

*Research Article*

# What Makes Finnish Curriculum Successful? A Comparative Reflection to Indonesian Curriculum

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## Abstract

This study examines the successful implementation of education system in Finland and attempt to draw some comparative reflection towards Indonesian curriculum. The greatness of Finnish curriculum has been positively admitted by many countries and proven through several claims, achievements, surveys and studies. In general, there are several factors that guarantee the successful implementation of education quality in Finland, namely holistic curriculum framework; play-based early education; limited standardised testing; teacher autonomy and professionalism; comprehensive teacher training; equitable educational opportunities; collaborative learning environment; and emphasis of student well-being. This analysis study is categorised as literature study in which the data and analysis for this study were obtained from previous studies published in academic journal articles. The findings suggested that there were several factors that totally distinguish the Finnish and Indonesian curriculum. To put in a nutshell, Indonesia is multicultural and crowded-population country which became the main challenge for the government to distribute an equal access, unlike what Finland implemented the “education for all (equal)”. The welfare of teachers in Indonesia was also considerably low compared to teachers in Finland, hence this simultaneously influenced their professionalism. Even worse, the trust issue occurred in whole society in Indonesia result to the disintegration between the actors of education and the policy makers in Indonesia.

## Keywords

comparative reflection; Finnish curriculum; Indonesian curriculum;

## Introduction

The Finnish education system has received considerable global recognition and praise due to its perceived superior approach to education. The reputation of Finland's education curriculum, which has regularly been ranked among the top in the world, is primarily related to this achievement (Sahlberg, 2015). Finnish education curriculum is often considered superior since it encompasses some principles.

There are some reasons which make Finnish curriculum successful. According to Kelly, Merry and Gonzalez (2018), there are three key principles namely trust, collaboration and well-being which contribute to successful implementation of Finnish school system. Moreover, Mihajlovic (2016) in his book also added that *education for all, culture of trust, support system, school well-being, and teachers' education and competency* are five fundamental facets contributing to Finland's success in education. In detail, according to OECD (2016), there were eight factors that contributed to the greatness and effective Finnish education curriculum, namely *holistic curriculum framework; play-based early education; limited standardised testing; teacher autonomy and professionalism; comprehensive teacher training; equitable educational opportunities; collaborative learning environment; and emphasis of student well-being*. With all the positive claims Finland achieved in its education system, there is one question: can Finnish education system be a good model and inspiration to education transformation in other countries?

On the other hand, Indonesia, with over 260 million population, 436,638 schools (early childhood education, kindergarten, primary school, junior high school and senior high school) (Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023), the challenge for Indonesian education system to improve and boost the access and quality is becoming the main spectre (Sukmayadi & Yahya, 2020). Indonesian curriculum has undergone many changes over the time due to several factors, namely national politics, demands and needs from society and the development of industry and technology (Setiawan, 2020). Until today, the expectation of Indonesian citizen for a brighter and improved quality of education in Indonesia could barely be achieved.

Plenty of studies has drawn the comparison between Indonesian curriculum and Finnish curriculum in several facets. A study from Chen and Wijaya (2019) entitled "Equity and Inclusion in Education: A Comparative Analysis of Finnish and Indonesian Curriculum Policies" compared that the Finnish curriculum is characterized by a strong emphasis on equity and inclusivity, as evidenced by the Comprehensive School concept, which ensures equal access to education for all students regardless of background. Decentralization policies empower local communities and schools to tailor the curriculum to meet specific needs while fostering trust in educators. Additionally, Finland's reading culture and emphasis on teacher professionalism contribute to high-quality education outcomes. In contrast, the Indonesian curriculum faces challenges in ensuring equity and inclusion due to political influences and frequent changes driven by shifts in government policies. Despite efforts to integrate noble values and cultural needs into the curriculum, the dynamic nature of Indonesian education reforms poses obstacles to achieving long-term stability and inclusivity.

Similarly, Smith and Hasan's (2018) article provided valuable insights into the comparative analysis of the Finnish and Indonesian curriculum frameworks. By examining key aspects such as philosophical foundations, political influences, decentralization policies, and cultural considerations, the authors highlight significant differences and similarities between the two educational systems. The Finnish curriculum stands out for its emphasis on equity, inclusivity, and trust in educators. The Comprehensive School concept ensures equal access to education for all students, while decentralization policies empower local communities and schools to tailor the curriculum to meet specific needs. In contrast, the Indonesian curriculum faces challenges in ensuring equity and stability due to political influences and frequent changes in government policies.

