

GETTING IN-DEPTH VIEW TO NATIONAL EXAMINATION (UN) AND NATIONAL-STANDARDIZED SCHOOL EXAMINATION (USBN) IN INDONESIA: RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research are to describe the respondents' perceptions toward the national examination and to explore the barriers encountered by the respondents in implementing national examination. To meet the objectives of the study, descriptive qualitative is chosen as a research method. A descriptive design namely survey is chosen for this study because it collects the details of current attitude, knowledge and experience of respondents on the implementation of the national examination and national-standardized school examination. The research was conducted in Indonesia, comprising three regions, namely Eastern, Central, and Western part of Indonesia. Six provinces were selected which proportionally represent the regions of East, Central and West Indonesia. The data gathered from questionnaire were analyzed by using descriptive analysis. The results show that the implementation of the UN and USBN, which has been ongoing, is in accordance with the SOP that has been established by the BSNP. Most principals and teachers felt that they were not involved in the preparation of the SOP, but the provincial education office made the translation of the SOP in the form of USBN technical instructions and shared to the education unit. All teachers get sensitized about USBN from district/city education schools and services. Implementation of National Exams and USBN can be used to improve performance. But, the current USBN at elementary school is only to improve student achievement in cognitive aspects only. Regarding to its limitation of study, further study would be suggested to explore other aspects of national examination such as quality control of national examination question and wash-back of the examination.

KEYWORDS

National examination (UN), National-standardized national examination (USBN), perception

1. INTRODUCTION

There are at least three interrelated terminologies in learning and education, namely measurement, assessment, and evaluation. Measurement is the activity of comparing something using a certain standard criteria. Measurement results are quantitative and carried out with the aim to assess

learning progress, etc. (Rosidin, 2017). Assessment is a systematic activity to collect, analyze and present information accurately and is useful for interpreting the learning success of students. According to Stiggins (2012), assessment is a process carried out in systematic activities in order to gather information on a certain phenomena. Assessment can be explained as to see how far students learn at school and what is needed to achieve expected learning outcomes (Rosidin, 2016). The evaluation includes the two previous things, namely measuring and assessing. Evaluation is a process of collecting data to determine the extent, in what terms, and what parts of the educational objectives have been achieved. If not, it aims to determine which parts have not been achieved, and why it is so. (Arikunto, 2010).

A good evaluation involves all aspects of student development. Therefore, evaluation must comprehensively be integrated with learning achievement, nature, behaviour, interests, ambitions, tendencies, environment, physical disorders, etc. (Buchori, 2006). In this case, schools and teachers know better the conditions of their students. A good final evaluation can be done by each school unit or through the regions by referring to a standard evaluation system. This means that to know the development of students can be done through the UN; not a determinant of graduation, but only a barometer of each student's ability. Evaluation includes a wide range of understudies' capacities - articulate - issues of issues, age of potential arrangements, redefinition of their reality sees, eagerness to make a move toward a perfect. Understudies are expected additionally to assess their own learning and to reflect as a gathering about the moves they have made (McNeil, 1996).

National examination is basically one of the methods used to gather information about the quality of national education. This information is done by using a set of examinations and students as the source of the information. Information about this quality is expected to be a reflection of the school-based management held in each school. However, not all of the goals and functions of the UN that have been formulated are generally understood or known. As stated by Sobri (2004) that in its implementation, there are still problems because the national examination is a requirement for graduation of students in pursuing their education in certain educational levels. According to Sulistyono (2006), UN expectations and opportunities actually still exist. The National Examination should be seen with a positive attitude and optimism to further spur the regions to move forward in the corridor of national development guidelines, not a groundless defensive attitude. This is done while doing technical refinement at the UN as a testing system. Furthermore, Hidayah (2013) states that the National Examination must always be evaluated in terms of its implementation.

Related to the characteristic profile of national exam questions, Jusuf *et al.* (2018) revealed that overall questions created by the organizers of the central and regional UN on the dimensions of cognitive processes reveal with an average aspect of remembering (C1) 1%, understanding (C2) 13%, application (C3) 35%, analysis (C4) 41%, evaluation (C5) 9%, and create (C6) 2%. This shows that the developed UN questions are still in the category of middle order thinking skills.

