; Sarrico, 2014; Suardipa & Pitriani, 2020).

In detail, the relationship between the five dimensions of excellent service and accreditation can be seen in the following table:

Table 2.
Dimensions of Excellent Service and Their Relevance to Accreditation Policy Connectivity

Dimensions of Excellent Service	General Meaning	Relevance to Accreditation Policy	Implications for Educational Services
1. Reliability	Consistency and accuracy in service delivery	Accreditation evaluates the learning process, school management, and graduate outcomes	Schools that understand and properly implement IASP 2020 tend to be more consistent in delivering learning services
2. Responsiveness	Responsive and prompt in serving users	Accreditation encourages schools to develop information and feedback systems.	Schools need to establish a responsive system for addressing complaints and feedback from parents and students.
3. Assurance	Staff knowledge and	Assessors evaluate teacher	Accreditation policy encourages the

Dimensions of Excellent Service	General Meaning	Relevance to Accreditation Policy	Implications for Educational Services
4. Empathy	competence provide a sense of security and trust	competence, human resource management, and compliance with quality standards	development of teacher and staff professionalism as a means of quality assurance
	Care and attention to the individual needs of users	IASP 2020-based accreditation emphasizes an inclusive and contextual learning approach	Schools must demonstrate concern for students with special needs and those from marginalized families
5. Tangibles	The physical condition of infrastructure, facilities, and the environment	School physical facilities are one of the key components in accreditation standards	Schools must be able to demonstrate physical improvements (classrooms, toilets, libraries) as part of excellent service delivery

Source: Author Processed

In the context of Banten, the study by Iskandar & Rasyid (2023) found that the dimensions of responsiveness and tangibles remain the main weaknesses of schools in rural areas due to limited facilities and slow service mechanisms.

2. Educational Accreditation

Previous studies show that educational accreditation instruments have not been fully and effectively connected with quality and educational service policies at the regional level.

Sagala (Idris et al., 2024; M et al., 2024; Pedhu, 2022) highlights the weak integration of national policies into local educational practices, where schools tend to focus more on fulfilling administrative requirements rather than on continuous quality improvement.

Other studies (Irfani et al., 2021; Munaroh, 2024; Rama et al., 2023; Yuniasari, 2024) emphasize the role of school principals as key drivers in linking accreditation policies with school quality management, although in local contexts such as Banten, this role has not yet been optimal. Furthermore, Jingqi & Ulmet (2019) and Sakti et al. (2025) found that many schools have not fully understood the substance of IASP 2020, particularly regarding quality culture and learning outcomes. This situation is exacerbated by the limited technical assistance provided by local governments.

In terms of inter institutional coordination, Iskamto, Liyas, et al. (2022), Rizki et al. (2024), and Sudarma (2022) emphasize the importance of collaborative mechanisms between

BAN-S/M, the Education Office, and schools. However, in Banten, such formal collaborative forums remain limited. Asyari (2019), Coutet (2022), and Gyger et al. (2019) also demonstrate that schools which use accreditation results as the basis for preparing their School Work Plans (RKS) and School Budget and Activity Plans (RKAS) are better prepared to meet the standards of excellent service.

3. Regional Education Policy

The literature on regional education policy highlights that educational decentralization has not yet functioned optimally. Alemu (2023), DiCicco & Faulkner (2024), Ebekozi et al. (2022), Gyger et al. (2019), John & Kumar (2023), Zaki Ewiss et al. (2019), and Zenkov et al. (2023) found that weak connectivity and synergy between national and regional policies hinder the effectiveness of implementation.

Meanwhile, Coutet (2022), Farawita (2024), and Muharam (2023) emphasize the limited role of local governments in promoting the implementation of accreditation policies in schools. In the Indonesian context, Nurhadi (2024) shows that regional fiscal constraints directly affect the quality of educational services, particularly in the provision of infrastructure, which is one of the key indicators of accreditation

State of the Art The state of the art of this research lies in: (1) the integration of public policy and education quality management approaches, particularly within the context of regional autonomy. (2) The use of the policy connectivity concept as an analytical lens to examine the relationship between national accreditation instruments and their implementation policies at the regional level. (3) This approach highlights the importance of policy harmonization as a prerequisite for delivering excellent educational services. **Research Novelty** This study presents several novel contributions, including: (1) A policy connectivity perspective, rather than a focus solely on the implementation of accreditation policies in isolation. (2) A focus on Banten Province as a case study, which has been rarely explored despite its complex educational dynamics such as urban rural disparities and quality gaps. (3) The integration of policy, accreditation instruments, and excellent service offers a holistic approach to understanding how policies concretely affect the quality of primary and secondary education services. (3) An empirical examination of the extent to which strengthened accreditation instruments have a direct impact on the quality of educational services at the school level not merely on administrative compliance.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014; Steven J. Taylor & Robert Bogdan, 2016) with a policy study design. This approach was chosen because the main focus of the research is to gain an in depth understanding of how policy connectivity aimed at strengthening accreditation instruments relates to their implementation in delivering excellent primary and secondary education services.