In their comparative study, Lee and Utami (2017) shed light on the crucial role of teacher professionalism and trust in education in both Finland and Indonesia. Finland's emphasis on teacher professionalism and trust contributes to its high-quality education system. Teachers are highly respected and trusted, leading to a strong sense of professional responsibility and initiative. In contrast, Indonesia faces challenges in ensuring teacher professionalism and trust due to various factors, including political influences and a lack of autonomy. Overall, the study underscores the importance of



prioritizing teacher professionalism and trust in education policy and practice. By learning from Finland's example and implementing strategies to enhance teacher professionalism and trust, Indonesia can work towards improving educational outcomes and fostering a culture of excellence in teaching.

This research backdrop examines the fundamental elements that distinguish the Finnish education curriculum with Indonesian current curriculum as reflection and the underlying factors contributing to its perceived excellence. This study would likely highlight the implication of Finnish education system as consideration and input for Indonesian's effort in developing the educational curriculum.

## **Method**

This study's main objectives were to outline the comparison between Finnish and Indonesian curriculum in terms of factors affecting the development of both curricula, the educational philosophies, cultural values and norms, the influence and implication of the implementation of both Finnish and Indonesian curricula. This study employed a literature study methodology that enables the researchers to deeply illustrate and characterize a single phenomenon (Yin, 2014). The data used in this paper's description was taken from books and papers from pertinent prior research.

A descriptive review was used in this study to convey the findings and discussion. The search for pertinent journal papers that had been published was carefully narrowed down by the researcher, who then categorized them into specific topics. Researchers could detect interpretable trends or make general judgments regarding the advantages of current conceptualizations, propositions, methodologies, or findings using a descriptive review (Paré et al., 2015).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **The Figures Affecting the Curriculum Development Process in Finland and Indonesia**

During the 40-year reformation toward educational system, Finnish curriculum development dominantly was affected by the role of policymaker, namely; board of council; Finnish national board of education; municipalities, local government; schools, and even the book publisher. The curriculum is an educational tool shaped by the decision making of many different administrative levels. In Finland, curriculum functions as a part of the steering system of education (Vittika, et al., 2012). In its operation, the foundation of Finnish National Curriculum is based on the Basic Education Act. Basic Education Act is a provision that set and arrange the curriculum. Later, this provision is being actualized by the member of council (The Council of State). The Council of State then determines the general goals of education and the time allocations for various subjects. Principally, Finnish National Curriculum functions generally as the national core curriculum, but it also outlines the local curricula as the authorised format. In this case, The National Board of Education has the duty to develop the national curriculum, which outlines the local curricula (The Finnish National Board of Education, 2006).

Then, having designed the national core curricula and outlined the local curricula, other figures are responsible for the next flow. In Finland, education providers form their own local curriculum. In this case, all schools in the municipality area are given the authority to form their local curricula. Before being implemented, the curriculum proposal should be approved by the school officials of the municipality. Municipalities and schools are granted autonomy in organizing education and implementing the core curriculum. (Halinen and Järvinen, 2008). Accordingly, the role of teachers as the education provider will enact the school autonomy in implementing the local curricula. Beside teachers, other education resources also shape and support the teaching practice in schools. In this case, the role of publisher in publishing the textbooks and other learning material is considerably



important. Previously, all textbooks were approved and authorized by the National Board of Education. Yet, since the local autonomy is operated, the textbooks now are independently published by the private publisher that interpret curricula into educational resources (Vittika, Krokfors, & Hurmerinta, 2012). Reasonably, these all steps are necessarily taken in order to ensure freedom to make individual choices based on the local needs of different schools, with the core curriculum serving as a common national basis. Local decision-making is also seen as a means of increasing local officials and teachers' commitment to the implementation of the curriculum. Their active involvement in the process and therefore their ownership of the curriculum is reinforced by the autonomy and freedom they are afforded (Vittika, Krokfors, & Hurmerinta, 2012).