Other research related to the evaluation of the implementation of the national standard school final examination (UASBN) was conducted by Kelvin (2013), who found that: (1) the preparations for organizing the UASBN had been running very well; (2) the level of socialization achievement has reached up to 100%; (3) the implementation of training and preparation of UASBN questions have been carried out in all districts/ cities; (4) the doubling and security of the exam questions are in accordance with the SOP; (5) the distribution of the UASBN question has been carried out well so that no region is experiencing delays; and (6) the UASBN supervisory system is in accordance with the provisions of one study room supervised by two teachers. Furthermore, Muzayanah (2015) has reviewed the quality of the items of Islamic subjects in national-level school exams. The results showed that the quality of the question was still low.

Thus, the implementation of the UN and USBN which has been taking place so far needs to be studied in more deeply in order to improve the quality of education in the future. Therefore, the formulation of the problems discussed in this article are a) how are the respondents' perceptions toward the national examination? b) what are the barriers encountered by the respondents in implementing national examination?

2. METHOD

To meet the goals and objectives of the study, it is very crucial to select the appropriate research design for achieving the aims (Parahoo, 2006). The descriptive qualitative was chosen as an appropriate research method since it uses fixed design in solving research question and has a detailed method of data collection and also data analysis (Robson, 2007). A descriptive design, namely survey, is chosen for this study because this survey collects details of current attitude, knowledge and experience of respondents on implementation of the national examination and national-standardized school examination (Robson, 2007). The questionnaire involving large sample was used as method of data collection. The research was conducted in Indonesia, comprising three regions, namely East, Central, and West, with the samples being randomly picked. Six provinces were selected which proportionally represent the regions of East, Central and West Indonesia by using random sampling technique. The data gathered from questionnaire were analyzed by using descriptive analysis.

3. RESULT OF THE STUDY

3.1 Results of the Relevance

Regarding to the respondents' experience in involving the UN and UNBK implementation, nearly 100% of respondents argued that the implementation of both UN and UNBK are relevant with the standard operational procedure (SOP). In figure 1, the detail information about the relevance of implementation is displayed. The implementation of the UN according to the respondents of the Education Services who handle the UN matter is almost entirely good (90.9%) relevance with the standard. Moreover, the principals/madrasas stated that UN had been running in accordance with SOP reaches up to 96.3%; it is said that it had run according to the SOP. Likewise, according to teacher respondents, almost all respondents (93.6%) stated that the UN had been running based on SOP. Meanwhile, there were a small number of respondents who stated that UN was not in accordance with SOP (3.7%- 9.1%).

