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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## The Implementation of Multigrade Policy in Probolinggo Regency: Challenges and Program Sustainability

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**ABSTRACT**

Multigrade is one alternative solution to solve education problems caused by the lack of teachers, unequal distribution of teachers, and lack of students in every learning group. These problems need a particular policy regulated by the government because education is right for every citizen. This research explored the overview of program success, challenges, and the potency of multigrade sustainability. The research methodology employed was descriptive qualitative, which was collected through observation, interview, and documentation. The result is analyzed, interpreted, and verified. A case study approach was conducted considering the multigrade policy is only applied in certain areas with particular conditions. Research is organized in Probolinggo Regency, East Java. Research revealed multigrade policy is appraised properly to resolve the teacher shortage problem and a minimum number of students in each study group. However, there are still big challenges to the sustainability of multigrade policy. As a result, multigrade programs can not be applied systematically in other regencies which have similar problems.

**KEYWORDS**

Policy Implementation; Multigrade; Challenges; Good Practice, Sustainability

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### 1. Introduction

Education is a human right, which means every human has the right to education under legal force without discrimination. State, through the national education system, must be able to ensure access to education and the increase of education quality, especially the children as the successor to the sustainability of nation and state. The government has attempted to manifest the commitment to fulfill the education right of all citizens, one of which is a 12 years compulsory education program. This program is aimed to increase the opportunity and extend basic education services, which are quality and access for society. Equality in education access in Indonesia meets various challenges, one of them being an unequal distribution of teachers. Moreover, there are many primary schools with small numbers of students, and some schools in remote areas have a number of students, which is under the eligibility limit (less than 10 pupils in each study group). Therefore, the government created regulations stated in The National Medium-Term Plan (RPJMN) 2015-2019; the first regulation is school regrouping or merging schools, second policy is to keep schools with multigrade programs.

Government regulation related to multigrade learning has been applied in Probolinggo Regency through Regent Regulation No.18 of 2019 about the management of multigrade instruction (multigrade teaching). This policy regulates multigrade learning at the primary school level, which covers curriculum guidance, lesson planning, and teacher management. Technically, the teacher combines grades one and two in one class. As a result, the teacher teaches more than one class at the same time and place. Implementation of a multigrade policy is a local government intervention through education authorities to overcome teacher

shortages and a small number of students in every learning group. Implementation of multigrade learning is the result of problem identification revealed by the INOVASI program and Education Authorities of Probolinggo District. The INOVASI program is a partnership between the Australian and Indonesian governments. Implementation of the multigrade policy provided an incredible response from several parties, increasing student attendance and positive transformation in teachers' teaching patterns which was initially using the variation of concrete learning media, which was the teacher's creation to the existence of a growth mindset to manage fun learning. Consequently, it has a direct effect on pupils' learning achievement. It can be seen in the enhancement of pupil learning results for literacy and numeration. Numeration enhancement varies between 8-18 points (scale 0-100), as illustrated in figure 1. it can be seen that there is significant improvement before multigrade implementation (baseline) and after the practice of multigrade learning (endline)

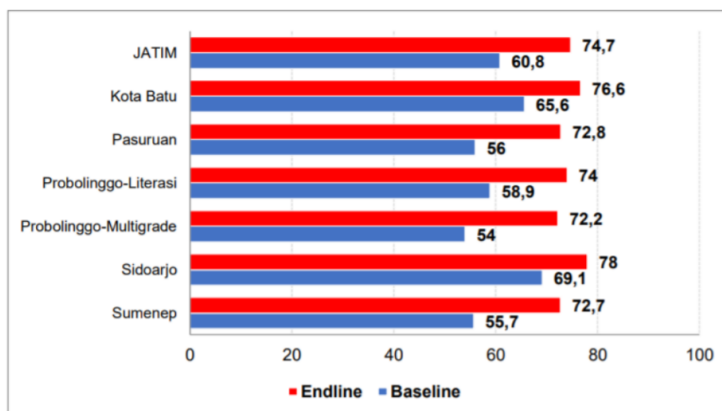


Figure 1. Numerical Achievement of INOVASI program 2018 –2020

Meanwhile, the enhancement of literacy scores varies from 13-28 percent (scale 0-100), as illustrated in figure 2. It shows the increase of pupil literacy by 28% before the multigrade approach is employed.

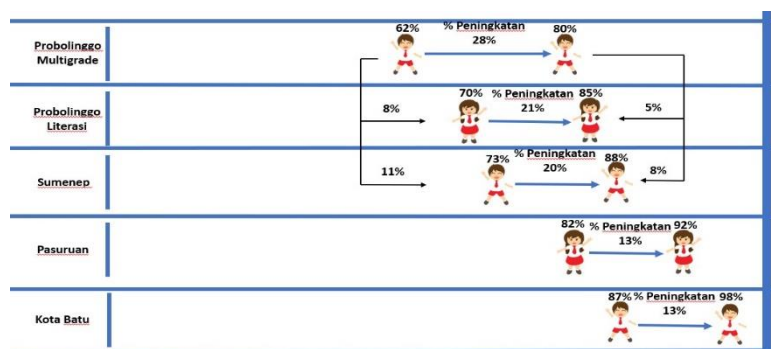


Figure 2. Literacy Achievement of INOVASI program 2018 – 2020

The multigrade policy is also applied in several countries as an effort to resolve education problems. Little (2006) indicated multigrade practices in developing countries generally emerged because of an imbalance between the number of teachers and students in the National education system framework based on grade. It is different in developed countries, especially England, multigrade is implemented in schools with a large and constant population. In this case, the multigrade policy is based on pedagogical choices in line with an effort to promote active and independent education. In China, there are 420.000 schools practicing it; 22% of primary school in Mexico and 25% of primary school in England is also implementing this policy. Even in developed countries such as the Northern Territory of Australia, in 1988, there were 40% of schools carried out this system, and 29% of the class in the Netherlands (A.Djalil:2005).