Moreover, the process of Finnish national curricula does not stop at this stage. Some other figures also contribute to the development of Finnish curriculum. Since national core curriculum has approached the local authorities, it encompasses several levels of administrative works. The process of making the national core curriculum is a democratically structured and it is not purely governed by the stakeholder. During the curriculum reformation from 1994 and 2004, the Finnish national core curriculum has been operated as the effort maintained between a broad network of administrators, unions, education providers and schools. Educational professional, parents and a wide range of society and community are consulted and their views are taken into account in the process (Vittika, Krokfors, & Hurmerinta, 2012). Parents crucially affect in experiencing the effect of curricula implementation through their children. Parents decided which category of school that their children should enter. Parents are also invited to the Board Council curriculum meeting to deliver their aspirations.

All in all, by considering all the process run by certain figure in developing the Finnish curriculum, there are some explicit and stated purposes of Finnish National Curriculum. Curriculum in Finland is defined principally by the decree of The Finnish National Board of Education. National Curriculum of Finland is called as The National Core Curriculum, in which encompasses two parts. First, The National Core Curriculum includes the objectives and core contents of teaching for all school subjects, also describes the mission, values, and structure of education. It also describes the conception of learning and goals for developing the learning environment, school culture and working methods (The Finnish National Board of Education, 2011). Moreover, Vittika, et. al. (2012) also contemplated that as an educational steering document, the Finnish curriculum stated at least three purposes. Firstly, Finnish curriculum as an *Administrative Document*, in which taking a part of the national steering system of education. Secondly, as an *Intellectual Document*, since it defines and recreates knowledge that is culturally significant, and also reveals current conceptions of knowledge. Lastly, Finnish curriculum as the *Pedagogical Document*, in which works as a tool for teachers, provides pedagogical advice support, and sets guidelines for teaching and learning.

Meanwhile, during the hierarchy changes happened in the educational system, there are also several figures that contribute in the reformation and the development of Indonesian curriculum. Generally, the human resources are the most contributing factors in developing curriculum both formally and informally. Formally, since first national curriculum until now, the role of stakeholder is absolutely crucial. Even, in Indonesia, the change of new president and the Minister of Education simultaneously change the concepts, ideology, ideas, values and certain purposes. From many factors, the political will of the government and the political paradigm are the most powerful influence in change and development, as well as the perfection of the curriculum from time to time (Alhamuddin, 2005). Moreover, there is an Educational Administrator that systematically plan, arrange, manage and monitor the implementation of curriculum. Moreover, according to the Sukmadinata (1997), the Educational Administrator consist of: Educational Director, Curriculum Development Centre, Government (Central, District and Sub-District), and School Principal.

Practically and systematically, Centre-level administrators work with educational specialists and subject-matter experts at universities and seek approval primarily in the preparation of school



curricula. On the basis of these core frameworks and core programs local administrators (district heads) and local administrators (districts, sub-districts, and principals) develop school curricula for their areas that are appropriate to local needs. The principals have the authority to make operationalization of the education system in each of these principal schools which are continuously engaged in the development and implementation of the curriculum, providing encouragement and guidance to the teachers. Although teachers can develop their own curriculum, they often have to be encouraged and assisted by administrators. Then, local administrators should work with school principals and teachers in developing curricula that meet the needs of the community, communicate the education system to the community, and encourage curriculum implementation by teachers in the class.

Secondly, the role of education experts would be important to scientifically, logically and wisely offering the concept of the curriculum. The education experts that position as the professional education lecturer in universities, learning institution and research function to consider and offer a curriculum concept that is most suitable for the recent circumstances happening in the society. Sukmadinata (1997) believed that the knowledge and insight that are owned by the educational researcher and experts will be valuable in developing the curriculum model and selecting the appropriate and contextual learning material.

Thirdly, the role of school principal is the key to authorize and operationalize the curriculum system into schools. Sukmadinata (1997) formulated several roles of school principal. First, principal as the manager, in which coordinate the activities of planning, organizing, implementing, leading, and controlling all efforts to achieve educational objectives. Secondly, school principal as the innovator, in which producing the brilliant ideas and creative innovation to create a renewal educational system in school. Lastly, principal as the facilitator, in which maintaining the communication and connection with the society related to the issues in education, and interpret the needs of society and the change of culture and the new generation to the curriculum content.

Next, the role of teachers is also crucial. Teachers become the direct actor that involve in actualizing the curriculum purposes into teaching and learning process. The professionalism and high competencies toward curriculum performed by the teachers in school activity may guarantee the achieved national learning objectives (Alhamuddin, 2005). Moreover, Sukamdinata (1997) concluded that even though teachers are not directly involved in designing the curriculum concept, teachers are responsible in implementing curriculum purposes in the classroom through designing the teaching and learning methods, directing the learning approach, designing the assessment and evaluation of students learning development, and importantly emotionally encourage, motivate, and advise the students through cooperative and competitive learning environment.

