

In Search of the Excellent School: A Case Study of an Indonesian International Standard School in Improving Its Capacity Building

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Abstract Improving school capacity building has become one of the major themes in research on educational effectiveness. This study investigates the implementation of the International Standard School (SBI) policy in Indonesia which can be seen as an example of the efforts of a particular country to improve school capacity building. Disappointingly little is understood about people's perception about educational activity, in this case, pertaining to international standard schools. Using the program coherence dimension of a capacity building framework, a qualitative study was conducted in a secondary school located in a small region in West Java, Indonesia, that is involved in the program. This study found that the interpretation of the SBI policy was changing, and that establishing international standard classrooms is the salient aspect of the implementation of the policy. This study revealed that becoming an SBI school has positive consequences with regard to the acknowledgment of its quality by the central government. One consequence is that the SBI School can collect from parents extra funds amounting to about ten times more than the school receives from the central government. The document analysis reveals the SBI School's major difficulty in fulfilling the 'international

requirements' is the mastery of the English language by their teachers.

Keywords Indonesian education development · International standard school · School capacity building · Indonesian public secondary school

Introduction

The fast changing world and global interconnectedness have led to many changes which have impacted on education. To name a few, standards-based reform, public accountability, school-based management, and digital technologies (Hopkins and Jackson 2003) are all developments which schools in developed countries find challenging. Such situations have made governments in developing countries, including Indonesia, take initiatives by imposing policies on their school system to keep the educational sector in line with the global challenges.

In Indonesia, a significant change to the educational sector followed the collapse of the New Order regime in 1998 and the devolution of responsibilities to provincial and district administrations. This change can be seen in the fourth Constitutional Amendment of the 1945 Constitution in 2002 which stipulates that at least 20 percent of state budget should be allocated for education, and the new education system regulated by the Law 20/2003 that emphasises educational decentralisation. This Law, among others, stipulates that local governments have to develop at least one school that has 'international standard'. In accordance with this Law, the Indonesian Ministry of National Education, backed with available funds based on the amendments of the Constitution, proposed an International Standard School (Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional or

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SBI in Indonesian terminology) program in which hundreds of schools have participated since 2007 (Martiyanti 2008). The objective of improving capacity building within a school under such a program should be welcomed by schools. The developing country context is salient and unique, especially when it is analysed as a complexity in the implementation of the school improvement program.

The main objective of the present study is to reveal the school stakeholders' perspectives on and the practices of the implementation of the international standard school program in their school, and in particular the stakeholders' perspectives on the issue of school capacity building. Moreover, we also investigated the impact of the program and how the school managed to overcome the challenges and establish itself as an international standard school in terms of program coherence. This paper provides a theoretical approach to school capacity building as appears in international literature followed by an overview of the current Indonesian education development with regard to the international standard school policy. An outline of our research methodology is followed by the presentation and discussion of empirical findings, with a concluding section to close the paper.

School Capacity Building

The intended outcome of most education policies is to improve students' achievement. Extensive studies on students' achievement by Hattie (2002), for example, found that teachers are the main contributor to students' success when they provide good quality in curriculum, instructional methods and assessment in the classroom. In line with Hattie (2002), Darling-Hammond (2009) also emphasised the important role of teachers in determining the success of school reform such as the development of curriculum, assessment, and school management. Good quality curriculum, assessment, and management cannot be ignored by the organisational leadership of a school if it is to build the capacity of its teachers to carry out their roles effectively (King and Newman 2001).

Hopkins and Jackson (2003, p 86) wrote that in the context of an educational institution, capacity refers to 'the internal organisational characteristics of the school'. In addition, Harris (2001, p 261) defines 'capacity building' as 'concerned with creating the conditions, opportunities and experiences for collaboration and mutual learning'. This implies that school capacity building is the total competency that the school possesses in order to make it better and move forward.

Newman, King, and Young (2000 as cited in Hopkins and Jackson 2003, p 88) proposed more operational terms to be incorporated in the concept of school capacity

building that comprised three core components of the organisational capacity of a school:

1. Knowledge, skills, and dispositions of individual staff members;
2. A professional learning community in which staff work collaboratively to set clear goals for student learning, assess how well students are doing, develop action plans to increase student achievement, whilst being engaged in inquiry and problem solving.
3. Program coherence—the extent to which a school's programs for student and staff learning are coordinated, focused on clear learning goals and sustained over a period of time.