This research was purposed to complete previous research about the implementation of multigrade policy. Previous research showed the implementation of a multigrade policy led to a significant change in students learning in class. However, there is no specific research exploring the challenge and sustainability of multigrade policy. This research raised three questions: (a) what is good practice and challenges during the implementation of multigrade policy (b) what is the dominant factor on the sustainability of multigrade policy (c) What is support provided by stakeholders in implementing multigrade policy?

This study also explored the state's role in the sustainability of multigrade policy to make it into national level regulation with comprehensive support from the central government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and the Technology Republic of Indonesia.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

The policy is a study of regulation or program to achieve a certain goal, so it is always related to the effort to resolve a problem. Islamy (1997:17) mentioned the concept that the purpose of policy contains three elements, that is, identification and targeted goal, tactic or strategy to reach the desired goal, and providing various inputs to enable concrete implementation.

The correlation between public policy or state policy and the policy issues is not surprising because, according to Dunn (1999:110), public policy is basically interrelated choices made by government officials regarding issues such as housing, energy, health, education, welfare, crime control, etc. Relations between actors inside government circles and actors outside government in formulating public policy issues have been stated by Wahab (1997:50) that: parties who are not government or private parties are able to influence the development of a formulation of state policy".

Education policy is understood as part of public policy, which is public policy in the education field. Therefore, education policy is the policy on education that is proposed to attain the goal of country development in the education field as one of country development goals (Tilaar & Riant Nugroho, 2008: 264). Education policy is the elaboration of education vision and mission as unity between theory and education practice. Margaret E. Goertz (Riant Nugroho, 2008:37) explained education policy is related to the efficiency and effectiveness of education funds.

In the simplest form, the policy cycle consists of policy development, implementation, and evaluation, although Janssen dan Helbig (2018: 100) suggested a more detailed definition cycle, policy development, policy implementation, policy enforcement, and policy evaluation. Based on context, the approach to developing policy can be top-down or bottom-up (Stachowiak, Robles, Habtemariam dan Maltry, 2016). A top-down approach means action or policy delivery can be centered; meanwhile, a bottom-up approach is local stakeholders can fully participate in starting policy and designing the implementation. Implementing policy can be easily done by translating written policy documents into action. It involves the creation of a "policy delivery system" by developing a certain program to obtain the policy result (Grindle, 1980). Even Though the policy is not similar to the program, program implementation functions as a process of applied regulation. Therefore, according to Grindle (1980:6), every research about:

*'... process of policy implementation almost involved research and analysis on real action program which has been designed as a media to reach wider policy goal.'*

Policy implementation can only be started when a related organization has determined the goal and clear target, developed a program to reach the goal, and allocated enough resources and agents to take action (Andrews, Pritchett dan Woolcock, 2017). Meanwhile, there are many factors that can be contributed to the implementation of effective policy (Cerna, 2013); Andrews, Pritchett, and Woolcock (2017) revealed the organization's ability to apply the policy is the key factor

According to Anderson, as quoted by Kusumanegara (2010: 53), in policy process studies, policy actors are derived from several institutions encompassing superstructure politics and infrastructure. Experts identify the policy actor that is: legislature, executive, judiciary, pressure groups, political parties, mass media, community organizations, bureaucracy, NGO, private sector, and think tank groups. These actors or stakeholders have characteristics showing their power in influencing policy processes. Moreover, Maryono et al. in Latupapua (2015: 25) explained the stakeholders could be grouped into a. primary stakeholders b. key stakeholders, and c. secondary stakeholders.

Understanding the role of each stakeholder in policy implementation, Nugroho (2014, 16-17) classifies the role of stakeholders as follows: a. Policy creator b. Coordinator c. Facilitator d. Implementer and e. Accelerator.

A problem that must be noticed in the context of policy implementation is durability. Policy durability refers to the policy capacity to maintain stability, coherence, and integrity as time goes on (Patashnik, 2008). It means the constant pursuit to implement policy concepts and purposes in arbitrary conditions. Therefore, a policy can be considered durable if it can be adapted to the arbitrary situation with high flexibility, but it moves to obtain the determined goal. Nixon (2016, quote Andrews, 2008) determined three characteristics of durable policy: reception, authority, and ability. Reception refers to stakeholders who accept the reason and the need to reform with financial consequences and others. Authority means capacity and the power of involved people must enforce the policy as the result of the constitution, while ability is defined as the capacity and individual skill to conceptualize and carry out the policy. All three are intersected; they create a "reformation room." It represents the durability and effectiveness of policy implementation.

Although there is no policy that can be 100 percent successful or fail, the success policy can be indicated by sustainable advantages (Berchtold et al., 2020). Reaching sustainable advantages is one of the biggest challenges in developing and applying policy. Several studies showed the change program is frequently effective during the implementation, but it fails to be maintained after a while. Reviewing the report of an educational intervention program funded by foreign countries in Indonesia, Cannon (2017) discovered there is only 12 percent of the project which is having actual sustainability, which means the program benefit is continued 2 years or more after the project is done. Meanwhile, the sustainable concept is still up for grabs and different from one field to another (Farley dan Smith, 2013); in policy studies, Shediak-Rizkallah and Bone (1998) identify three indicators that a policy or program is maintained; beneficiary is continuously achieved results; the activity continues in government organization, and government stakeholders develop the capacity to continue the project.

