



German Education System

Netty Anggraini^{1*}, Azwar Ananda², Nurhizrah Gistituati³, Rusdinal⁴
Universitas Negeri Padang

Corresponding Author: Netty Anggraini netty.aknp@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The German education system is known as one of the most structured and organized systems in the world. This research aims to explore various aspects of the German education system, including history, structure, curriculum, teaching methods, and learning evaluation. Education in Germany is divided into several levels, starting from primary education to higher education. This education system also includes various types of schools, such as Gymnasium, Realschule, and Hauptschule, each of which has a different focus and goals. This research also discusses the role of technology in education, as well as the German government's efforts to ensure equal and quality access to education for all levels of society. The research results show that the success of the German education system lies in a comprehensive and results-oriented approach, as well as strong cooperation between government, schools and society. It is hoped that these findings will provide insight for other countries wishing to adopt or adapt effective educational practices from Germany.

INTRODUCTION

Geographically, Germany is located in the middle of the European continent. Germany has an area of 356,957 square kilometers, with a population of more than 82 million in the 1950s, and around 8% of them were not German. Most of these foreign citizens come from Turkey, either born in Germany or of Turkish descent. They came to Germany at a time when southern European countries began to recruit manual laborers. Other immigrants entered Germany as refugees, because of the war, or because of economic pressures in their respective countries. The Third Type of Immigrants are ethnic Germans themselves (although not all of them speak German). In contrast to other types of immigrants, they can request their citizenship at any time when entering Germany (Fulbrook, 2014).

The dominant language in Germany is German itself with various dialects, because, from its historical roots, Germany has four language minority groups, namely Danes, Frisians, Sinti (Gypsies), and Sorb. None of these groups have more than 100,000 members. However, to teach this group of minority children their own mother tongue is still used.

Germany is not a country that is rich in natural resources, nor is it a country that is able to fulfill its own agricultural production (Coy, 2021). Therefore, Germany depends a lot on imported and exported goods. In general, German (western) trade is very good, and German investment abroad exceeds foreign investment at home. Until 1990, officially, there was no unemployment in West Germany, but in East Germany it was still recorded at 10.3%.

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

The type of research used in this research is qualitative research, namely research that is based on efforts to build views that are studied in detail, formed with words, holistic and complex images (Moleong, 2007). Meanwhile, the approach used is a descriptive analytical approach which is intended to obtain in-depth and meaningful data and examine current problems (Sugiyono, 2018). With a descriptive analytical approach, this article examines comprehensively, objectively and systematically the implementation of educational reform in Singapore and Indonesia. The method used in this research is a literature study, namely a data collection method by conducting a study of various literature in the form of books, journals, notes and reports related to educational reform both in Singapore and Indonesia (Nazir, 1988). Data collection was carried out by sorting reference sources and scientific literature related to educational reform, the background and conditions of education in Singapore and Indonesia, policies related to educational reform in Singapore and Indonesia and conditions after the implementation of these policies, then reviewing and analyzing and presenting it in a systematic arrangement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A brief history of Germany

Germany (German: Deutschland, German pronunciation: ['dɔʏtʃlant]), officially the Federal Republic of Germany (German: Bundesrepublik Deutschland) is a federation in Europe. This country has a very important economic and political position in Europe and in the world. With an area of 357,021 square kilometers and a population of around 84 million people, this country with 16 states (Bundesland, plural: Bundesländer) is a key member of the European Union (largest population), a transportation hub for goods and services between countries in the region, and is the country with the largest population. the third largest immigrant group in the world (Meutiawati, 2007).

The history of Germany as a nation-state began with the formation of the German Confederation in 1815, led by the Kingdom of Prussia. However, inhabitation of the area on the east bank of the Rhine, where most of Germany is now located, has been going on since prehistoric times, all the way back to the Old Stone Age (Paleolithic). In places near the flow of several large, hilly rivers (for example the Rhine and the Neckar River), for hundreds of thousands of years, various communities have lived. Fossils of Homo heidelbergensis and Homo neanderthalensis were found in such places. In more modern periods, remains of Cro-Magnon people from the last Ice Age have been discovered. Remains of the New Stone Age (Neolithic) and Perundagian Age civilizations (both the Bronze Age and the Iron Age) were also found in many places.

The historical era began in the 5th century, commonly called the Middle Ages by European historians, with the discovery of documents in Old German, Latin written by the local people themselves, or other languages.