Fullan (2000) pointed out that these three components are inherent in that the first is about 'human capital', the individual's competency as educator; the second is about 'social capital', the relationships within the school are continually strengthened and developing in order to enable the individual staff member to actualise his or her knowledge and skills (Hopkins and Jackson 2003). This was also emphasised by Harris (Harris 2001; Harris and Lambert 2003). Hopkins and Jackson (2003, p 88) argued that the last component is indispensable, since although many innovative ideas are constantly appearing, schools can be most effective when they are not 'those [who] take on the most innovations, but those that are able to integrate, align and coordinate innovations into their own focussed programmes'. In other words, program coherence is crucial to the management of 'human capital' and 'social capital' in the school for bringing about effective change. This particular study focuses more on the program coherence component than on the first two components.

Research on school capacity building in England has shown the importance of outside school support as a prerequisite in the context of the Local Education Authority (Harris 2001) and Hadfield's National College for School Leadership (Hopkins and Jackson 2003). This is consistent with the framework proposed by King and Newman (2001) who also stated that whatever policies and programs of a school superior's agency (district, state, or national government) the organisational factor is the critical thing that makes the school successful in improving its capacity building.

Recent Developments in Indonesian Education and SBI Policy in Brief

After the collapse of Soeharto's government in 1998, the centralised system that had been practiced since the Dutch colonial regime was radically dismantled. Since the regional autonomy law of 1999, the education sector

together with other public sectors has been managed at district level. The government has subsequently conducted several further reforms in the national school system with regards to school management, curriculum, education financing, final examinations, community participation, and teacher certification (Kristiansen and Pratikno 2006; Raihani 2007; Fitriah 2010; Raihani and Sumintono 2010).

In terms of school management, the government in 1999 introduced a program called school-based quality improvement management (SBQIM) which targets 700 junior secondary and senior secondary schools across Indonesia (Umaedy 1999). Schools which are interested to join SBQIM have to submit a school development plan and, if accepted, the central office will give a block grant as 'seed money' called 'quality improvement operational assistance' or BOMM (*bantuan operasional manajemen mutu*) to the school to cover a portion of the total operational cost of the quality improvement program (Subijanto 2000; Indriyanto 2003). There are two reports on these efforts (Subijanto 2000; Depdiknas 2001) which show that all schools emphasise the enhancement of the academic achievements of their students, through extra teaching for students who face the national examinations.

The Indonesian parliament, in 2003, enacted a new education law (Law 20/2003) that strengthens the decentralised mode. One of contents of the new law is about International Standard Schools. Article 50, paragraph 3, states clearly that the national government and local governments have to establish at least one educational institution that is at an international standard at each level (Depdiknas 2007). The Government Decree No 19 on National Standard of Education in 2005 in Article 61, paragraph 1, states the same thing with regard to international standard schools. The central government initiated the International Standard School (hereafter called with SBI) program in 2007 with the publication of guidebooks, by recruiting schools and channelling funding (Martiyanti 2008).

According to the guidebooks (as cited in Coleman 2011), the definition of the international standard school is:

A school which fulfils all the National Standards for Education and which is further enriched by taking into consideration the education standards of one member nation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and/or another advanced nation which has particular strengths in education such that it achieves competitive advantage in the international forum.

The above definition portrays a new kind of school type that was previously not known in Indonesia. Kustulasari (2009) argues that the SBI are different from the usual international schools in Indonesia (such as the Jakarta

International School or the Australian International School) which serve children of expatriates who are working in Indonesia; it also unlike the national-plus schools which are private schools mostly based in big cities that 'in addition to the national curriculum, employ an internationally renowned curriculum such as the Cambridge's International General Certificate of Secondary Education' (p. 2).

In addition, the guidebooks also identify nine areas of quality assurance for a school to attain in order to become an SBI school, as shown in Table 1.

In short, the guidelines (Depdiknas 2007, 2008) give the SBI formula as:

$$\text{SBI} = \text{SNP} + \text{X}$$

where SNP is the National Standard for Education, and X is the enrichment with something related to the school system of an OECD country. In other words, the formula and its explanation in Table 1 portray an excellent school concept in Indonesian education system.

In order to join the SBI program, a school is required to prepare some documents to be evaluated, after which it will be granted status as a SBI school and given a certain amount of money from the central government (Depdiknas 2007, 2008, 2009). At the secondary school level, a school receives Rp 300 million (equal to US\$ 30,000) annually for the first 3 years (Coleman 2009) in addition to the normal funding. In his study, Fahturahman (2009 cited in Coleman 2011) found that the schools also received significant additional funds annually from provincial and district governments. The schools that are recruited to the SBI program are also required to submit self-evaluation forms, annual development plans, and action plans for each academic year. At the senior secondary school level, there are more than 200 schools, nearly all public schools, across Indonesia participating in the SBI program (Martiyanti 2008). As noted in Coleman's study (2011), the schools that are recruited for this program are 'cream of the cream', according to a senior officer at the Ministry of Education.