Similarly, Moore, Mascarenhas, Bain, and Straus (2017) identify the five constructions generating the term sustainability: after a certain time, continuing to deliver the program, preserving the change of individual behavior, evolution or adaptation; and sustainability benefit. They explicitly mentioned 'after a certain time period' as one of the meaningful indicators, as stated by Cannon (2020), that sustainability can not be measured until relevant intervention is done for a normal period of time, for example, minimum of two years.

In order to accommodate the meaning of sustainability, several classifications are promoted as follows (Cannon, 2020:68):

*"Sustainable possibility is a prediction created on or approaching the project finishing that advantage will be continued after the assistance from a donor is made. Actual sustainability is the conclusion about the sustainability reached after evaluating the evidence two years or more after the project is done; that benefit will be continued after the assistance is done. Dynamic sustainability is the sustainable learning and benefit adaptation of intervention to achieve development and continuous change. Complementary (or supportive) sustainability is a continuation of good practice approach and resources utilized in developing previous education and the continuity of experienced personnel from the previous work. Scale out benefits expansion and practice in the spatial dimension. Scale out only has significance if the better practice is maintained in the origin school and other schools. Dissemination, a similar concept to be scaled, means the benefit is distributed, widely available, and implemented using local resources outside the original development site*

### **3. Methodology**

This research utilized qualitative descriptive methods. A case study approach was employed because the multigrade policy is only conducted in particular areas such as Sukapura Sub-district Probolinggo Sub-district.

In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the main instrument during research. Data were gathered using in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling technique; an in-depth interview was started by interviewing the head of the Office for Management of Regional Revenue, Finance and Asset, the head of the Education Office, The education secretary, The head of primary school sector, The Head of Curriculum Section, supervisor, headmaster, teacher and pupils in school applied multigrade. Then, data analysis techniques were applied to an interactive model (Miles et al., 2014) with the following procedures: condensing data, displaying data, and conclusion: describing/verifying.

### **4. Result and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Identification of Education Problems in Probolinggo Regency**

East Java Province consists of 29 regencies and 9 cities, one of which is the Probolinggo regency. It is administratively bordered by Madura Strait in the north, Situbondo regency in the east, Lumajang and Jember Regency in the south, and Pasuruan Regency in the West.

Sukapura District is one of 24 districts in the Probolinggo regency. It has a 10.208,53 hectare area or 6,02% of the Probolinggo Regency area. The distance between the Sukapura district capital and to regency capital is 42 km, with fairly good road access to be used for two-wheeler and four wheel vehicles. This district is bordered by Lumbang district in the north, Kuripan and Sumber district in the East, Lumajang regency in the South, and Pasuruan regency in the west. Sukapura district consists of 12 villages which encompass 40 hamlets, as displayed in table 2. the area of largest village in a row is Sapikerep, Ngepung, and Sukapura.

The data from Central Bureau Statistics (2021) mentioned the dynamic of the Sukapura population from year to year is very volatile and tends to decrease. In 2015, the population of this district was 20.402 people, then it decreased to 20.270 people in 2016, the population is back down to 19.405 people in 2017, and it increased to 19.644 people in 2020. the ratio of births and deaths and very low migration every year. Besides, the fairly strong traditional ties, fertile natural conditions, and ability to provide vacancies impacted on lack of pull and push factors for the community to migrate (Subagiarta, 2015).

In Indonesia, like in other countries, multigrade are frequently arising because of needs and unplanned, especially because of teachers' absence (World bank, 2011; Luschei & Zubaidah, 2011). it is similar to the Probolinggo regency; the factors underlying the multigrade implementation are:

a. Availability and unequal distribution of teacher

Homeroom teachers in primary school are the main factor causing the arisal of multigrade practices. When the number of teachers is limited, the existing teacher will be responsible for teaching more than one class, both in the same room and in different rooms. Each school ideally has 6 homeroom teachers, one religion teacher, and one physical education teacher. Most schools in the Sukapura district are small schools that possess less than 50 pupils (Dopodikdasmen, 2018). Data from the Education Ministry (2020) said there are 72.976 retired teachers. It contributes to a teacher shortage of 1.020.921 people. It increased in 2021; the teacher shortage is predicted to reach 1.090.678 people, and retired teachers 69.757 people. In 2022, the teacher shortage will be 1.167,802 people, with 77.124 people retiring. Then, in 2023 teacher shortage will increase to 1.242.997 people, with 75.195 teachers retiring. In 2024, the teacher shortage is predicted to be 1.312.759 people, with a number of retired teachers are 69.762 people. It means the limitation of teacher availability is a problem on a national level, not only in the Sukapura district. Baseline INOVASI data (2018) in table 1 revealed a low teacher-student ratio in the Sukapura district.