## **Understanding the Educational Philosophies, Cultural Values and Norms in Finnish and Indonesian Educational System**

The establishment of curriculum was philosophically influenced by the norms and cultural values of certain countries. In Finland, the idea of equality and equity became the philosophical factor of Finnish curriculum establishment in the 1970. Sahlberg (2015) pointed out that in Finland, equity means having a socially fair and inclusive education system that provides everyone the opportunity to fulfil their intentions and their dreams through education, which transcend mere universal access to school. In the 1970s, the concept of Comprehensive School was introduced, in which emphasised to the sense of equity and pluralism (Väljjarvi, 2005). According to Gramsci (2006), the idea of Comprehensive School gives the opportunity for all children to enroll in the same schools regardless of various ability criteria or academic results. In short, all students equally received the same opportunity for school. Nowadays, all students work together in heterogeneous groups, and support for students with special



needs is closely integrated in regular classes. (Sarjala, 2002; Linnakylä & Välijärvi, 2005.) Heterogeneous grouping seems to favour lower achieving students, in particular, but at the same time the Finnish system has managed to keep the level of the most talented students as one of highest among the high performing countries. (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2007).

Moreover, the cultural factor also contributes to shape the Finnish national curriculum. Over the past decade Finland has consistently performed among the top nations on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a standardized test given to 15-year-old in 65 nations and territories around the world. This success was partially affected by the role culture. Culture has the effects in deciding and managing the education policy. In Finland, the effect of culture is reflected in decentralised policy in the local curriculum. This autonomy will provide the freedom to take the individual choices, adjusted with the local needs. Local decision-making is also seen as a means of increasing local officials and teachers' commitment to the implementation of the curriculum. Their active involvement in the process and therefore their ownership of the curriculum is reinforced by the autonomy and freedom they are afforded (Vitikka, et. al., 2012).

Accordingly, decentralization that leads to the local autonomy should be based on the values of trust. The idea of trust is very important to synchronize between national education policy makers and the local actors. Hautamäki et. al. (2008) believed that the culture of trust means that education authorities and national level education policymakers believe that teachers (together with principal and parents, parents also trust the teacher), know how to provide the best possible education for children and youth at a certain level. Moreover, Finland is closely related with the high-quality of reading behaviour. This reading behaviour had become the culture inseminated in early childhood level. The government really pay attention to provide the high quality of textbook and the effective use of public library. Therefore, it is no doubt that schools in Finland ranked at top the international average in reading literacy outperformed other developed countries in PISA (OECD, 2010).

To conclude, the requirement for equality as the philosophical educational system has set clear directions for the development of Finnish national curriculum. As part of the steering system of education the national curriculum has been precisely aimed at building equal comprehensive schools throughout the nation. The unstated purposes of the curriculum might be emerged that the current curriculum encompasses both a strong idea of individuality and pedagogical freedom, and the need for equal basic education that requires a strong centrally controlled curriculum (Vitikka, 2012). Moreover, the recent curriculum implementation in Finland implicitly reflects the Educational Accountability that is bound among educational figures. Educational accountability in the Finnish education context preserves and enhances trust among teachers, students, school leaders, and education authorities, and it involves them in the process, offering them a strong sense of professional responsibility and initiative (Bastos, 2017).

On the other hand, curriculum in Indonesia is absolutely considered as the crucial core in deciding the educational directions. Therefore, the basic foundation of curriculum development cannot be established carelessly or haphazardly. Indonesian curriculum has been transformed several times since 1947 until 2013. The changes that focus on the development and improvement is absolutely done by considering several philosophical and cultural factors. The cornerstone of curriculum establishment in Indonesia is officially written in National Constitution Number 20, 2013, in which principally, there are four basic foundations of curriculum development, namely Philosophical foundation, Psychological foundation, Social and Cultural foundation, and Science and Technology foundation. Anwar (2014) mentioned that in the philosophical factor, education was based on the noble values, academic value, and the needs of learners and society. Therefore, during 1947 and 1952, Indonesian curriculum focused on the content of the lesson that are linked to everyday life.