An important difference between the SBI schools and other schools is the SBI schools teaching and learning of mathematics and science subjects using English as the communication language in the classroom, and information and communication technology (ICT). However, the guide books (Depdiknas 2007, 2008) contain the unique criterion of Test of English as a Foreign Language (the TOEFL) score as an indicator of the required proficiency in English of the teachers. For instance, science and mathematics teachers have to have at least a TOEFL score 500, which is problematic because TOEFL measures the ability of non-native English speakers and thus it cannot become the benchmark of English communication performance in class (Kustulasari 2009). In fact this 'criterion' becomes a big

Table 1 Nine areas for quality assurance in Indonesian international standard schools (SBI)

Areas for quality assurance	Examples of quality indicators
1. Accreditation	Apart from accreditation at 'A' level by the Indonesian National Accreditation Board for Schools, the school is also accredited by a school accreditation body in an OECD member nation
2. Curriculum	Level of lesson content equivalent to or higher than that taught in an OECD member country
3. Learning-teaching process	Science and mathematics subjects are taught using English and using information and communication technology (ICT); other subjects, apart from foreign languages, are taught using Bahasa Indonesia
4. Evaluation	Achieves Indonesian National Education Standard for Evaluation, enriched with modes of evaluation employed in an OECD member country
5. Teachers	Teachers of science and mathematics subjects are able to deliver lessons through English and using information and communication technology (ICT)
6. Principal	Principal has an active mastery of English. Principal possesses international vision, capable of developing international links
7. Facilities and resources	Library equipped with facilities which permit access to ICT-based learning resources throughout the world
8. Management	School is multicultural. Has 'sister school' links with international standard schools abroad
9. Financing	Achieves Indonesian National Education Standard for school financing

Adapted from (Coleman 2011, p 19)

burden for science and mathematics teachers when their English communication skill is still far from the minimum requirement level (Kompas 2009). A study conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2007 and 2008 involving more than 27,000 SBI school teachers found that more than half of them have only a novice proficiency level in English, while only 0.7 % could be regarded as having 'advanced working' or higher level of proficiency in English (Coleman 2011).

The rationale of the SBI program, according to the studies by Coleman (2011) and Lumbanraja (2012), is based not on a solid foundation, but rather on a simplistic justification such as 'for studying abroad', or on the repetition of the terms 'globalisation' and 'competitiveness'. Kustulasari (2009, p ii) argued that such justifications are evidence 'that the policy documents lacked clarity in explaining some critical terms and thus were not likely to help the national schools to achieve the intended goal of the policy'. Moreover, Coleman (2011) observed that around 50,000 Indonesians are studying abroad (a figure used to support the rationale of SBI) compared with the estimated 2.7 million Indonesian migrant workers (who are mostly poorly educated and have limited preparation to be a 'global person'), a staggering ratio of 1:54, which shows that the SBI program with the many funds provided to the certain schools, 'constitute a considerable subsidy to the wealthy'.

Methodology

The research orientation of this study is interpretive, with the researchers' task to 'make sense of, or interpret,

phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln 1998, p 3). This study investigates the way people understand educational activities, pertaining in this case to the international standard school. The study aims to uncover stakeholders' perspectives and understandings, particularly with regards to school capacity building issues in the real settings. The researchers entered the respondents' lived setting and sought information and interpreted what happened (Creswell 1998; Schwandt 2000).

To gain a better understanding of the phenomena, the researchers adopted the case study design (Miles and Huberman 1994; Stake 2000; Punch 2009). A single case was purposefully selected in order to get deeper insights into the concept of capacity building in the context of Indonesian's international standard school which is situated in a localised boundary of space and time (Yin 1994).

The research was conducted at a public general secondary school which has been participating in the SBI program for more than 3 years, located in a small city in West Java province. This institution was selected because it is a typical Indonesian school involved in the SBI program and is well regarded in the city (Coleman 2011). The school has been acknowledged by the community as a top school in the city, in which only high achiever students can enrol. A total of 1,100 students were enrolled at the school, divided into 27 classes (nine classes in each level, i.e. year 10, 11, and 12) taught by 94 teachers.