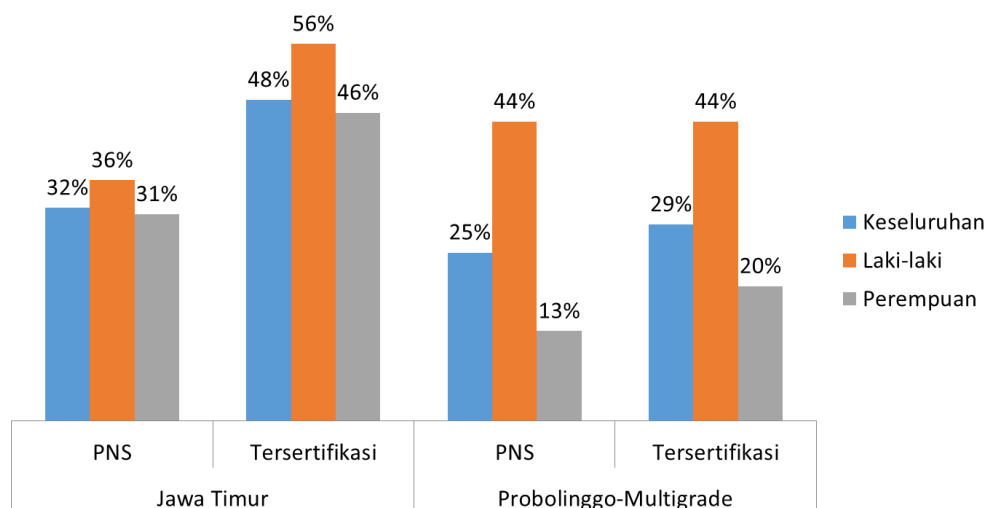
**Table 1. Teacher-Students Ratio**

	<b>Probolinggo-Multigrade</b>	<b>East Java</b>
The Average of Students Number per School	49	194
The Average of Teachers Number per School	6	15
Teacher-Students Ratio	8: 1	13: 1

The data above confirmed the teacher-student ratio in Indonesia has decreased to a low level. According to international standards, the growth of educator numbers is faster than the increase in students' participation in education. Nowadays, this ratio is under the international benchmark related to good education quality, and new evidence in Indonesia shows this level has a low correlation to the learning result. In other words, the analysis result indicated the effort to increase the teacher-student ratio would not have a big impact on students learning results (Al Samarrai, Syukriyah; 2013).

According to qualitative studies done by INOVASI, the imbalance of teacher and student numbers is caused by the distance and high transportation fees because of bad road access and weather. It is mainly perceived by non-permanent teachers. No incentive to manage small schools and small numbers of students contribute to teachers' motivation in small schools. In addition, the number of civil servants and certified teachers in a small school is less than the average of a partner school in East Java (refer to graph 1.1)

**Graph 1. Teacher Percentage Based on Status as Civil Servant and Certified Teacher**



Efficiency is needed in entire Indonesia regarding teacher placement and teacher-student ratio. The multigrade learning model can be one solution. However, teachers need to have experience in implementing an active learning approach first before they are recognized for multigrade learning. It is possible to utilize a multigrade learning approach in other areas with good preparation so learning quality improvement can be obtained. In order to make this good practice continue, it is crucial to ensure the multigrade learning model is supported by the correct policy.

b. Small number of students

School is considered less efficient if each class with less than 20 pupils is taught by one teacher. In reality, multigrade is practiced when there is a small number of students along with a limited teacher or classroom. Table 2 describes the number of primary school (SD) pupils in Sukapura District in the last three years. Referring to the Education ministry regulation, no 17 of 2017, paragraph 24 said the minimum number of primary school pupils in each study group is 20 people. As a result, there are many schools that have not fulfilled the minimum standard called small schools.

**Table 2. The number of Primary School Pupils in Sukapura District**

SD/MI	Number of pupils		
	Oktober 2016	Oktober 2017	November 2018
SDN Sukapura I	196	189	191
SDN Sukapura II	117	126	128
<b>SDN Sukapura III</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>SDN Sukapura IV</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>43</b>
SDN Sapikerep I	87	86	86
SDN Sapikerep II	115	102	98
<b>SDN Sapikerep III</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40</b>
SDN Jetak	104	111	111
SDN Wonokerto I	88	86	84
<b>SDN Wonokerto II</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>61</b>
SDN Ngadirejo	81	82	79
SDN Sariwani I	84	76	74
<b>SDN Sariwani II</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>39</b>
SDN Pakel I	80	80	80
SDN Pakel II	106	97	92
SDN Kedasih I	114	111	110
SDN Kedasih II	87	86	94
SDN Ngepung	183	160	175
<b>SDN Ngadisari I</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>SDN Ngadisari II</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>SDI Nurul Hikmah As Sholeh</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>53</b>
TOTAL	1.831	1.799	1.787

Sources: Monthly Supervision Report 2019

A small number of students can occur because of various reasons. In urban areas or areas with dense populations, a lack of students can happen because of competition among schools and the existence of popular schools. In contrast, a lack of students in remote areas with low population density is sure to happen. As well as in Sukapura District, population density tends to be low. Besides, the population density in Ngepung district is only 155, and the highest population density is in Sukapura village, which is 601 (Central Bureau Statistics, 2019). However, if it looks further at the hamlet level, there are two remote hamlets with a total population of 11 % of the village population. These two hamlets are Curahwangi and Watulumpung.

Different conditions with the number of students in densely populated schools can happen because of competition among schools to admit the students. This condition actually happened in villages in Lumbang and Krucil Districts. Rampant development of Islamic Primary Schools or Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) is also encouraged by strong Islamic life in the area with the majority of Madurese people. Consequently, there are many state primary schools that have lost students, as admitted by teachers and headmasters. The root problem is no regulation that regulates the distance between schools coordinated between education

authorities as a primary school in charge and the Ministry of Religion office as an Islamic Junior high school in charge. Moreover, there are many efforts made by Islamic junior high school administrators to attract students, such as a personal approach, hiring local teachers, providing free school supplies, etc. Information stated it makes fewer students who register to state primary school. This tendency is not found in the Sukapura district because most people have various ethnicities and religions, strong cultural ties, and respect for diversity.