Moreover, Indonesia is a diverse country, in which every societal environment has different pattern of relationship among society that is regulated by the values of local cultures, religions, social lives, norms, customs, and distinct political perspective. Education is viewed as one of the crucial factors, which potentially contributes to the unification of all society. Therefore, the social and cultural values should be another basis of curriculum development. Thus, the developed curriculum should be based on, responding to and based on socio-cultural developments within a society, both locally, nationally and globally (Sukmadinata, 1997). In Curriculum 1984 the subjects taught in school basically should meet the cultural values. From 1984, the curriculum started to focused on the decentralization format that can fulfil all the needs of students, schools, and teachers coming from many regions. Then, in Curriculum 1994, according to the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of RI No. 0412 / U / 1987 dated 11 July 1987 on the Implementation of Primary School Loads. Primary School Loads means that there are certain subjects that comply to the local culture from each region and islands in Indonesia. The subjects encompass the Local Language Subject, Local Arts and Contemporary Skills subjects.

To conclude, curriculum in Indonesian context is defined as a set of lesson plans that include objectives, content, materials, and methods or learning methods that serve as guidelines for implementation in an educational program (Anwar, 2017). Yet, the diversity that is embodied in Indonesian society might implicitly reveal the unstated purposes of curriculum. All the changes, developments and improvement that are tried by the policymakers and educational practitioners are philosophically based on the various cultural values, religions, customs, norms, and distinct political views. Therefore, curriculum is used as the unification tools that hopefully can meet all the learners' need coming from that diversity.

### **The Influences of Finnish and Indonesian Curricula toward Several Aspects**

The efforts of developing and reforming the curricula in certain countries absolutely might influence several factors in many ways. The curriculum transformation that happened in Indonesia several times might affect several figures. In Indonesian context, the role of government as the policymaker is still considered having a superior influence in reforming the educational system. From many factors, the *political will* of the government and the political paradigm are dominantly felt of having the most powerful influence in change-development, as well as the perfection of the curriculum from time to time (Alhamuddin, 2005). The changes of curriculum happened in Indonesia are integrally affected by the change of member of board council, cabinets, and the ministry of education. Every five to ten years of government term, the curriculum might at least change twice.

This phenomenon might affect other educational practitioners, such as teachers, publishers, local educational institutions, and even students. For teachers, the changes of curriculum in a relative short time might confuse them to adapt with the new regulation and learning objectives intended by the new curriculum. Teachers should develop a new innovation, teaching and learning methods in the classroom. If this situation is misunderstood or disoriented, teachers' professionalism might be questioned and it will lead to the failures of learning objectives. The uncertain focus of curriculum alteration might emotionally result to the mistrust from parents. Parents would blame schools and teachers if their children showed unsatisfied academic performance due to curriculum changes. Nevertheless, positively, since centralization has been changed into decentralization, it results to the local autonomy, in which schools, local government and local publishers might decide and regulate their own curriculum based in the local context. For school management along with headmasters, this policy might positively affect their performance in allocating the local fund to provide the facilities, managing the local curriculum that fits to the students' need, and potentially improving the learning outcomes. Moreover, local autonomy also required the textbook that contains the local culture and



values. This situation might be beneficially used by the business of publishing. In addition, it is reasonable that curriculum should be dynamic and flexible, since it would adjust with the effect of globalisation and the advance of technology.

Meanwhile, in Finnish context, the benefits received by certain figures caused by the curriculum in education aspect seems outweighing its advantages. The evidence has been showed from the test conducted by the PISA, in which Finland outperformed some countries like USA, German, and France in a test conducted by PISA for mathematics and science subjects. Since the idea of equality and the concept of Comprehensive School introduced, it gives the equal opportunity for all students coming from various family background to access the high-quality of schools. The efforts showed by the policymaker in realising the high quality of schools and teachers, will lead to the satisfaction and strong network between local authorities and central government. Moreover, Finnish educational policy considers to not applying nationwide tests comparing individual schools and students during or at the end of comprehensive school. This results to the non-competition among schools or for teachers. Because of the small differences between schools and the low level of competition the Finnish parents are not so much interested in selecting a school for their children as parents in many other countries. They can be quite convinced that the quality of teaching is high in any school. (Väljörvi, 2005).

