

## Research Article

# The Implementation of the National Standards for Higher Education Policy as Quality Assurance

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**Abstract.**

Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) College in Aceh differs from other private universities because it has a complex organizational structure compared to other private universities. Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) College in Aceh, apart from being a higher education foundation leader, must also synergize with the Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) organization. This is what drives the author's interest in studying the implementation of the National Higher Education Standards in quality assurance improvement at Nahdhatul Ulama College in Aceh. In this study, researchers focused on the implementation of the National Standards for Higher Education Policy at Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama Sharia Science College. The method used in this research is descriptive-qualitative. Furthermore, the data source used is the results of interviews with informants, who serve as primary data, and other documents as secondary data. In determining the informants, the researcher used the Purposive Sampling Technique; the data were then obtained through interviews, and documentation was analyzed using the Interactive Model, which follows the flow from data collection, data display, data condensation, and conclusions. Based on the results of research and findings, there are leadership, information technology, infrastructure, finance, university values, and culture, which include attitudes, habits, organizational behavior, work ethics, creating, serving, and interacting with colleagues and the community with good results, all of which contribute to organizational capacity in implementing internal quality assurance at the college. On the other hand, the limited opportunities available to academic staff to enhance their national and international competencies in line with their positions and areas of expertise and the inconsistent application of the PPEPP model at Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College are some of the weaknesses. The implementation of the internal quality assurance system at Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College demonstrated a good strategy; however, there are still areas that require constant improvement in addition to upholding current standards.

**Keywords:** policy, education policy, quality assurance, national standards for higher education

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## 1. Introduction

Public policy includes national development policies in the area of education. Often referred to as education policy, policy in the field of education is a descendant of public policy, which is known as development policy in developing nations. As a result, policies pertaining to education become sectoral and must compete with those of other sectors for precedence [1]. However, in many developing nations, policies related to the construction of physical infrastructure, defense and security, and politics take precedence over educational policies. As a result, educational advancement is extremely sluggish and cannot serve as the primary pillar of development for a society, a nation, or a state. The Indonesian government is well aware that the key to progressing society is education. All members of society can advance their resources so they can become development resources by steadily raising the standard of education.

The following are the five fundamental reference elements, or higher education system structuring paradigms: (1) Results and performance in higher education must always be measured in terms of sustainable quality; (2) Management patterns based on autonomy can foster sustainable quality, which is based on creativity, ingenuity, and academic productivity; (3) Higher education autonomy must be aligned with accountability/accountability regarding the administration, performance, and results of higher education; (4) The National Accreditation Body's accreditation process actualizes the public's right to obtain valid and reliable information regarding the administration, performance, and results of higher education. (5) The assessment process is the primary managerial function that supports planning and decision-making in higher education. A body tasked with compiling and developing National Higher Education Standards has recommended National Higher Education Standards (SNPT), which are determined by the Minister. Then, Higher Education Standards are determined by each Higher Education Institution with reference to the National Higher Education Standards. These measures are taken in order to achieve quality higher education and are outlined in Law Number 12 of 2012 Article 54 concerning Higher Education (UU Dikti) as Higher Education Standards.

The minimal requirements for learning at the higher education level in postsecondary institutions are set forth in the National Higher Education Standards. As stated in Permendikbud Number 3 of 2020, Article 3, the National Higher Education Standards seek to ensure that the goals of higher education are met, emphasizing the importance

of educating the populace, applying humanities values to advance science and technology, and fostering the nation's sustainable acculturation and empowerment. They also seek to ensure that the quality of learning in study, research, and community service programs offered by higher education institutions throughout the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is met, adhering to the standards outlined in the National Higher Education Standards. These programs also encourage higher education institutions to continuously achieve quality in learning, research, and community service that surpasses the national standards for higher education.

In order to achieve national education goals, all postsecondary educational institutions are required to meet the National Higher Education Standards. These standards also serve as the foundation for the granting of permits to establish Higher Education Institutions and to open Study Programs; they also serve as the basis for the implementation of Curriculum-based Learning in the Study Program, the conducting of research and community service, the development and implementation of an internal quality assurance system, and the establishment of criteria for an external quality assurance system through accreditation.