**4.2 Good Practise and Challenges to Implement Multigrade Policy**

**4.2.1 Good Practise of Multigrade Implementation**

The implementation of a multigrade policy obtains a marvelous response from various parties. Students' attendance at school increases because they can socialize with many classmates. A positive change occurred to the teacher teaching pattern, which was initially using the variation of concrete learning media, which was the teacher's creation and the existence of a growth mindset to manage the fun class. As a result, it has a direct impact on students' learning achievement; it is proven with the enhancement of students' scores for literacy and numeration. Numeration enhancement varies between 8-18 points (scale 0-100), as illustrated in figure 1. it can be seen that there is significant improvement before multigrade implementation (baseline) and after the practice of multigrade learning (endline)

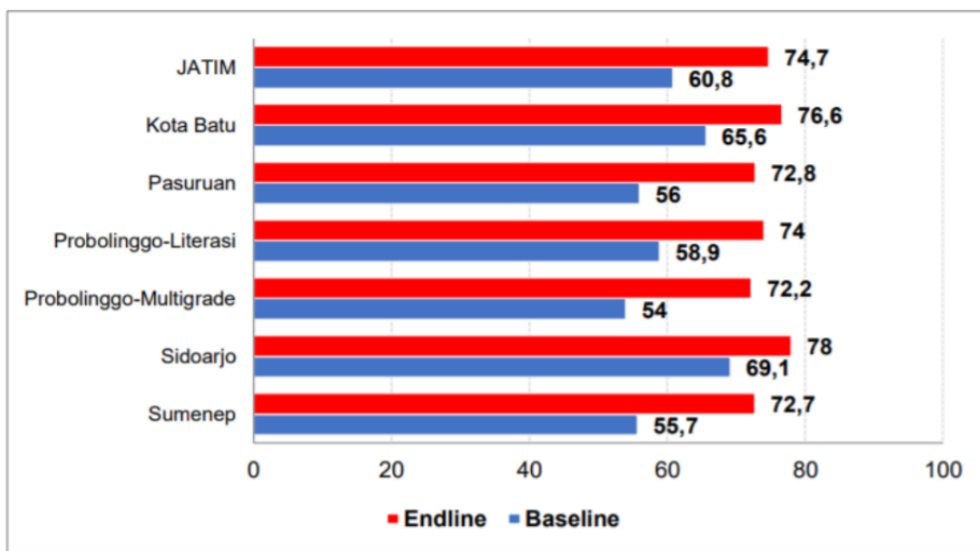


Figure 1. Numeration achievement of INOVASI program 2018 – 2020

Meanwhile, the enhancement of literacy scores varies from 13-28 percent (scale 0-100), as explained in figure 2. Figure 2 informed the increase in students' literacy is 28% after the implementation of the multigrade approach in school.

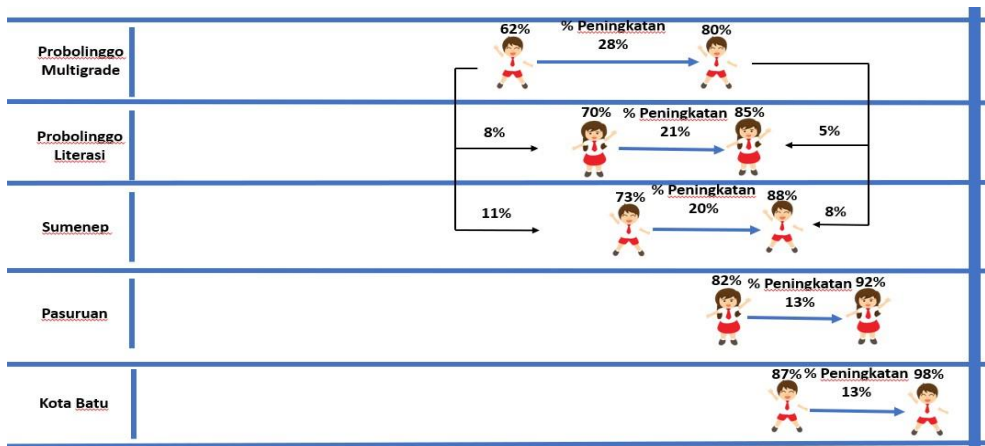


Figure 2. The achievement of literacy INOVASI Program 2018 – 2020

The pupil's parent positively reacts to the implementation of multigrade because if there is an absent teacher, the instruction runs normally. Besides, multigrade is considered able to teach togetherness values, to live in harmony and peace in accordance with the social norm. The effect of multigrade implementation in school is able to increase competitiveness; pupils in a lower grade will be motivated to learn from the higher grade students. Meanwhile, the higher grade students will learn more actively because they will be ashamed if they are defeated by the lower grade pupils.

The success of multigrade is not only visible at the school level. In 2020, Probolinggo Regency obtained first place in the public service innovation competition held by East Java province. This reward denoted the multigrade policy in Probolinggo Regency has been attempted to increase public service quality in the education sector.

**4.2.2 Challenges to Implement Multigrade Policy**

- a. Different teacher incentives for non-civil servant and civil servant influences teachers' ability to buy learning material. The limitation of school funds, teachers frequently provides learning material with their own initiative.
- b. The limitation of capacity and teachers' creativity in designing lesson plans according to multigrade demand is still a burden for some teachers.
- c. In the administrative sector, school worries related to the filling of Dapodik (basic education data). In implementing multigrade, the total teacher teaching hours will exceed the maximal teaching hours because the teacher teaches more than one class.
- d. Mutation of a teacher who has been trained in a multigrade module is transferred to other schools which do not use a multigrade learning approach.
- e. Less optimal monitoring and evaluation from education authorities through the local supervisor.

**5. The Implementation of Multigrade Policy in Probolinggo Regency**

According to Grindle (1980), "In general, the task of implementation is to establish a link that allows the goals of public policies to be realized as outcomes of governmental activity. It involves, therefore, the creation of a "policy delivery system," in which specific means are designed and pursued in the expectation of arriving at particular ends."

