

The Achievement Ideology and Top-Down National Standardized Exam Policy in Indonesia: Voices from Local English Teachers

Amirul Mukminin

Jambi University, Indonesia
amirmuk@yahoo.com

Eddy Haryanto

Jambi University, Indonesia
eharyanto@yahoo.com

Makmur

Jambi University, Indonesia
adlasalsa@ymail.com

Failasofah

Jambi University, Indonesia
ocesnyaba@yahoo.co.id

Nunung Fajaryani

Jambi University, Indonesia
inung_qonita@yahoo.com

Yulhenli Thabran

Jambi University, Indonesia
yulhenli@hotmail.com

Suyadi

ABA Nurdin Hamzah, Indonesia
sueyadi@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative inquiry was to explore and describe the perspectives of local English teachers on the National Standardized Exam [NSE] policy as a high-stakes exam to gauge student performance nationally at four senior high schools in Jambi City, Indonesia. The theoretical framework of the ethics of critique, justice, and care was used to guide this study. Data for this study are collected through a demographic background survey and in-depth interviews with fifteen local English teachers. The demographic data were analyzed descriptively. The interviews data were analyzed using within-case and cross-case displays and analyses. Two salient themes with their sub-themes that emerged were (1) negative perspectives on the practices and accuracy of the NSE policy and (2) unintended consequences the NSE policy (curriculum and instruction, teaching and learning, teacher motivation, student motivation, less attention to non-tested disciplines, and widespread cheating). This study provides information for policy makers, school leaders, researchers, and teacher educators to understand how the policy is implemented at the school level. Policy implications are discussed.

Keywords: *Achievement ideology; national standardized exam policy; Indonesia; local English teachers; unintended consequences.*