Data collection of fieldwork was completed over a period of 3 months, consisting of researchers taking notes for journal entries and recording participants' stories and experiences. The researchers conducted several classroom observations as passive observers to obtain information; in

addition, school meetings, teacher preparation room activities and even school committee meetings that involved many parents were observed and noted, providing the researchers with supplementary information that was useful to corroborate the primary evidence.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, deputy principals, teachers, students, school committee members and parents, where they agreed to be interviewed, recorded electronically (using a digital voice recorder) and transcribed. Informal interviews by way of conversations with participants were conducted around the school to investigate certain issues that emerged and needed clarification or further opinions from the participants. In order to do a systematic analysis to reveal patterns and key features of the school's capacity building, the researchers also used the official documents, which the school had to provide in its reports to the government. Selected documents were taken with permission from the school, such as the school development plan, the school program report as the SBI School, and lesson plans; but other documents such as real budget and expenditure were not disclosed by the school.

These approaches were selected because they enabled the researchers to gather and identify important issues relating to the international standard school and the school capacity building program in particular, as the views and opinions of the respondents provided more detail (Fontana and Frey 2000). The researchers also undertook methodological procedures to achieve trustworthiness in the present research by using triangulation, through using multiple data sources and methods, and techniques of data collection and analysis. All of the data were analysed using data reduction, selection, and simplification after which they were coded to develop emerging themes and to find their relation to the literature (Creswell 1994; Miles and Huberman 1994; Hodder 2000; Yin 1994).

Research Findings and Discussion

The research findings in this article mainly related to program coherence in the school capacity building concept that was developed by Newman, King and Young (2000 as cited in Hopkins and Jackson 2003). However, other components in capacity building were also presented since they are interrelated.

The SBI Policy Interpretation

Firstly, it is interesting to point out how members of the school interpret the SBI policy that is implemented in the school. One of the school committee members explained 'international standard' in SBI as:

At the beginning we did not know what the expectations of international standard were and so we started as preparation for students who will study abroad. At the same time we also implemented science and mathematics subjects to be taught bilingually (English and *Bahasa* Indonesia). During the second year, we changed the strategy. We identified two classrooms that we thought will meet with international standard and we filled them with year ten students (first year at general secondary school level) that were carefully selected. Right now, we are planning to make all classes in our school into SBI classes. This means that all Year 10 students starting from this year are grouped in SBI classes so that in the next 3 years the target as a real international school will be reached.

The response above shows that policy formulation allows many interpretations at school level, which were also shared by other school stakeholders. The changing strategy, however, reflects that schools learned by doing in order to adopt and utilise the policy in their interest. Finally, the changing status as an SBI school led them to completely change all class arrangements to meet the 'international standard'. It was found that in the school there are two kinds of classes, regular and a SBI class, a practice that had been in place for the last 3 years after they joined the SBI program.

To illustrate, a student from the SBI class explained about the difference between regular classes and her class:

According to my perspective, the SBI and regular class are the same. However, the main difference is in the SBI class where we use English more often. Also, we have a smaller number of students in our classroom consisting of around 25–30 students. In the regular classroom, there are 44 students. Then, in the SBI classroom they provide a TV and computer which are not provided in regular class.

The difference in treatment is salient in the school. Findings using classroom observation to compare the regular and SBI classrooms confirmed the situation. SBI classrooms are provided with premium services including a smaller number of students, multimedia facilities, internet in the classroom; and differences could be seen even in the way the teachers interacted with students (Coleman 2011).

Selected students who joined the SBI classes undoubtedly exhibited many differences. Several observations that were conducted by the researchers found that in the SBI classes, students were more active in classroom activities (asking, giving comments, and answering questions). Students participated regardless of the subjects or the teaching methods used by the teachers. Meanwhile, in the regular

classes most of the time the teachers used the ‘chalk and talk’ method, getting limited participation from students. One of the English teachers and one local language teacher who taught regular and SBI classes illustrated the situation:

In terms of teaching and learning, instruction in SBI class is easier because the students are smart. So we don’t have to inform them of many things. Mostly, the teachers give instructions. In the SBI class, students explore the lesson and teachers act as facilitators.

Teachers’ treatment of students is different. Teachers who teach in the SBI class are more relaxed, but those who teach in regular classes are more stressed... It is because the seriousness and attitude of SBI students are much better. Recently, I gave remedial lessons for some SBI students. They ask for more lessons and want to do their test again when their marks are low. But in the regular class, even when their marks are below the standard, no one wants to do the test again.