Furthermore, Grindle (1980) suggests that policy implementation can be analyzed in two ways, firstly, the content of policy analysis, and secondly, the context of implementation. The policy implementation model, according to Grindle (1980), can be seen in Figure 2 below:

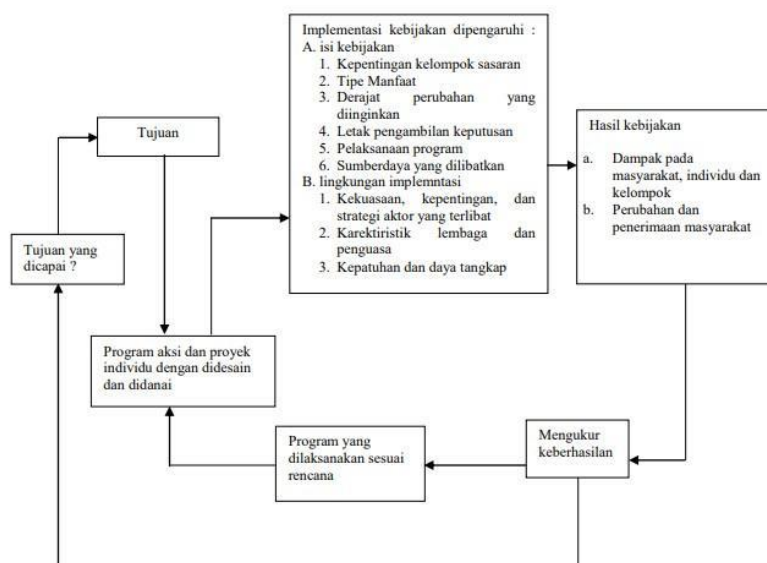


Figure 2. Implementation as a Political and Administrative Process Source: Grindle (1980:11).

According to Grindle (1980), the implementation of multigrade policy in Probolinggo Regency can be explained as follows:

1. Policy content

- a. Target group interests

Multigrade implementation in Probolinggo Regency is generally based on a small number of students influenced by geographical conditions wherein schools are located in difficult locations, so it only admits students from the surrounding



area. Then, the tendency to have fewer children impacts the lack of students. In Lumbang and Krucil districts, rampant development of Islamic primary schools with various approaches and efforts to find out new students impact on the founding of the small school. It does not happen in the Sukapura district because of strong customs ties and religious tolerance. As a result, the tendency to establish schools affiliated with certain religions is low. A sufficient number of teacher, teacher absence, and ability to reach school is defining factor in implementing multigrade in some schools. Lack of teachers is the main problem perceived in Probolinggo regency, both retiring teachers, mutation, and absence. The degree of teacher absence is low because of a fairly far domicile, status as a non-permanent teacher with a low salary, and school's geographical condition, which is hard to reach, and the influence of the weather. However, the government cannot ignore the right of Sukapura District citizens to obtain quality education services. A policy to apply a multigrade learning method is an alternative solution to resolve those problems.

b. Benefit type

Education policy in the reform era has generated constitution No 20 of 2003 about the national education system as fundamental in developing national education. In chapter 5, paragraph (1), "every citizen has the same right to obtain a quality education," Chapter 11, paragraph (1), "government and local government must provide service and easiness and have to ensure the implementation of quality education for every citizen without discrimination." Action to reach these goals is described in The National Medium-Term Plan 2015-2019 which mentions one of policy direction and strategy of education field is to increase the management and teacher replacement through multigrade implementation. Therefore, multigrade has been an important concept to be understood in providing basic education services in Indonesia. Education problems that occurred in Probolinggo regency are; teacher availability, unequal distribution of teachers, and a small number of students in every learning group.

Probolinggo Regency has several particular areas which are hard to access because it is located on a plateau with limited transportation access. There are small schools with less than 16 pupils in each learning group. On the other hand, in the regulation of education and culture ministry no 17 (2017) chapter 24, the minimum number of students in each study group for the primary school level is 20 pupils. The head of education authorities of Probolinggo regency, in his speech on regency planning meeting INOVASI program in 2018, spoke 41,2% of primary school (SD) consists of 232 state primary schools and 29 private primary schools in Probolinggo regency is a small primary school wherein there is minimum service standard. Furthermore, he stated the lack of homeroom teachers in small schools in Probolinggo regency reaches 191 people (INOVASI, 2019). According to the regulation of education and cultural ministry number 23 (2013), the number of students in every learning group for primary school cannot be more than 32 pupils. The education profile of Probolinggo regency indicated a high score on repeated class (AMK) in early grade, that is 6,9 % for grade 1; 1,9% for grade 2; and 1,7 % for grade 3 based on NIEP data 2008 (<http://dapo.dikdasmen.kemdikbud.go.id/> 2008). Although it is data for the entire Probolinggo regency, it represents the high AMK that can happen because there are many factors that influence the provision of education services, including the condition in remote areas. The implementation of a multigrade policy in Probolinggo regency can provide access to education services in the area, which has limitations on the number of teachers and students like Sukapura district.

c. The desired degree of change

The Multigrade program is well accepted by the Education Authorities and Development Planning Agency at Sub-National Level (DPASNL) because it is considered in line with Regional Medium-Term Plan (RMTP). This program is assumed to be able to solve the teacher shortage problem at the regency level and enhance access and education quality in general, so multigrade implementation will be able to complement existing educational programs. Therefore, the multigrade policy is expected to resolve the gap in basic education service in Probolinggo regency, especially in small primary schools which lack students in one study group based on minimum service standards corresponding to the regulation of the Education and Culture Ministry no 23 (2013). The effort to reform is started by increasing teacher and headmaster competence in conducting effective and efficient multigrade learning in small schools in Sukapura District.