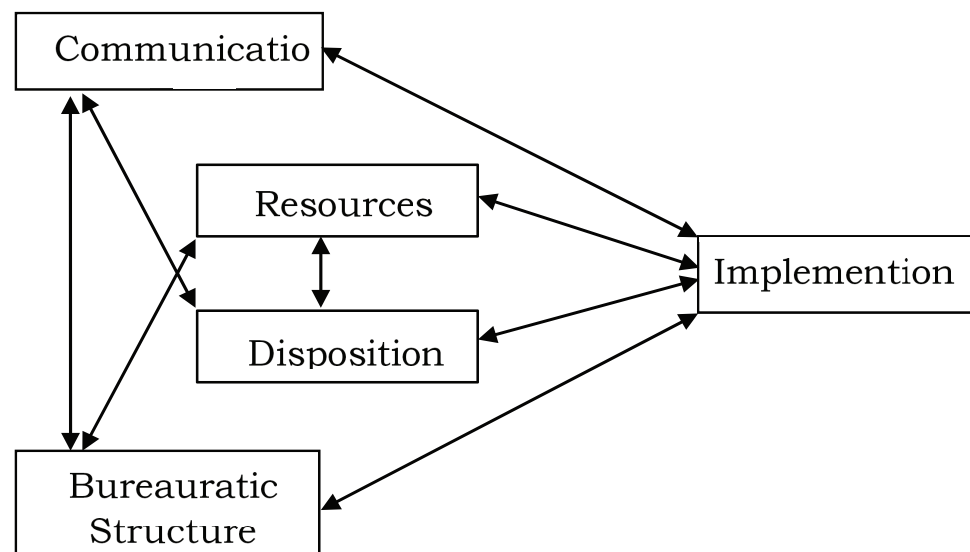
The government creates public policy, which is meant to offer direction and guidance for doing or not doing socially relevant actions. Next, public policy is put into practice as a government product. The political structure and state administration capabilities in place at the time have a significant impact on the process of putting public policy into action. The goal of public policy implementation is to comprehend how public policy is implemented in order to gather data on success factors and roadblocks. If there is a failure in the implementation phase, suggestions are made to overcome the challenges. As a result, even after a policy is put into place optimally and has the potential to benefit a large number of people, it will still be reviewed periodically [2-4].

Edward III (1980) in Iqbal, et al. [4] argues that there are four factors that are crucial to the effective execution of public policy. The four elements are bureaucratic structure, communication, resources, and disposition. Communication: the idea that good communication between policy implementers and target groups is essential to the successful implementation of any policy. It is possible to appropriately socialize the aims and objectives of policies and programs to prevent policy and program distortion.

Resources, specifically meaning that sufficient financial and human resources are needed to support any policy. Human resources are both enough in terms of quantity and quality of implementers to cover the target group as a whole. Disposition, on the

other hand, describes traits that are specific to those who carry out policies or programs. The qualities of democracy, dedication, and honesty are crucial for an implementor. It demonstrates the significance of bureaucratic structure in the execution of policies at the level of bureaucratic structure. The mechanism and the actual organizational structure of the implementing body are the two key components of this aspect of bureaucratic structure.

The aforementioned four variables, which Edward constructed in a single model, are connected to one another in terms of accomplishing program and policy goals and objectives. In order to achieve goals, everything works in concert with one another, and one variable has a significant impact on other variables. The following can be used to characterize this George C. Edward III model:



**Figure 1:** Implementation of Edward III model [4].

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze how the National Higher Education Standards policy is being implemented at the Nahdhatul Ulama universities in Aceh Province, with a focus on resource allocation and coordination. This research can be supported by a number of earlier investigations, including one by Alzafari and Usin [5], which examine from a comparative standpoint how quality assurance standards are being implemented in Europe. The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education, which were created to compare nations, served as the basis for administering the questionnaire. The findings indicate that quality assurance systems at higher education institutions are primarily developed in accordance with national standards or in response to institutional requirements. Additionally, studies examining changes in Vietnamese higher education quality assurance and accreditation during

the ten years since the establishment of the national quality assurance organization have been conducted. First, this study summarizes the system's accomplishments in terms of leadership and management, as well as policy and practice. The development of human resources for accreditation and quality assurance in the national context is also covered. The two most crucial steps in the accreditation process—self-evaluation and external evaluation—are then highlighted [6].

Hou, et al. [7] study about Taiwanese universities and accreditation bodies face difficulties as a result of the 2012 Ministry of Education's self-accreditation policy. There are three key conclusions: (1) the university's internal quality assurance capacity increases as a result of the independent accreditation policy; (2) self-accrediting universities face inconsistent review decisions, arbitrary removal of standards and indicators, and improper reviewer selection procedures; and (3) the duties and responsibilities of external quality assurance bodies need to be clarified in accordance with the new quality assurance policy.