To put the matter into perspective, the beginning students who enter the SBI class were carefully selected. Some students from the SBI classroom who were interviewed and involved in informal discussion with one of the researchers stated that their previous achievements were excellent. One student from the SBI class shared her story:

Q: What is your reason for entering this school?

A: Previously, I chose to go to SMAN 3 Bandung.¹ But my parents don’t want that, because it is too far. So, in this district the best school is this school, and then I was enrolled to this school. Well a good school is shown by its quality. People will not say it is a good school when its service is bad.

Q: How about your achievement in junior secondary school?

A: Well, I am a top student since primary school.

The school that participated in the SBI program was regarded as the best school in the district (Coleman 2011). It is also the oldest school that has had a very good reputation for a long time, with its alumni including important and powerful people not only in the district but also in the province. This makes the school the first choice for parents, as expressed by one student’s mother:

It is well known that this school is the best and has a good quality...especially with its status as SBI School.

The school management explained in more detail about the academic achievement program that is implemented in the school in the context of SBI:

In this school, the X^2 is about the deepening of teaching subjects. This means we added teaching hours. Students attend class until 3:30 pm. In the curriculum, a weekly teaching-hour is 38–42 h but in our school it becomes 45 h. In the SBI class we even add another 8 h a week, which brings the total to 53 h... The additional teaching hours are for subject enrichment, where we focus on English, mathematics, science, and also religious education.

In short, the practice of different treatment is seen by school stakeholders as the implementation of the SBI policy in their school. It also speaks for itself with the school resources channelled into it and it being regarded as the school’s best program.

Funding for the SBI School

Supporting some SBI classes, of course, needs extra funding. In terms of financial support for each SBI school, the central government yearly provides a block grant amounting to 300 million³ rupiahs (equal to US\$ 30,000) that is sent directly to the school. The fund is intended as seed money that can be used by the schools to finance several development programs initiated by the school themselves to make them reach the ‘international standard’. This is actually in line with the SBQIM program that was in practice earlier (Indriyanto 2003) but inadequate funding precluded any significant impact on the schools that participated in the program.

During the site studies, the researchers attended the School Committee meeting, with permission from the school management, when the agenda was to formulate how much money parents have to pay to the School Committee for entrance fees and monthly fees. The meeting is formally called ‘the annual meeting of the School’s Committee’. Discussions relating to the above matters were part of the School Committee’s role. According to Sumintono’s (2009) study, Indonesian public secondary schools collect money from parents through the School Committee in order to make ends meet. The practice has stopped since 2005 in primary and junior secondary schools across Indonesia when the central government imposed the BOS policy (*Bantuan Operasional Sekolah* or School Operational Support) (Fitriah et al. 2013). However, the practice has not stopped in

¹ The prestigious general high school in the West Java provincial capital.

² X is part of formula $SBI = SNP + X$, as explained in the previous section.

³ From the academic year 2009/2010 the amount has been increased to Rp 500 million (US\$ 50,000) yearly.

Table 2 A summary of the 2009/2010 school budget

No	Description	Subcomponent	Total amount in thousand rupiahs ^a
I Income			
1	Education contribution fund	School entrance fee Monthly tuition fee of SBI students Monthly tuition fee of acceleration class students Monthly tuition fee of regular students	2,882,480
2	Grant from the central government	–	500,000
3	Routine fund from the district government	–	38,500
Total			3,420,980
II Expenses			
1	School renovation	Refurbishment of school facilities	965,062
2	Teaching and learning	Stationery Books, papers, ink, markers Internet services Digital projectors Computers	896,337
3	Student services and activities	Student organisation Scouting Science club Sport, others extra curricular psychology test	453,000
4	Staff professionalism	Allowance for principals, deputy principals, teachers, administrative staff Salary for contract teachers Salary for contract support staff	938,500
5	School overhead cost	School culture: cleaning, security, tidiness, school environment maintenance	421,500
6	School operational costs	Other school activities	88,000
Total			3,762,400

^a 1US\$ = Rp 10,000

secondary schools. Such activity is a ‘tradition’ which is legal, usually supported by a stipulation from the education district office. The mechanism of parents ‘giving’ money through the School Committee to the School is like charity or donations: because the source of funds is not from the government, the school can use the money in whatever way they think necessary, mostly without transparency and accountability mechanisms to the parties that provide the funds (Sumintono 2009).

Conversations with a student and one parent below confirmed the parents’ regular financial contribution to the school and the reason why some students experience different treatment by the school:

Q: ‘Tuition’ fees between regular and SBI students are the same, aren’t they?

A: No, they are different. The regular class is 100 thousand rupiahs [US\$ 10] a month, but for SBI student, it is 150 thousand rupiahs [US\$ 15] per month.