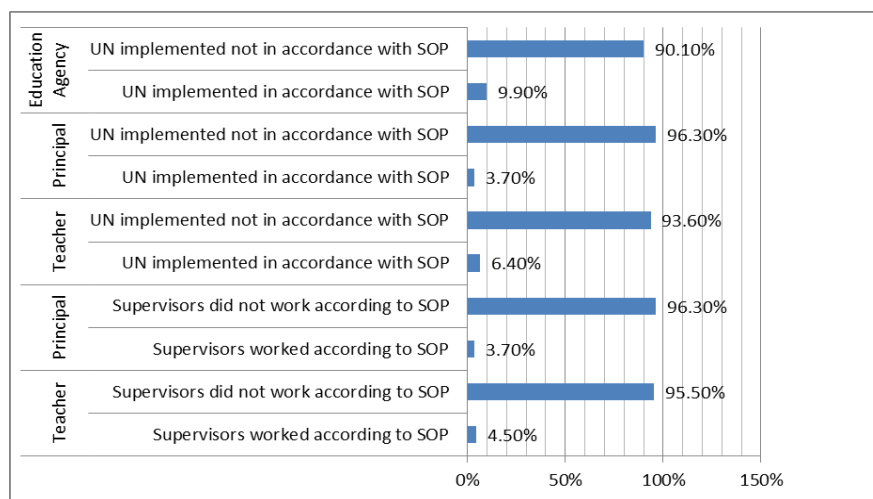


Figure 2. UN Implementation

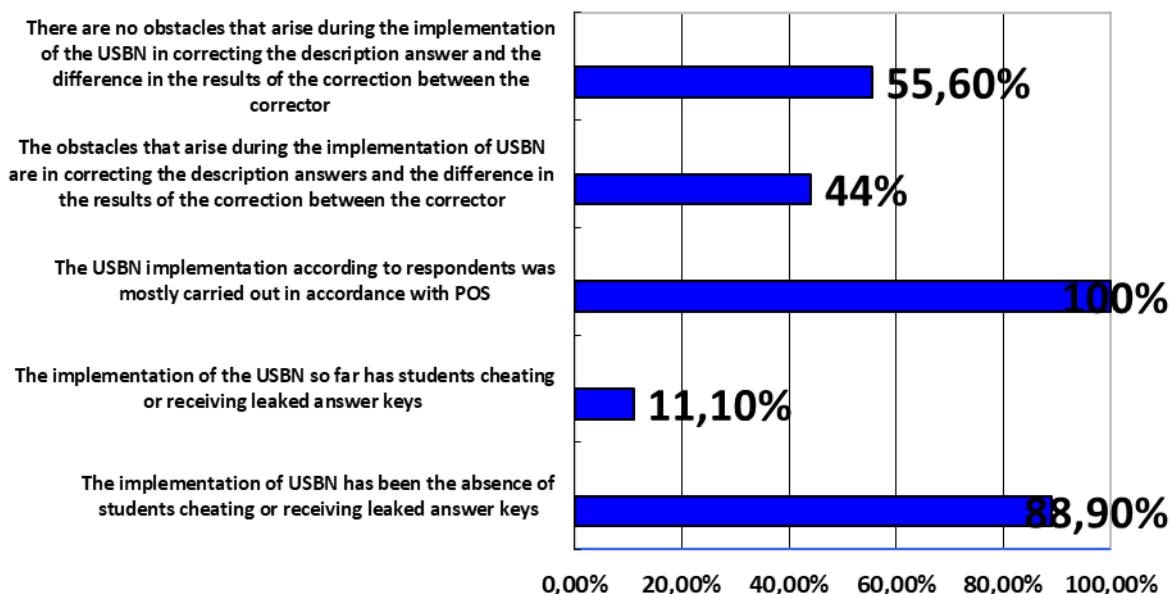


Figure 2. USBN Implementation (Rosidin et al., 2019)

In the case of the implementation of USBN, as it is illustrated in Figure 2, respondents from the Education/Ministry of Religion argued that overall of USBN implementation has run in accordance with the National SOP (100%). As for the implementation of USBN, so far, a small number of students who cheated or received illegal key answer (11.1%) stated that they were true and as many as 88.9% stated they were not there. This shows that in USBN, although a small portion of the correct answers may leak or students who cheat is stated, it still needs to be anticipated.

3.2 The Barriers of the Implementation

Table 1. Implementation of UN

Education Office	Principal	Teacher
36.4% students cheated during UN or received answer keys	18.5% students cheated during UN or received answer keys	25.5% students cheated during UN or received answer keys

Table 1 stated that as far as UN implementation, especially with the Paper and Pencil (UNKP), 36.4% of respondents from the Department of Education argued that there were students who cheated or received answer key leaks. In contrast, more than half (63.6%) stated that there were no students who cheated or received the answer key leak. Likewise, according to small portion of School Principals respondents (18.5%), the implementation of National Examination during this time students who cheated or receive the key still occurred and almost all respondents (81.5%) stated that it did not occur. Moreover, 74.5% of teacher respondents claimed that there was no cheating and question leakage, although 25.5% of them are still argued that some students cheat and receive the answer keys. These findings show that there is still a leak of the answer key or student cheating in paper and pencil-based National Examination (UNKP).

Regarding to questions that demand higher-order thinking skills and were tested in UNKP and UNBK, 55.8% of student respondents stated that they were able to answer these UN questions, and the rest (44.2%) stated that they could not answer those questions. Related to the UN and UNBK mode, the same result of respond is gained regarding the difficulty of questions. Some respondents (50%) of students claimed that the questions were easier and another 50% of respondents stated that the questions were more difficult. Based on the interview section, national examination which is claimed by students can improve achievement. In addition, the exam can increase motivation

since there is a competition to be the best. However, recruiting students in the high school education unit suggests that the national examination cannot increase preservation; it can only increase motivation as an exercise in higher education selection (university selection).

Respondents who came from educators, almost all (94%) stated that USBN was the right model for now. As for a small percentage (4%), they stated that USBN has not fully become a representation to be used as a model in measuring student learning outcomes. Likewise, in the context of geographical conditions, all respondents from the education office, 81% of teachers and 78.4% of principals, stated that USBN is currently the right type to measure student learning outcomes. However, in the context of the relevance of USBN with the social conditions of students in the number of percentages, there is still a small part of the stakeholders stating that they are not following the social conditions of students.

In terms of the relevance of USBN with the psychological condition of students, almost half of the respondents said they were anxious or had a psychological burden when USBN was implemented. However, this anxiety can be significantly influenced by the preparation efforts of all stakeholders, especially in this case, the teacher, in order to be able to comprehend such comprehensive material to the students. According to students, USBN can increase motivation and achievement, because they will be active in learning, having targets and getting up early, learning more diligently in order to be accepted into good schools. Respondents hoped that the USBN would still be paper-based because it could be scribbled, underlined, circled, or even written on. USBN can improve management and motivate students to take a university entrance test. However, there are also some students who expect computer-based exams because they are easier and more practical.