The research locus was set in Banten Province, considering that this region has unique characteristics while simultaneously facing serious challenges in education provision. Banten is known for its educational quality disparities across regions, particularly between urban areas (such as Serang City and South Tangerang City) and rural or remote areas (such as Pandeglang and Lebak Regencies). These disparities are reflected in differences in school accreditation achievements, access to educational resources, and the quality of learning services. Furthermore, Banten is one of the provinces actively promoting quality improvement in education as part of the broader agenda of developing superior human resources for Indonesia

Emas 2045. Therefore, Banten is considered a highly relevant locus to examine how accreditation policies are implemented in a region characterized by complex variations in geography, socio economic conditions, and resource availability.

The study was conducted in several selected districts/cities, namely Serang City, Pandeglang Regency, and South Tangerang City. The selection of these areas was based on the diversity of regional conditions (urban and rural), thus enabling the research to represent variations in accreditation policy implementation within different contexts.

Research Informants

The research informants include:

1. Provincial and District/Municipal Education Office Officials key actors in the implementation of education policies at the regional level, including the coordination of accreditation and quality assurance.
2. Accreditation Assessor Team (BAN-S/M Banten Province) technical implementers of accreditation with in depth knowledge of the application of the School Accreditation Instrument (IASP).
3. School Principals and Teachers at the Elementary (SD), Junior High (SMP), and Senior High School (SMA) levels direct implementers of the accreditation instrument as well as the primary actors responsible for delivering educational services.
4. School Supervisors serving as a bridge between government policies and school practices, while also ensuring the alignment of implementation.
5. Parent or School Committee Representatives representing the perspective of education service users.

The selection of informants was based on the principle of multi level and multi actor involvement in the policy cycle, the implementation of accreditation instruments, and the evaluation of educational services.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through:

1. In depth interviews, to obtain detailed information from policymakers, implementers, and education practitioners.
2. Document review, which included national regulations (Ministry of Education, BAN-S/M), regional regulations, the latest IASP, educational planning documents, and accreditation reports.
3. Field observations, to directly observe the practices of accreditation implementation and the quality of educational services in schools.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed qualitatively using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (2014), through three main stages:

1. Data reduction Data from interviews, documents, and observations were selected, categorized, and focused on relevant aspects. This process involved open coding to

identify initial themes, followed by axial coding to connect categories, and selective coding to construct narratives that explain relationships among variables.

2. Data display The coding results were organized into narratives, tables, and matrices to illustrate patterns of policy connectivity.
3. Conclusion drawing Conducted by interpreting the patterns of relationships between policies, accreditation instruments, and the delivery of excellent services, as well as linking them to theoretical frameworks and previous research findings.

In this study, a methodological question may arise as to why statistical analysis was not employed to examine the relationship or impact of policies quantitatively. This decision is based on the consideration that the research problem emphasizes processes, actor dynamics, and the challenges of policy implementation, which are difficult to reduce into mere numerical variables. Furthermore, policy data and accreditation practices are not solely quantitative in nature but are closely linked to narratives, perceptions, and the experiences of actors at various levels ranging from national, regional, and school contexts to the community. In addition, the limitations of secondary quantitative data, such as accreditation achievement indicators, are insufficient to fully explain the gap between the ideal framework of IASP 2020 and the realities of implementation in the field. Therefore, a qualitative approach is considered more appropriate, as it allows for the exploration of meanings, perceptions, and policy interactions that cannot be measured solely by numbers, while also complementing quantitative studies that tend to focus on cause and effect relationships.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Indicators of Policy Connectivity in Strengthening Accreditation Instruments

Policy connectivity refers to the interlinkages among policies across different levels of government (national, regional, school), as well as the synergy among policy implementers. In this context, several key indicators have been identified as follows:

1. Alignment between National and Regional Policies

The findings indicate that policy alignment remains partial. Although the Banten Provincial Education Office has integrated certain elements of IASP 2020 into its Strategic Plan (Renstra), weaknesses are evident in the limited technical regulations and measurable follow up mechanisms. This reduces the effectiveness of implementation, as schools lack clear operational guidelines. In other words, alignment at the macro policy level does not automatically translate into quality improvements at the micro level, particularly in schools located in rural areas that do not receive adequate technical guidance.

2. Cross Institutional Coordination Mechanisms

Although effective coordination forums exist in Tangerang and South Tangerang, their effectiveness remains spatially limited. Most other regions do not have a structured coordination mechanism, resulting in accreditation recommendations often being excluded from regional development planning. This condition highlights a policy weakness: success in one area does not guarantee equitable outcomes, and without an institutionalized coordination system, the overall effectiveness of the accreditation policy remains low.

4. School Capacity in Translating the Accreditation Instrument

The variation in school capacity shows that the effectiveness of IASP 2020 is highly influenced

by schools' internal readiness. High performing schools are able to utilize the accreditation instrument as a tool for quality reflection, while the majority of resource constrained schools treat it merely as an administrative requirement. This indicates an implementation gap: the accreditation policy has not been sufficiently effective in standardizing quality across schools, as it is not accompanied by an equitable capacity building program.