Q: How much do you have to pay for the entrance fee of your child?

A: When my kid enrolled at the school, I paid 2.5 million rupiahs [US\$ 250], but now I heard its 5 million rupiahs [US\$ 500]. That is for SBI students, regular class students pay less than that.

Interestingly, as the researcher noted, the people who were invited and came to the meeting were parents of new students (year 10). The meeting practiced one way communication, where the representative from the school explained about the list of the programs to be financed, the amount of money needed and some calculations about the amount to be paid by each parent monthly. There was a short question–answer session with parents which the school representative, however, still dominated, insisting that the service given to their children was well worth the money the parents pay.

What was missing from the meeting since this was an annual meeting, were the parents of years 11 and 12 students.

Why they were not invited? The school financial report from previous academic year was not presented or discussed; and the details of the coming school budget were not provided in hardcopy for parents to read and analyse. This also made the researchers rely on the manual note that was presented at the meeting, since the school did not allow access to hardcopy of the school budget. At the meeting it was explained that it is not a balanced budget as the expenses were higher than the income. The school management informed parents that the School Committee has to top up the budget with 389 million rupiahs in order to implement all the programs listed in the school budget. Table 2 presents a summary of the school budget as discussed at the meeting:

The table shows that parents' contribution to the school budget (Education Contribution Fund) was so huge that the fund provided by the district government (non-salary budget) was less than 2 %. This is consistent with a study conducted by Supriadi (2003) that the routine and maintenance funds (non-salary budget) from the government for secondary schools only contributed less than 10 % of the schools' real needs. The amount that the government gives to the school in terms of teachers and staff salary is around 1.5 billion rupiah annually, while at the same time, money from parents through the School Committee is nearly twice that amount.

To put this data into perspective, the money that is collected annually by the School Committee compared to the grants received from the central government, actually plays a very big role. For year 2009 alone, the school was able to 'generate' nearly six times the amount that the central government gave to help the school participate in the SBI program. An important question is why did the school participate in SBI since it was able to collect much more money than the SBI funding in any case? The answer could be that status as an SBI school provides a 'certificate' of very good quality by the central government. Additionally, the school was able to ask more from the parents with the justification that with SBI, it needs more money to operate.

The school needs more funding because it has SBI status which is approved by the schools' stakeholders and in order to purchase facilities to prepare the SBI classrooms with computers and a digital projector, etc. From another perspective, this is a legitimate means for the school to raise money (Winarti 2008). One teacher criticised:

I am suspicious that the real intention to implement this program is to gain more money. I agree if the SBI program focuses more on giving good quality educational services to students.

School Development Program as an SBI School

The analysis of the school documentation regarding the SBI program which documents the school's efforts to

improve the school capacity building is presented below. As mentioned above, the school was required to submit several documents in order to become involved in the SBI program: the school development plan (5 years and 1 year development plans), an action plan, and school self evaluation. All documents were gathered with permission from the school, and were obtained in the form of hardcopy and softcopy for analysis. The content of the school development plans (both 1 year and 5 years programs) comprise a list of programs to be implemented, sources of funding, persons responsible, and success indicators; the action plan document, which should be more specific and measurable is, in fact, similar to the 1-year development plan. The self-evaluation is measured on actual school readiness. Without doubt, all the documents contained important information about the school development programs that show the school's intention to implement the SBI program.

A school self-evaluation report consists of ten elements which the school has to address concerning the actual condition and readiness of the school. The school's report indicated they were ready in five elements while the other five were not ready. The five elements which were not ready were curriculum, human resource management, self-appraisal and evaluation, and school management and partnerships.

Curriculum and human resource management, which are the vital parts of an educational institution, were not ready because of the English requirement. The government criterion stated that curriculum components should be written in English: syllabus, textbooks, student worksheets, lesson plans, educational software, evaluation instruments, and teacher qualifications. The school's document indicated that everything related to curriculum materials already existed but needed revision especially in terms of the teachers requiring more training. In relation to human resources, the school simply declared that it was not ready to achieve the standards. School management, teachers, and support staff (librarian, technician, laboratory assistant, and administrative employee) for instance were required to be able to communicate in English and achieve a certain level of TOEFL score⁴ (500 for teacher and school management, and 400 for support staff), and should be able to use ICT tools in teaching and learning. Since the school had already been involved in the SBI program for more than 3 years, it is clear that the English requirement is the most difficult obstacle for the school.