In Indonesia, Manueke and Manopo [8] examined internal quality audits with the goal of enhancing the Manado State Polytechnic's Higher Education Quality Assurance System implementation. The Learning and Quality Assurance Center oversaw the execution of the internal quality audit, according to the findings. carried out in accordance with protocols, which include manual pre-audit, audit, and post-audit processes. Due to the lack of an existing system that is integrated with the data center, the Learning and Quality Assurance Center faces a number of challenges when managing the findings of internal quality audits, including requesting corrective action, reporting, and documenting audit results. Sihotang and Nadeak [9] were investigated the faculty and postgraduate programs at Indonesian Christian University to discover a leadership model for the consistent and long-term implementation of an internal quality assurance (IQA) system. The following are the research's conclusions: 31 quality standards have been established by faculties and postgraduate programs; 31 quality standards have been implemented but are still not well understood; and 31 audits have been performed and the results have been positive for internal quality. audit activities;(4) the audit findings have been delivered to the university rector; and (5) while some leaders endorse the creation of the 62 faculty-level quality standards, others do not.

In this instance, the researchers will look at how the Aceh Province Nahdhatul Ulama College at the Aceh Nahdhatul Ulama Sharia Science College (STISNU) is implementing the National Higher Education Standards Policy. STISNU is the only tertiary institution affiliated with Nahdhatul Ulama in Aceh, in addition to having two organizational

components—the Foundation (Organizing Body), which oversees private tertiary institutions generally, and the Nahdhatul Ulama organization, which is overseen by the Aceh Nahdhatul Ulama (PWNNU) Regional Management—these factors account for the reason. It follows that this will make it more difficult to implement policies.

## 2. Research Methods

The goal of this study is to provide an overview of the phenomena surrounding the Nahdhatul Ulama universities in Aceh Province's application of the National Higher Education Standards policy. Using a qualitative research approach and descriptive analysis, a comprehensive, factual, and accurate picture of the research object was obtained, all while adhering to the research objectives. After gathering information through interviews and in-person field observations, analysis was completed. Because it takes a qualitative approach, data analysis is an inductive process that uses observation, documentation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and literature review to test the validity of the data using two methods: peer debriefing and triangulation techniques [10].

According to Moleong [11], data collection in qualitative research can use methods such as observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The data collection methods used in this study include (1) Non-Participant Observation, which aims to learn more about the field conditions in-depth and the process of implementing activities directly; (2) In-depth interviews (in-depth interviews). This is based on the type and source of data required in this research. To gather primary data, this type of interviewing technique was used with all informants. The informant was interviewed, but every attempt was made to avoid coming across as formal as possible. Utilizing a notebook and Multi-Player 4 recorder, along with the assistance of a photo camera, the researcher documented the interview's outcomes. Using an interview guide or conducting an open interview, which gives the informant the chance to share their thoughts and opinions about the research phenomenon, the researcher and the informant exchange questions and answers during the interview technique; (3) Documentation Study: Depending on the topic of the research, documents are viewed or examined in order to gather qualitative data. Government or private documents pertaining to guidelines and operational guidelines for the Higher Education Quality Assurance System (SPM-PT) that are pertinent to the issue under investigation are among the required documents.

Additionally, information about the quality assurance system is stored on the website in the hopes that the condition can be determined. those who work in the field.

In this study, data analysis was done three steps: once before heading into the field, once in the field, and once it was over. The problem under study is the main focus of the data analysis in this dissertation. The steps the author took in this research are as follows: (1) choosing phenomena based on the research question; (2) figuring out what data is required; (3) utilizing triangulation techniques to conduct a study; (4) interpreting findings; and (5) generalizing them. The instrument-based data is gathered and then analyzed so that it can address research questions through interactive, qualitative analysis techniques that are carried out until the data is saturated. Activities in data analysis, namely data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions according to the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana [12]. This qualitative analysis method is expected to be able to analyze data related to the ongoing implementation of the National Higher Education Standards policy at Nahdhatul Ulama universities in Aceh (existing model) and attempt to analyze the formulation of alternative policy implementation models that are in line with the demands and needs of society in order to support quality improvement in Nahdhatul Ulama College in Aceh.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1. Quality assurance policy