Goals of German Education

The aim of education in Germany rests on providing fair opportunities for every individual to develop their full potential, creating citizens who are independent, think critically, and contribute positively to society (Cecep et al, 2009). In accordance with the Constitution (Grundgesetz),⁵ the German Federal Republic is a 'republic, a democracy, a federal, socially and constitutionally responsible state. With an education constitution that guarantees:

1. Freedom for the arts and sciences
2. Research and teaching
3. Freedom to believe
4. Believe (conscience) and declare a religion
5. Freedom to choose a place to live and a place to study or train
6. Legal equality and basic human rights of parents to care for and educate their children. The purpose of education in Germany is determined by each state.
7. The federal state does not intervene in educational affairs directly

German State Education System and Policy

The education system in Germany is decentralized, starting from elementary school to high school. Several Landers (regional authorities) made various provisions in their respective constitutions regarding the regulation of educational issues, and all through the legislative process. This arrangement includes determining educational goals, structure, teaching content, and procedures in their respective regional systems. Those responsible for the implementation of education within the state are the cabinet ministries or the Ministry of Culture (Kultusministerium). In large states, schools are not controlled directly by the state ministry, but through regional administrative bodies which are part of the executive body. Local communities usually also have responsibility for providing the necessary infrastructure and are sometimes involved in hiring staff.

Structure and Types of Education in Germany

The formal structure of the German education system includes: primary education, lower secondary education and higher education. Depending on the state, compulsory schooling in Germany lasts nine or ten years, with children normally entering school at the age of six. . However, some German children attend pre-school education (Kindergarten) voluntarily at the age of 3-5 years. The German education system can be visualized as follows:

1. Basic education (primary school) with a general length of education of 4 years (ages 6-9 years) except for the capital city (Berlin) implementing a 6 year system, while several other states implement an additional 2 years of teaching at grades 5 and 6 in an intermediate institution that provides various types of lessons in preparation for entry into secondary school programs. Other states provide other forms by providing special lessons in grades 5 and 6, and students can easily move from one school to another according to the desired program. At the end of grade 4 (or grade 6 in some places), students are directed to different programs such as those available in high school.
2. Secondary schools (lower secondary education) in Germany can be divided into 4 types, namely: Hauptschule/Realschule, Realschule/Mittelschule, Gymnasium and Gesamtschule. Hauptschule/Realschule is a type of secondary school that provides instruction aimed at entering an apprenticeship after students receive a certificate of completion of study. These programs provide specialized courses to prepare students for their future careers, and also teach a foreign language (usually English). The Hauptschule program is categorized as the program with the lightest academic demands in Germany at grades 7 to 9.
3. Realschule is a school program that prepares students to enter careers as middle-class employees or workers. This program has higher academic demands than a Hauptschule. Since the 1970s, completion of this school has been a requirement for entering apprenticeship programs. A certificate from this school is also the key to entering various higher education pathways.

4. Gymnasium, aims to prepare students for higher education, although not all graduates go on to college. In grades 5 to 10, curriculum content varies according to the type of school attended. Starting in grade 11, students can choose specializations in a somewhat complex order. After successfully completing the exams in grade 13 students are entitled to enter tertiary institutions.
5. Gesamtschule is a school that emphasizes comprehensive programs for all children in a field, and children will obtain different certificates according to the field they choose. However, because there was a lot of controversy over this type of school program, not all regions opened this school (it was only opened in areas under social democratic lands).

Furthermore, higher education institutions in Germany consist of two types, namely: First, academy / polytechnic / Fachhochschulen (which is completed for 12 years of complete education); Second, University. There are no specific program requirements for entering a university, and there is no clear distinction between undergraduate and graduate programs. The First Certificate can be obtained after 4 or six years of study (Yusuf, 2019).

In 1996 the Pure Education Rate (NER) for elementary school students was 86%, while the rate for continuing to secondary school was 88%. Apart from formal education, in Germany non-formal education is also developing in the form of vocational, technical and business education which is mandatory for children. Children who graduate with a general education diploma at the Hauptschule or Realschule level and also those who do not get a diploma after completing 9 years of study. This education is a prerequisite for getting a job, and it can be completed part-time or full-time. Other non-formal education is in the form of adult education which aims to improve the quality of people's lives, in accordance with the demands of the times and very rapid economic, social and political changes. Adult education programs can be grouped into three, namely general, vocational (including technical and financial) and political.