⁴ New regulations relating to SBI, Minister of Education decree (*Permendiknas*) number 78/2009 stated that Internet-Based TOEFL for teachers and students should reach more than 7.5 which means a very low level competency in English. This could be a typographical error during constructing the regulation, which can be seen in: <http://www.kemdiknas.go.id/media/132906/nomor%2078%20tahun%202009.pdf>.

Upon closer examination of the self-evaluation report, the five ready aspects, namely the facilities and infrastructure, school culture, student affairs, and program socialisation and finance depended on funding availability. For instance, facilities (such as provision of ICT and multimedia tools, classrooms, laboratory apparatus, and materials) and school culture (cleanliness, tidiness and security of classrooms, school yards, canteens, etc.) are things that the school needs to purchase and pay for the services provided. This shows the main difference from aspects that were classified as not yet ready. Availability of money in the school to finance fulfilment of these requirements, however, does not work very well when, for instance, dealing with teachers' competencies in English. In short, developing teacher capacity is the real obstacle and the school cannot make improvements in terms of planning and executing this kind of program. On the other hand, it also shows that the SBI policy designers designed a program that is too difficult for schools to fulfil and it reveals the limited information gathered about the actual condition of schools when the policy was designed (Kustulasari 2009).

The three other documents completed by the school are nearly the same in terms of content. Essentially, the 5-year development plan is an extrapolation of the 1-year plan: the finance for each program is five times the number of 1 year plan. A summary of the action plan is provided in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the source of fund comes from the two components: central government grant and School Committee contribution. Not included in the summary table are the contribution from the provincial government and the district government, which, according to the three documents of the school, is zero, unlike Coleman's (2011) findings in other districts. Certainly the school management complained as follows:

Funding from the provincial government is not coming yet. The district government did not give anything more than the usual fund and they also ignore the need for funds to implement SBI programs. It is a big mistake...they even said that our school has everything, and so there is no need any help. It is ironic to get such a statement from a district government official.

The policy guide books (Depdiknas 2007, 2008, 2009) stated that grants from the government should be matched by an equal amount that the school should provide, which showed that this school was able to raise even more money and spend slightly more. The guidebooks also stated that money from the central government has to be spent according to the recommended allocations. This action plan showed that more than a third of the money from the central government for the SBI program was spent on

curriculum matters (preparing curriculum materials and their delivery in the classroom). This decision followed the central government suggestion, which is also something that the school wanted to emphasise, i.e. good teaching and learning activities.

It should be noted that the biggest allocation was for the selected subjects of mathematics, science, and English. The reason this needed the bigger portion was because teachers were required to work extra hard to prepare the related curriculum materials in English. Also, teachers might need to buy materials such as textbooks and educational software. According to the school self-evaluation report, many related things were already available. Additional improvement, renewal, and particularly teachers' training needed further attention. So, in the first 5 years of the SBI program, particular teachers would be busy preparing the lesson plans, test items, students' worksheets, and other teaching materials and translating them into English. Undoubtedly, all of these activities need more funding. One of the biology teachers specifically explained this situation:

When we deal with English, the honorarium should be increased proportionally. This is because when we prepare materials in English it is more difficult. So, we should get monetary returns.

However, if we correlate with teacher competency in English, it was easily identified that the program planned and implemented by the school did not adequately address the real situation. This became clear when we compared the budget for developing human resources which was only one-fourth of the allocation for the curriculum. The availability of teachers with sufficient competency in English was a more fundamental problem that needed to be solved from the beginning. In other words, it is questionable how the teachers can prepare the curriculum materials when they are incompetent in English (Coleman 2011).

Regarding the required English competency, the school management explained it as:

In terms of English, it is the very hard. Improving English cannot be achieved in one or 2 years. For instance, TOEFL score for teacher should reach 500. It is difficult to achieve, even for our English teachers. So, this is ignored as the most important thing.

To illustrate the point, the views and experiences about teaching using English in their classroom of two science teachers are presented below:

Talking English for opening and closing classroom activity, I can do it. But readiness to use English also involved the students' ability to understand. So, the solution is to use power point presentations in English, but we explain it in *Bahasa* Indonesia.