Quality assurance activities must be institutionalized in the form of standard organizational procedures in order for the university to fulfill its vision, mission, goals, and targets to become a superior Nahdhatul Ulama tertiary institution at the regional and global levels. Policies are necessary to improve quality because internal quality assurance is a quality assurance activity that demands a high level of commitment from the institution. The university's established policies serve as the foundation for the implementation of internal quality assurance, which is a tool for meeting and exceeding established standards. Academic and non-academic domains of higher education carry out internal quality assurance using both national and international standards for education. Internal quality assurance necessitates that internal and external stakeholders have the necessary knowledge and comprehension in order to determine, implement, evaluate, control, and continuously improve quality. In addition to referencing national education

standards, Aceh' Nahdhatul Ulama College has implemented internal quality assurance that also refers to international standards. The PPEPP cycle and continuous improvement are key components of the quality control management model that Nahdhatul Ulama Higher Education has adopted. The Chancellor's decision determines the internal quality assurance policy for Nahdhatul Ulama universities, which has been prepared over a period of more than five years. Nahdhatul Ulama College has established and implemented its own quality standards, which are implemented through quality points to manage activity processes in all work units and institutions. The online availability of the internal quality assurance manual of Nahdhatul Ulama university facilitates easy accessibility for the university community.

The aforementioned results are consistent with Iqbal et al. [4] which proposed the definitions of policy as follows: 1) a leader's written or spoken statement about the organization he leads; 2) provisions that must be used as guidelines, guidelines, or instructions for each activity in order to achieve smoothness and integration in the pursuit of organizational goals; and 3) a road map for action in the pursuit of organizational goals. Then, The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education states in Articles 51, 52, 53, and 54 that the standards of higher education in both academic and non-academic fields must be determined, implemented, evaluated, controlled, and improved in order to implement quality assurance. To accomplish the objectives of higher education, academics should focus on scientific autonomy, academic freedom, and freedom of the academic platform. Additionally, it is stated in Article 6 Paragraph 1 of Government Regulation Number 4 of 2014 concerning the Implementation of Higher Education and Management of Higher Education that:

In carrying out responsibilities in the field of supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of higher education administration, it is necessary to develop and establish a quality assurance system for higher education institutions, which consists of 1) An internal quality assurance system by each university, 2) An external quality assurance system carried out through accreditation by BAN -PT and/or independent accreditation institutions.

Likewise, paragraph 2 of Article 3 of Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 49 of 2014 concerning National Higher Education Standards states that National Higher Education Standards must serve as the foundation for creating and executing an internal quality assurance system, and that Letter (f) serves as the foundation for establishing requirements for an external quality assurance system that is accredited. Wibowo [13] states that procedures that comply with decision-making guidelines are



used to determine policies concerning the academic quality of higher education when determining public policy.

When researchers examine the facts surrounding quality policy in the context of internal quality assurance, they find that while some aspects of the policy align with theory, others require further investigation for potential future improvements. First off, the quality standards at Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College have not been routinely reviewed comprehensively, both academically and non-academically; maintaining internal quality in accordance with international standards remains challenging; academic staff members continue to have few opportunities to advance their national and international competencies in line with their roles and areas of expertise; and PPEPP is still not consistently implemented in higher education. The Nahdhatul Ulama College in Aceh has to take this seriously because if internal quality assurance isn't working properly, higher education won't be of the same caliber, and community trust will decline.

### 3.2. Organization capacity

The internal quality assurance system of Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College has been legally reinforced by a Chancellor's Decree, which is being implemented by the Quality Assurance Agency (BPM). The chancellor, who is the higher education management representative for quality assurance, appoints and oversees BPM and its equipment. BPM and its equipment have the authority and responsibility to supervise and keep an eye on the quality assurance implementation according to the position or positions within the scope of work. Effective leadership through organizational leadership, operational leadership, and public leadership is how Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College demonstrates its leadership in implementing internal quality assurance. BPM provides training and workshops to both academic and non-academic fields to train staff in implementing internal quality assurance. All work units at Aceh Nahdhatul Ulama College that are supported by human resources as well as other resources—such as leadership, information technology, finance, infrastructure, values, and culture—have been able to successfully implement internal quality assurance.

The aforementioned is consistent with the definition of an organization, which is a group of people working together as a cooperative system that is intentionally planned and executed by two or more people. It is also possible to define an organization as an autonomous system of different interconnected activities [14].

The researchers make a comparison between the relevant theory and the facts regarding organizational capacity to implement internal quality assurance. However, there are a few areas that still require optimization, specifically: The college's respective cultures have not yet developed, and the human resource development program is not yet a part of their optimally scheduled regular activities. It does not currently have a leadership selection process that generates leaders with a style of leadership that is appropriate for the circumstances, making it difficult for it to set itself apart from other universities.