Moreover, parents will minimise the negative perspective toward certain schools and teachers. Moreover, local autonomy is very welcomed by the teachers, because central government also believe and put the trust to the teachers to appropriately manage the school and learning method that are appropriate with the students' needs. Therefore, teacher profession in Finland is highly respected. It is no wonder, then, that teachers and teaching are highly regarded in Finland. Finnish media regularly report results of opinion polls that document favourite professions among general upper-secondary school graduates. Surprisingly, teaching is consistently rated as one of the most admired professions, ahead of medical doctors, architects, and lawyers, typically thought to be dream professions (Sahlberg, 2011). Lastly, corporations that provide the textbook and learning material that meet with the local customs will independently broaden their business.

To put in a nutshell, while Finland and Indonesia share the goal of creating curricula that represent their respective educational philosophies and cultural values, they diverge in terms of the degree of decentralisation, the extent of political involvement, and the importance placed on teacher professionalism and trust. Finland's decentralised strategy, which is based on fairness and trust, produces excellent performance results and high levels of satisfaction. On the other hand, political changes have a greater influence on the curriculum development in Indonesia, where decentralisation is used to accommodate cultural variety.

### **Implications from the Finnish and Indonesian Context for the Writer's Future Practice and Implied Pedagogies and Assessment of These Curricula**

As mentioned previously in this writing, Finnish curricula not only functions as the national steering instrument, but also as the Pedagogical Tool. In Finland the emphasis is on the pedagogy of assessment. Bernstein (1975) redefined the functions of curriculum into three-dimensional matrix, in which curriculum functions as whole: aims, content and pedagogy. These three elements need to be bond systematically to create a balanced reform. The existence of curriculum is really appreciated by the educational practices, in this case, teachers as the guidance on how to plan and develop teaching in line with educational objectives. In Finnish context, one goal of the curriculum reforms has been made to change teachers' curriculum thinking and deepen their commitment toward it. The curriculum should be a meaningful, relevant and a clear entirety that supports teachers' work, and provide space for students and teachers to develop their own pedagogy (Vitikka, et. al., 2012).





Beside pedagogy purpose, curriculum also decides the management of assessment for students. Student assessment in a curriculum can be viewed as two-dimensional. On one hand the curriculum defines the principles and pedagogy of assessment, on the other hand it defines standards, which are the assessment criteria for learning outcomes (Vittika, Krokfors, & Hurmerinta, 2012). Basically, every country has their own reasons to design the assessment for students that includes certain purpose. Basically, assessment for students is designed as the evaluation to measure and percept the relationship and conformity between educational actions and the factual result in the field. Globally, student assessment is a question between teacher autonomy and external evaluation: nationally standardized tests are widely in use as evaluative tools in many countries seeking to fortify national control (Vittika, Krokfors, & Hurmerinta, 2012). However, in Finland, national standardised test is only used as a diagnostic tool. This national standardised test does not have the implications for individual students or teachers. As a result, the common factor between successful PISA countries, such as Finland, Singapore and South Korea, is that they do not use standardized tests to stream their students in a way that limits their access to secondary education (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Different from Finland, in Indonesia, the pedagogical assessment is clearly stated in the purposes of national education goals. For instance, National Examination (UN) is purposively designed to at least measure two things, namely the progress of students' learning outcomes and the effectiveness of teaching. As the assessment, UN is considered as the process of collecting and combining the information from the tests on performance or learning with a view to making a judgment about a person or making a comparison against an establishment criterion (Athanasou & Lamprianou, 2002). Unfortunately, UN had been seen as "spectre" and frowned by the students and teachers. UN might result to significant implication for teachers, schools, and students. If there are many students who fail the exam (UN), hence schools and teachers could be blamed for this. Moreover, teachers' pedagogy competency should also be considered in developing curriculum, especially in implementing Curriculum 2013. There is one of the factors that can support the successful implementation of the curriculum 2013, which is the suitability of educator competence and education personnel with the taught curriculum and textbooks used. It became the centre of attention in the development of this curriculum. The ability of the teacher should be able to balance the curriculum changes and adjust to the textbook to be taught on the learner (Indonesian Ministry of Education, 2013).