d. The position of policy maker

Implementation of multigrade policy in Probolinggo regency is the responsibility of Education authorities through Probolinggo Regent Regulation No. 18 of 2019 about multigrade management at the primary school level. This policy regulates the implementation of multigrade learning in primary schools and includes curriculum guidance, learning design, and teacher management.

e. Program implementation

Program implementation is carried out through a Memorandum of Understanding 2018-2019 and continued in 2019-2020 between the East Java governor as the government of East Java province and the ministry of education and culture represented by the head of the research and development agency together with partner regent/major. Probolinggo Regency is one of INOVASI's partners in East Java, where it conducts the multigrade program. The manifestation of program acceptance can be noticed in fund allocation in the Regional Revenues and Expenditures Budget for multigrade sustainability in Probolinggo Regency. Moreover, the Education Authorities Head explained that there are eight pilot

schools on multigrade implementation. It began with the election of the headmaster and the establishment of a specific group for multigrade. There are eight schools chosen considering the pupil number, 40-50 people per school, that is SDN Ngadisari I, SDN Ngadisari II, SDN Sukapura III, SDN Sukapura IV, SDN Sapikerep III, SDN Sariwani II, SDN Wonokerto II, and SDI Nurul Hikmah As Sholeh. Those schools are formed into one particular group, that is, the Multigrade group. In addition, it also selected several Regional Facilitators who are a combination of teachers, headmasters, supervisors, and stakeholders at the regency level. Group formation and appointment of regional facilitators are supported by the decree of the education authorities head Probolinggo Regency. Multigrade practice in Sukapura District is conducted by combining students in one classroom by ignoring the grade. Students from different grades sit in the same group. Meanwhile, the teacher teaches using the lesson plan which has already been made before and combining the same theme for different grades. Learning material is simultaneously delivered. Then, students do assignments with different competence demands among grades. Consequently, there is no wasted time using this method because students do not have to wait for a teacher who teaches in another class. Teachers can also provide intensive guidance to their students. Students learning results and several learning materials will be lively decorating the wall beside the particular learning corner such as literacy and learning media.

f. Involved resources

According to Widodo (Sutojo, 2015:4) claimed that "implementation is a process which involves several resources including human, fund, operational ability, by government or private (individual or group) to reach the determined goal by the policy maker." Education Authorities Probolinggo Regency is the main stakeholder who has authority on planning, implementation, and multigrade evaluation programs. A stakeholder is also related to The Development Planning Agency at the Sub-National Level (DPASNL), which coordinates the planning of development activity at the regency level. Other government offices at the regency level, such as women's empowerment and child protection service and villager empowerment office, have not had activities related to basic education or potential activity which can be synergized to support the multigrade success. At the school level, teachers and headmasters are the implementers of multigrade learning. Development of multigrade implementation is done through a teacher working group, a medium for teachers who are multigrade implementers to discuss learning preparation and discover solutions to problems faced in class. The local supervisor monitors and evaluates the multigrade implementation in each school.

2. Implementation scope

a. Power, interest, and strategy of the involved actor

Stakeholders' commitment is a crucial component in the success of policy implementation. Commitment usually generates authority and/or institutional acts to ensure the implementation runs well in achieving the desired result. In Probolinggo Regency, almost all stakeholders have a high commitment to policy implementation to attain success.

The multigrade policy is well responded to by Education authorities and DPASNL Probolinggo Regency because it is considered in line with the vision and mission of Probolinggo regent stated on RMTF of 2019-2023. This program is assumed to be able to solve teacher shortage problems and able to increase access and education quality in general. Therefore, multigrade implementation will be able to complete existing education programs.

As the manifestation of acceptance, the government of Probolinggo Regency has supported in the form of fund allocation from the fiscal year 2020-2022 for multigrade replication in other districts which have the potential to possess similar education issues. The area of replication does not use the cooperation concept, which means funding and guidance are fully done by the Probolinggo government through Education Authorities without the intervention of the INOVASI program. The confirmation of a multigrade replication area is mentioned in the decree of Education Authorities Head No: 420/002/426.101/2020, with 91 implementer schools spread in 22 districts. Then, in 2021 the number of institutions will be added to 17. As a result, the total number of institutions that conduct multigrade learning programs is 116 institutions of 534 primary schools (SD) in Probolinggo regency.

b. The characteristic of institutions and ruler

Policy implementation can be started when related organizations have determined the purposes and clear targets, developed a program to attain the goal, and allocate enough resources and agents to take action (Andrews, Pritchett dan Woolcock, 2017). Meanwhile, there are various factors that can contribute to the effectiveness of policy implementation (Cerna, 2013); Andrews, Pritchett, and Woolcock (2017) confessed the organization's ability to apply the policy as a key factor. In implementing a multigrade policy, the government of Probolinggo regency positively responded to the involvement of outside parties (INOVASI program), which was the initiator and had a great role in formulating and developing multigrade policy.

c. Obedience and perception

Obedience and the response of policy implementer is the main determinant. Consequently, the thing which will be explained in this section is how the obedience and reaction of policy implementers in responding to a policy, Grindle

(Agustino, 2008) is. Besides, Van Mater and Van Horn (Agustino, 2008) proposed attitude and obedience or implementer rejection will greatly affect the success or failure of implementing public policy. The approach to policy development can be top-down or bottom-up (Stachowiak, Robles, Habtemariam, and Maltry, 2016). Multigrade in Probolinggo regency is a policy with a bottom-up approach, which means it is the formulation result of stakeholders who understand the education problem. As a result, local stakeholders can fully participate in multigrade implementation in the school.