The aforementioned shortcomings serve as raw material for further improvements that will bring the organization's capabilities up to par. Leadership, information technology, infrastructure, finance, human resources, university values, and culture—which include attitudes, habits, organizational behavior, work ethic, creating, serving, and interacting with colleagues, leaders, and the community with good results and still needs further improvement—all contribute to the implementation of internal quality assurance.

### 3.3. Impact of implementation

The KTSP curriculum's implementation and the level of service that Work Units/Faculties provide to students and stakeholders in the good category are two examples of how the implementation of internal quality assurance has benefited the organization. The effectiveness of education is demonstrated by the availability of a variety of inputs, processes, and atmospheres carried out in the educational process as well as the products of academic activities. The good institutional accreditation from BAN-PT indicates the institutional capacity, which is reflected in the availability and sufficiency of various basic equipment needed to provide education. This is where the impact of implementing internal quality assurance at Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College is evident. A number of factors, including graduates and students, teachers and staff, governance, curriculum, academic environment and learning, funding and finance, infrastructure, research and community service, and service and cooperation, are used to illustrate this.

The aforementioned explanation complies with government mandates, which state that an institution of higher learning's mission should be reflected in its Tri Dharma Higher Education activities. These activities fall into three categories: 1) Education-related activities, 2) Research-related activities, and 3) Community Service-related activities. The Tri-Dharma program's mission and objectives statement then has a big impact

on the program's management activities. The components of the Tri-Dharma organization are in fact components of the relevant university. Application of desired graduate qualities, such as the qualities of graduates who are: a) of high quality and b) pertinent (fit for the purpose). With the current staff material, there are numerous interpretations that can be made from the two (two) objectives of the nature of the graduates, each of which has a different burden of achievement [15].

Accordingly, the new paradigm mandates that the performance and outcomes of higher education establishments consistently allude to sustainable quality and be grounded in the inventiveness, productivity, and creativity of the academic community. Higher education institutions are expected to be able to ground society and provide global competence through an autonomous and accountable management pattern. The organization is real. The impact of implementing internal quality assurance with policies is appropriate. However, Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama college should be concerned about a number of issues that need to be improved, such as the availability of facilities, concerns about student body leaders' comfort, performance issues, and curriculum development as an attempt to pool resources on a variety of academic subjects. have the same content; to achieve curriculum efficiency and raise competency standards to ever-higher levels, academic units' coordination with management support needs to be improved; and the efficacy of international cooperation needs to be increased. In order to make this even more beneficial, it needs to be taken into consideration and improved. The Aceh Nahdhatul Ulama College is good, as demonstrated by the implementation of the internal quality assurance system; however, there are still areas that require constant improvement in addition to upholding current standards.

## 4. Conclusion

Several conclusions can be made in relation to the problems studied based on the research findings and discussions that have taken place, including the following:

The quality policies in place for internal quality assurance implementation at Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College demonstrates that the efforts have been made in an attempt to advance from the teaching university to the excellent teaching university stage in order to realize a superior university on a national and worldwide scale. At Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College, the academic and non-academic domains gradually adopt the quality assurance system for educational and non-educational processes. The regular reviews of overall quality standards, both academic and non-academic, the challenges they

face in maintaining internal quality in relation to international standards, the limited opportunities available to academic staff to enhance their national and international competencies in line with their positions and areas of expertise, and the inconsistent application of the PPEPP model at Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College are some of the weaknesses that still exist there.

Leadership, information technology, infrastructure, finance, human resources, university values and culture, which include attitudes, habits, organizational behavior, and ethos work, create, serve, and interact with colleagues, and the community with good results, all contribute to organizational capacity in implementing internal quality assurance at the college. Nevertheless, there are a number of drawbacks in a number of areas, such as: The Aceh Nahdhatul Ulama College Culture has not yet developed to the point where it can be used to set itself apart from other universities, but it does have a leadership selection process that yields leaders whose styles of leadership are appropriate for the given circumstances. The human resource development program is not yet a part of the best planned regular activities.

The results of implementing internal quality assurance demonstrate that Aceh's Nahdhatul Ulama College has institutional accreditation with a Good accreditation rating from BAN-PT. This is demonstrated by the college's institutional capacity, which is reflected in the availability and sufficiency of various basic educational tools, as well as by the effectiveness of the education, which is demonstrated by the availability of various inputs, processes, and learning environments, as well as by the academic outputs. Nonetheless, the university continues to have a number of issues, such as in order to achieve curriculum efficiency and raise competency standards to ever-higher levels, coordination between academic units with support management needs to be improved. Other issues include the availability of facilities, comfort issues, performance issues with student body leaders, and curriculum development, which is an attempt to share resources on various learning subjects that have the same content.

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