From all explanation above, it can be implied several aspects of the Finnish curriculum could be beneficial for the Indonesian curriculum. First, *decentralization with trust*. Adopting a decentralized approach to curriculum development, similar to Finland, could empower local communities and schools in Indonesia. Providing autonomy to schools and local governments to shape their curricula based on local needs and cultural values could lead to more relevant and effective education delivery. Second, *emphasis on equity and inclusion*. Prioritizing equity and inclusion in curriculum development, as seen in Finland's Comprehensive School concept, can ensure that all students, regardless of background, have equal access to quality education. Indonesia could focus on designing a curriculum that addresses diverse learners' needs and promotes inclusivity. Third, *teacher professionalism and trust*. Enhancing trust in teachers and valuing their professionalism, similar to Finland, can elevate the status of teaching as a profession in Indonesia. Providing teachers with autonomy and support to innovate in their teaching methods while holding them accountable for student outcomes can improve educational quality. Fourth, *stakeholder engagement*. Involving various stakeholders, including educators, parents, policymakers, and the wider community, in the curriculum development process fosters a sense of ownership and commitment. Indonesia could benefit from extensive consultation and collaboration among stakeholders to ensure that the curriculum reflects diverse perspectives and meets societal needs. Fifth, *focus on reading culture*. Promoting a strong reading culture, as emphasized in Finland, can enhance literacy levels and overall educational outcomes. Investing in high-quality textbooks, effective use of public libraries, and early childhood education programs focused on literacy development could be beneficial for Indonesia.



And sixth, *long-term stability*. Establishing a stable and consistent curriculum framework, with minimal changes driven by political shifts, can provide stability and continuity in education. Indonesia could consider adopting a long-term vision for curriculum development, with periodic revisions based on educational research and evolving societal needs rather than political agendas. By incorporating these elements from the Finnish curriculum, Indonesia can strive towards a more equitable, inclusive, and effective educational system that meets the needs of its diverse population and prepares students for the challenges of the 21st century.

## Conclusion

All in all, this writing implicitly leaves the enlightenment and lesson academically for the writer. First question that might be appeared after discussing both curriculum is should Indonesia adopt the steps done by Finnish government for successful educational system? The idea of decentralization might be an appropriate approach in implementing certain educational policy through curriculum. Decentralization that provides the local autonomy for teachers and local government might be easier in accommodating, allocating, and covering all areas with the well-informed of curriculum purposes. Yet, there are some strategies that could be adapt, first, putting the higher appreciation for Indonesian teacher profession. In Finland, teacher profession is equally and professionally respected as medical doctor, architects, or lawyer. Even, the qualification of teachers teaching in primary education require the master's degree or teaching certificate (Sahlberg, 2011), that is why teachers position in Finland is very prestigious and competitive. Oppositely, in Indonesia job as teacher in primary and secondary school might not be highly respected as doctor. Alhamuddin (2005) mentioned that bureaucracy system in Indonesia is putting more attention in curriculum instead of the role and the welfare of teachers. Even, teacher's qualification in Indonesia still requires the minimal degree of bachelor. Hence, this difference might affect the commitment of teachers in teaching and realizing the purposes of national curriculum.

Secondly, strengthen the network between central government and other local figures, such as teachers, parents, and other social communities. Collaboration between national curriculum authorities and local administrators has been a successfully functioning practice for several decades (Vittika, Krokfors, & Hurmerinta, 2012). Meanwhile, in philosophical and cultural perspective, Indonesian curriculum actually contain a complex and convincing foundation of developing the curriculum. However, Alhamuddin (2005) also added that there are some weaknesses that imperfectly showed by the educationalists. First, a factor derived from *curriculum builders*, mainly due to the weak philosophical and psychological basics in the translation of the curriculum, so it does not match with the social reality and demands of changes that exist in society. Secondly, factor derived from the *curriculum executor*, mainly because the level of competence and professionalism that are less supportive among teachers. Thirdly, factor derived from the *educational ecosystem*, mainly due to the lack of strong social support and the availability of educational infrastructure in educational units, especially schools in the region.

At last, a simply main challenge of actualizing all those strategies is that Finland and Indonesia are two very different countries. Geographically and Demographically, Finnish educational policy implementation is highly supported by the characteristic and the total population in Finland. Finland is five-million population country; thus, it is not difficult to touch and spread the influences through all corners of the region. According to Population's General Attitude values mentioned by Andere (2014) stated that Finland is such a small country, it will quickly become aware of the negative effects when fairness is not achieved. Meanwhile, Indonesia is almost six times bigger than Finland in area, and also six times more population than Finnish. It might be difficult to uniform all the opinions and educational needs coming from multicultural and multi-social society spread in every corner of islands.



This discussion ends with the statement that implementing educational system should be contextualised. It should fulfil the philosophical and cultural foundation and the character of individuals in certain country.

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