#### **6. The sustainability of multigrade policy in Probolinggo Regency**

A policy will not fully succeed or fail (McConnell, 2010). Meantime (Cannon, 2017) mentioned actual implementation period is not two years - the minimum period before a policy can be evaluated for sustainability (Cannon, 2017). It means the sustainability of multigrade policy in Probolinggo regency is in a stage that is possibly continued with conditions or certain requirements which must be fulfilled. The dominant factor which influences the sustainability of multigrade program are:

- Stakeholders commitment  
It is in the form of concrete support, such as budget availability in the Regional budget and adequate facilities in schools as a medium to support multigrade learning.
- Stronger institution collaboration, a collaboration between internal and external institutions. These factors are manifestations of running authorities and accepting all implications of the policy concerned.
- Comprehensive support from the central government through the dapodikdasmen system in admitting and accommodating the multigrade approach.

#### **7. Stakeholder Support in the Implementation of Multigrade Policy in Probolinggo Regency**

Discovering support and roles of each stakeholder in the implementation of multigrade policy in Probolinggo regency. Nugroho (2014, 16-17) classified stakeholders' roles:

##### **a. Policy creator**

The regional government of Probolinggo regency, through Education authorities, is the decision maker and multigrade policy maker. The result of education problem identification is the strategic proposal of education authorities to be followed up by internal stakeholders. Coordination of the multigrade program to DPASNL to be integrated with planning and budgeting in the Probolinggo regency regional budget. It was started in the regional budget 2019 until 2022, planning a budget to support multigrade and the program expansion in other districts having a similar problem to the Sukapura district.

##### **b. Coordinator**

In the context of multigrade policy implementation, stakeholders who act as coordinators are education authorities. Education authorities coordinate with other stakeholders, both internal and external

##### **c. Facilitator**

Regional facilitators are the people who facilitate and fulfill the needs of the target group. The facilitator consists of a supervisor, headmaster, and teachers in the Sukapura district. Facilitators have accepted training at the province level conducted by INOVASI. The duty of a facilitator is to train teachers in multigrade schools and guide them during the implementation in class. In 2019, education authorities published a decree for a facilitator as a companion of a multigrade school in Probolinggo regency.

##### **d. Implementer**

Education authorities are the implementer of multigrade policy, from the planning and budgeting through a strategic plan. Meantime, the headmaster and teacher are the implementer and target group of multigrade policy

##### **e. Accelerator**

One of the initiators and accelerators who have a big role in formulating and developing the policy until policy publication is INOVASI. According to Anderson, as quoted by Kusumanegara (2010: 53), policy process studies the policy actor derived several institutions encompassing super structure politics and infrastructure. Experts identify the policy actor that is: legislature, executive, judiciary, pressure groups, political parties, mass media, community organizations, bureaucracy, NGO, private sector, and think tank groups. INOVASI is the partnership between the Australian government (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade/DFAT) and the Indonesian government (Ministry of Education and Culture), which aims to accelerate the advancement for better learning results for Indonesia students by focusing on three main things in conducting the pilot project, that is: the classroom instruction quality, support quality for teaching and learning for all children. Probolinggo regency is one partner regency of INOVASI in East Java.

## 8. Conclusion

In general, the people of Sukapura district have a positive perception of education. However, the parent participation degree varies because of the economic condition and their educational background. Besides, the village location, especially hamlets, also determines the public view openness. In some situations, there is still conflict between cultural conditions, public economy, and participation in education; for example, when there is a custom celebration, children prefer to be absent, and children prefer to work both temporarily and permanently cause of family economic needs. However, these two things lessen along with the increasing public awareness of education.

Multigrade is a solution to fulfill the needs and resolve education problems in the Probolinggo regency, especially in the Sukapura district. In the previous condition, the teacher teaches two or more grades in turn without a lesson plan and only aims to provide activities for students. Through a multigrade policy, teachers can teach two or more grades by preparing learning according to the students' competence per grade.

Moreover, the lack of teachers and students in school and geographical conditions are the reasons for implementing a multigrade policy in the Sukapura district. School location and geographical conditions, which are difficult to access, frequently cause the limitation on teacher's absence. Long distances, difficult locations, and bad weather are the big challenges for teachers to teach in small schools. The teacher's domicile, which is far from school, and status as a non permanent teacher with a minimum salary affect low teacher attendance.

The multigrade policy can be done in an area with similar geographical and demographic conditions to the Sukapura district, which leads to the number and rate of population growth being low. It can also be applied in other schools with similar issues, teacher shortages, and a small number of students.

The regional government of Probolinggo regency showed a very good response to the multigrade program; it can be noticed from the policy and fund allocation to support multigrade implementation for now or next. Decree of Education Authorities head of Probolinggo regency followed by regent regulation. The existing policy provides a medium to implement multigrade, but there are some elements that must be completed so that policy that has been published can be more comprehensive, such as incentives for a teacher who implements multigrade, teacher and headmaster distribution adjusted to the multigrade training, and allocation of additional school operational assistance fund (BOS) to provide learning media.

The effect of the multigrade policy greatly affects students' attendance in school. The students are excited to come to school because the class is crowded; they are happy because they can ask the lesson which is not understood by the higher grade pupil who learns together. As a result, it has a direct impact on pupils learning achievement. It can be observed from the enhancement of students learning results in terms of literacy and numeration.

Besides, multigrade is able to enhance competitiveness; lower grade pupils will be motivated and learn from the higher grade pupils. Meanwhile, the higher grade pupil will be more active during learning because they do not want to be defeated by the lower grade students.

Policy implementation obtained full support from stakeholders, and the optimization of each stakeholder corresponded to its own capacity.

Challenges that must be faced for multigrade sustainability with stakeholder commitment, a collaboration of stronger institutions, and comprehensive support from the central government through the dapodikdasmen system.

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