5. Utilization of Accreditation Results for Quality Improvement

The effectiveness of the policy is also questionable, as many schools still regard accreditation as a separate evaluation activity rather than a strategic planning instrument. School Work Plans (RKS) and School Activity and Budget Plans (RKAS) are often prepared in a normative manner, without referring to accreditation recommendations. This indicates that the accreditation policy lacks sufficient driving force to transform school management practices, except in areas where school principals demonstrate visionary leadership.

6. Stakeholder Involvement

The involvement of communities and school committees remains more administrative than substantive. This condition suggests that the accreditation policy has not been effective in fostering meaningful stakeholder participation. Yet, the effectiveness of quality policies is highly dependent on the existence of shared ownership. With weak participation, the impact of accreditation on transforming educational quality remains limited.

B. Indicators of Excellent Service in Primary and Secondary Education

Excellent service in education is not only related to physical facilities but also to service reliability, responsiveness, human resource competence, empathy toward students, and infrastructure comfort. Critical analysis links these indicators to the literature on educational service quality and organizational excellence theory.

1. Reliability of Educational Services

Schools with strong integration of accreditation policies demonstrate certainty in learning schedules, fast and accurate administrative services, and consistent communication. In contrast, schools in remote areas tend to experience variations in timeliness, reducing parental trust. Literature indicates that service reliability is closely associated with the internalization of quality policies and the school's resources (Ahmed, 2009; Fitrianto & Hidayat, 2024).

2. Responsiveness to Needs and Complaints

Urban schools have formal complaint mechanisms, such as suggestion boxes, call centers, and digital platforms, with prompt follow up actions. Schools in resource limited areas tend to exhibit lower responsiveness. Critical analysis shows that this difference reflects the managerial and technological capacity of schools, consistent with the literature on excellent service (Adams et al., 2024).

3. Quality Assurance and Human Resource Competence

Schools with strong policy connectivity demonstrate competent and professional human resources, effective communication, and a culture of continuous training. Schools in underdeveloped areas tend to show weaker competence. Global literature confirms that human resource competence is central to improving educational quality (Abdullah, 2025; Awaludin, 2017).

4. Empathy and Care for Students

Schools that internalize accreditation policies adopt inclusive approaches, active counseling, and structured emotional support. Critical analysis indicates that empathy is a core indicator of excellent educational quality (Astria et al., 2024). Regional disparities highlight the need for teacher training and the strengthening of local policies regarding inclusivity.

5. Availability and Comfort of Infrastructure

Urban schools possess complete and well maintained facilities and use accreditation results for planning. Schools in remote areas face limitations in basic facilities, such as toilets, libraries, and laboratories. Literature emphasizes that infrastructure is a strategic component of a quality education ecosystem (Anjani et al., 2023; Kogoya & Uruwaya, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that the indicators of policy connectivity directly contribute to both the improvement and decline of excellent service indicators in schools. Schools that are able to accurately interpret and follow up on accreditation results generally demonstrate a higher capacity to develop responsive, professional, and user satisfying service systems. Conversely, weak coordination and limited understanding of accreditation policies tend to result in stagnant, fragmented, and less adaptive educational services that fail to meet user needs. These findings underscore the importance of multilevel policy alignment and the internalization of accreditation policies into school practices as key factors for successful implementation.

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to the literature on policy science and accreditation by enhancing the understanding of how policy connectivity affects the effectiveness of accreditation implementation at the school level. The findings support the local policy adaptation theory and the principles of policy implementation that emphasize consistency between central regulations and local adaptation (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980; Hill & Hupe, 2002). They also underscore that successful accreditation is determined not only by formal regulations but also by institutional capacity, local leadership, and inter actor coordination mechanisms.

Practical Implications

The findings have direct implications for education practitioners, including:

1. Central Government (Ministry of Education and BAN-S/M): Strengthen dissemination strategies and training on accreditation instruments (IASP 2020) so that all regional stakeholders have a consistent understanding and can implement policies effectively.
2. Regional Governments (Provincial and District/City Education Offices): Develop derivative regulations or technical guidelines tailored to local conditions to ensure accreditation results can be operationalized in a practical and sustainable manner at schools.
3. Schools (Primary and Secondary Education Units): Use accreditation results strategically in the preparation of the School Work Plan (RKS) and School Activity and Budget Plan (RKAS), ensuring that quality improvement programs are targeted, evidence based, and measurable.
4. School Supervisors and Accreditation Assessors: Build collaborative partnerships so that supervision and accreditation mutually reinforce each other, improving mentoring effectiveness and reducing fragmented policy implementation.

5. Education Practitioners and Researchers: Utilize the findings as a guide to design school quality improvement interventions, particularly in areas with limited capacity, such as inclusive schools or schools in 3T regions (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost areas).

In conclusion, this study not only advances academic insights regarding policy connectivity and accreditation but also provides practical guidance for decision making and improving educational services on the ground.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article is based on the development of research funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia through the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme, under Grant No. 125/C3/DT.05.00/PL/2025. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for the trust and support provided, which has made this research possible.

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