Table 3 A summary of yearly SBI school action plan in 2008

No	Component	Subcomponent	Source of fund (in million rupiahs) ^a		Success indicator
			Central govt.	School committee	
1	Curriculum of mathematics, science and English	Syllabus Textbooks Lesson plan Educ. Software	136.25	60.00	Availability of curriculum materials and facilitators
2	Assessment	Evaluation instrument Student assessment Appraisal of principal, teachers, support staff	35.00	14.00	Good quality teaching and learning Accurate assessment
3	Human resources	Principal; Teachers; Support staff Teacher professional dev. Forum for teacher competency development	35.50	24.50	Improvement of human resources quality
4	Facilities	Learning media Laboratory apparatus and materials Library; Classrooms; Website	29.25	99.00	Availability of teaching and learning facilities
5	School culture	Cleanliness; Tidiness Security; Free from drugs; Discipline	2.00	57.50	Availability of comfortable and secure school environment
6	Management	Administration of academic, student, finance, facilities, etc. Org. structure Job description ICT training ISO	18.00	31.50	Availability of good administrative services
7	Student affairs	Student selection Co-curriculum Student activities	32.00	10.00	Implementation of students' activities
8	Partnership	School and University in Indonesia and abroad	12.00	7.50	Good cooperation happening
9	Program socialisation	Sharing information to stakeholders	–	7.00	Knowledge and understanding of SBI program
Total funding			300.00	311.00	

^a 1US\$ = Rp 10,000

I am not confident, because I cannot speak English fluently. I only use English terms when explaining the main concepts to students. It is better to give the task of English as a communication language only to English teachers.

The school management perspectives as well as the teachers' views with regard to teachers' English competency are clear from the above excerpts. Management's solution was to question the standard set by the central government, but as far as the teachers, were concerned, they know their own ability and so used pragmatic approaches such as emphasising English as text to be read

by students or even giving back the task to the expert (Kompas 2009; Coleman 2011).

The rationale for this situation comes from the SBI policy itself, where it states that preparing teaching materials and communication in English become the criteria to determine whether a school has attained the SBI status (Depdiknas 2007, 2008, 2009, Kustulasari 2009). Then it makes sense for schools to spend more of the budget for curriculum materials in English.

The issue of accreditation as an SBI school is also related to the biggest allocation from the School Committee which was 99 million rupiahs a year for facilities.

Most of the money was used to procure ICT tools like desktop and laptop computers, digital projectors, television, and overhead projectors for the SBI classroom. Besides teaching in English, the policy stated that the use of ICT in teaching and learning must also be provided in classrooms in order for a school to be called an SBI school. Two members of the school management have expressed similar views as in the following excerpt:

If the school wants to move forward, then it should be provided with adequate funding. If we want to make our school better, we should prioritise the facilities. How can you learn how to operate a computer when the computer is broken or outdated? Sometimes, there is no computer at all. You cannot do it. So, make sure all facilities are available and push them to follow the activities. That's the only way.

Actually, the problem in term of facilities is so hard. You can imagine, each classroom has to be equipped with *infocus* [a digital projector], internet, computers or laptops. Then, starting this academic year, we are required to provide complete multimedia facilities to all year 10 classrooms and another thirteen SBI classes. When I calculated the amount needed, the total is around 180–200 million rupiahs.

Conclusion

This paper sets out to examine the implementation of the SBI policy in Indonesia. The SBI policy can be regarded as a platform for schools to improve their capacity building. Realities from one public secondary school in a small city in West Java were presented to provide a better understanding of the complexities of capacity building in a developing country, particularly in the aspect of program coherence.

As mentioned in earlier studies (Kustulasari 2009; Coleman 2011) with regard to lack of clarity in the SBI policy, the study found that this resulted in the creation of special classes with extra facilities to be regarded as SBI classrooms. In order to set up the 'international standard' classrooms, the school relied on funds coming mainly from parents through its School Committee; and these funds were significantly bigger than the grants allocated by the central government. The SBI status granted by the central government can also be seen as an 'excellent school' certificate, which provides the school with the reason to ask more from the parents in terms of funding to support programs to achieve the 'international standard'.

The SBI program that aims to improve Indonesia's education quality is actually implemented in the same way as the previous the SBQIM program. However, unlike the

SBQIM, the SBI program is targeting only good schools that have better resources. The SBI development of the particular school of this study revealed that many required targets are difficult to achieve, particularly the English requirement. This resulted in the school fulfilling the requirements that could be achieved with the availability of funds, but neglecting other requirements that seemed too complicated, such as improving teachers' ability and fluency so that English could be used as the communication language. Certainly, this is also another sign that the policy makers cannot fully grasp the Indonesian school system and its capacity, which casts doubts on the feasibility of the program to achieve success.

The findings of this study indicate that careful research based on the Indonesian education system is necessary to identify appropriate school capacity building programs. The English fluency requirement, for example, needs a new generation of teachers who are designed to teach in English; not just based on an ad-hoc program like SBI.

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