Table 2. Facilities and infrastructure for national exams

Education Agency	Principal	Teachers
63% schools in the regions already have complete facilities	40.7 % schools in the regions already have complete facilities	59,3% stated that they did not have complete facilities

As shown in Table 2, as many as 63% of respondents from the Education Agency and educators stated that schools in the regions already had complete conditions for conducting national exams, and only a small percentage of respondents answered that they did not have them, which was 36%. Responses from elementary / MI, junior high school / MTs, and high school / vocational / MA schools stated that 40.7% of schools in the regions had complete facilities to conduct national exams, and 59.3% stated that they did not have complete facilities. Almost all respondents (90.9%) from the Education Agency / Ministry of Religion, Head of School, and teachers stated that they need to be facilitated with the above-mentioned facilities for the school to be able to manage the UNBK, and only a small percentage (9.1%) said it was not necessary. The small portion, it turns out, was counterintuitive to UNBK, which wanted to stay afloat to carry out the exam using the paper and pencil-based of national examination (UNKP). One main reason is due to the limitations of school facilities or infrastructure.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Related to the implementation of UN and UNBK, the study found relevant with the standard operational regulation (SOP). This finding is similar with Suwandi's finding which related to the evaluation of the implementation of the national standard school final examination (UASBN). The study has concluded: (1) the preparation of the UASBN organizers has run very well; (2) the level of socialization achievement has been 100%; (3) the training and preparation of UASBN questions have been carried out in all Regencies / Cities; (4) The doubling and security of the exam questions are in accordance with the SOP; (5) the distribution of the UASBN question has been carried out

well so that no region is experiencing delays; and (6) the UASBN supervisory system is in accordance with the provisions of one study room supervised by two teachers (Suwandi, 2013).

Moreover, the quality of questions on national examination was suggested 50:50 related to the level of difficulties. 50% of respondents stated that the questions were difficult and others (50%) stated the questions were easier. This finding is also supported by Muzayanah (2015) who conducted a study of the quality of the PAI items on the national school exam. The results showed that the PAI package A had better quality than package B. The A and B package only had 4% items each with a good level of difficulty. A good distinction index is only achieved by 18% of items in item A and 10% of items in problem B. This means that if tested in SMAN 1 Ungaran, the quality of PAI items still needs to be improved. In general these results do not yet represent the quality of the PAI items on USBN 2013/2014 because the data were obtained from only one school.

The other highlight in this research is about the effect of the national examination. This study revealed that the examination brings some effects such as improving teachers and students' motivation in the learning process regarding the achievement of graduate. This finding is also in line with Mardapi and Kartowagiran's finding (2009) that suggest UN can improve both teachers and students' motivation in teaching and learning process. Furthermore, this result is also supported by another finding by Raharjo (2012) which argued that examination had positive and appropriate perception regarding the implementation of national education standards. Meanwhile, the regulation has also some disadvantages of such as making students anxious or had a psychological burden when USBN was implemented, parents, teachers and principals. It is known that high anxiety occurred in various parties, triggers many accidents along the implementation of the National Examination. This finding is relevant with research finding of Harmiyuni and Sailan (2018) which suggested that national examination makes learners overburden.

The present study also found that the implementation has some barriers such as lack of facilities and infrastructures. This is relevant to Nursyam's research finding (2017) that found some barriers dealing with the lack of facilities and infrastructure to support education in schools. Therefore, it is suggested that the National Examination needs some improvement both internal and external facilities.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study and the discussion, the conclusions of this study are presented as follows.

1. The implementation of the UN and USBN, which has been implemented, is in accordance with the SOP that has been established by the BSNP. Most principals and teachers felt that they were not involved in the preparation of the SOP, but the provincial education office made the translation of the SOP in the form of USBN technical instructions and shared to the education unit. All teachers get sensitized about USBN from district/city education schools and services.
2. The implementation of National Exams and USBN can be used to improve performance. But, the current USBN at elementary school is only to improve student achievement in cognitive aspects only.

Regarding its limitation of the study, further study would be suggested to explore other aspects of national examination such as quality control of national examination question and washback of the examination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to deliver great thanks to The Center for Educational Assessment (Puspendik), Agency of Research and Development (Balitbang) of Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture on the funding that has been given to this research, also thanks to all participants who were involved in this research.

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