

Indonesian government' s LPDP international scholarship program and technocratic legacy in the country

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論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

This dissertation studies the Indonesian government-sponsored scholarship programs organized by the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan; LPDP), focusing on its international scholarship program. With a special funding mechanism and operational expenses rivaling major public universities in Indonesia, LPDP scholarship is a massive undertaking by the government. This dissertation provides an insight into Indonesian government's ambitious, economically aimed education and human resource development project. Academically, it contributes to the discussion on the how education and economic policies intersect, especially in a developing country. It highlights both the potentials and limitations of the ability of such policies to contribute toward economic growth and development.

Main research question: How does government scholarship program under LPDP scheme serve as an instrument for human resource/capital development in Indonesia in relation to the country's effort to catch-up with the world-economy?

Summary:

This dissertation frames the scholarship as a government-organized academic mobility and skilled migration, meant to support economic growth and development by creating highly skilled human resource. The literature review highlights how the "international" dimension complicates the discussion on objectives and benefit of educational activities, and agency-structure relation involved in academic mobility and skilled migration. It also discusses the concepts used by the Indonesian government in its national economic development rhetoric, focusing on "total factor productivity" (TFP) and economic catch-up, as practical objectives of the LPDP scholarships.

This dissertation utilizes interview with current/former public officials, information from white papers, regulations, official publications, statistics, news, and secondary materials to explain historical background and early development of LPDP in relation to the education system and economic development policy in Indonesia. Interview with scholarship awardees also provides an insight on their perceived roles and agency.

It concludes that a technocratic legacy within the government informed an expectation that the scholarship awardees would return to Indonesia and form a class of “leaders and professionals” loyal and motivated to contribute to the national development. The program, being form of organized circular migration, serves not only to gain knowledge and ideas from abroad, but to create a class of individuals equipped with transnational experience and competence yet willing to serve their home country. Although temporarily required to stay and work in Indonesia following their graduation—arguably an anachronistic mechanism from previous scholarship programs meant to secure human resources for specific government institutions, they have a relatively high degree of freedom (agency) to decide on how they could contribute to the development in Indonesia.

LPDP scholarship as a policy product shows that the Indonesian government acknowledges the potential gains from the mobility of people, knowledge, and ideas for Indonesia as a developing country. At the same time, the scholarship also represents a form of resistance by a nation state against the transnational world. It shows how Indonesia attempts to manage the scholarship awardees as a set of “transnational actors” through the utilization of factors like patriotism and the intrinsic motivation to contribute, while binding them only in a relatively loose formal mechanism.

As a policy recommendation, this dissertation highlights the need for Indonesian government to specify concrete objectives of the program in order to measure its success as a public policy product, and to adopt a more open information disclosure policy to promote research by actors outside the government. For future research, this dissertation encourages a proper inclusion (i.e. theorization) of the roles of post-graduate degree holders and/or migratory experience into TFP estimation.