German Education Curriculum

The curriculum is formulated by the Ministry of Education according to each state under the control of the Lander (regional government). Most Landers require the following subjects in primary education: German; mathematics; social studies (usually taught as Sachunterricht); history (usually taught as Sachunterricht); geography (usually taught as Sachunterricht); biology (aspects of biology are taught within science, which is usually taught as Sachunterricht); physics (aspects of physics are taught within science, which is usually taught as Sachunterricht); chemistry (aspects of chemistry are taught within science, which is usually taught as Sachunterricht); arts; music; sport; religion; and modern foreign languages. Meanwhile, for secondary schools, the curriculum is different (Faas, 2011).

German Education Funding

The allocation of education costs comes entirely from Lander (Regional) and the local community, except for higher education. It is the responsibility of the federal government. Almost all educational programs in Germany are free (including tuition waivers in higher education). The federal government also provides financial aid to some high school and college students. Most private schools are small, approximately 90% of school operational costs are supported by the federal government. Federal government expenditures in 1990 for the education budget totaled 9.3% of GNP (Orr., Jaeger., & Schwarzenberger, 2009)

Best Practice

Education in Germany is known for its holistic and comprehensive approach. The following are some educational practices from Germany that can be applied in Indonesia: (Frackman et al, 1993)

1. **Inclusive Education.** Germany has a strong inclusive approach to education, meaning students with a wide range of educational needs, including students with special needs, are taught in the same classes as other students. This approach can increase social integration and reduce stigmatization of students who are different. Indonesia can adopt a more broadly inclusive approach to ensure that all children receive an education that meets their needs.
2. **Dual Vocational System.** Germany is renowned for its strong vocational education system that combines practical learning in the workplace with theoretical learning in schools. This helps students to directly acquire skills that are relevant to the world of work. Indonesia can expand and improve collaboration between schools and industry to provide vocational programs that are more effective and relevant to labor market needs.
3. **School Autonomy.** In Germany, schools have a high degree of autonomy in managing curriculum, assessment, and resources. This allows schools to adapt education to their local needs. Indonesia can give schools more autonomy in educational decision making to increase flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of students and local communities.
4. **Character Education.** Character education is highly emphasized in Germany, encompassing values such as tolerance, cooperation and social responsibility. Indonesia can integrate character education into the curriculum more formally and systematically to form a more responsible and ethical generation.
5. **Free Education.** Free Education Primary and secondary education in Germany is generally free, even up to university in most cases. This ensures wider access to education and helps reduce educational disparities. Although Indonesia has taken many steps to increase educational accessibility, more steps can be taken to reduce the financial burden on families in obtaining an education.
6. **Competency Based Education.** Germany emphasizes the development of skills and competencies relevant to the world of work. This can be implemented in Indonesia by increasing the focus on project-based

learning, interpersonal skills, and entrepreneurship at all levels of education.

7. School-Family-Community Partnership. In Germany, partnerships between schools, families and communities are essential in supporting children's education. Indonesia can strengthen parental involvement in children's education and expand partnerships with local communities to create a supportive educational environment.

The application of educational practices from Germany can help improve the quality and accessibility of education in Indonesia and better prepare students to face future challenges. However, it is important to remember that each country has a different cultural, social and political context, so adaptation is necessary according to local needs and realities.

Table 1. Comparison of the German and Indonesian Education Systems

Analysis	Indonesia	Germany
Educational Structure	The Indonesian education system consists of basic education (SD/MI and SMP/MTs), upper secondary education (SMA/SMK/MA), and higher education (universities and colleges).	The German education system has a more diverse approach, encompassing primary education, secondary education (including gymnasiums, realschule, and hauptschule), as well as higher education (universities and other higher education institutions).
Duration of Education	The duration of compulsory education is 9 years for primary and lower secondary education	The duration of compulsory education is 9 to 10 years, depending on the state, with primary education taken in 4 to 6 years, followed by 3 to 4 years of secondary education.
Curriculum	The curriculum in Indonesia is regulated nationally by the Ministry of Education and Culture, with an emphasis on academic subjects such as mathematics, science, languages and the arts.	The curriculum in Germany is also regulated nationally, but with greater flexibility at state level. In addition to core subjects, arts education and practical skills are also emphasized.
Vocational Education	Vocational high schools (SMK) offer vocational education, but sometimes lack widespread recognition and require	Germany is known for its strong dual vocational system, where students gain practical skills in the

	improvements in program availability and quality.	workplace while learning theory at school.
Funding and Accessibility:	Although primary and secondary education is generally free, access to quality education remains a problem in some remote areas and for certain community groups.	Primary and secondary education is generally free in Germany, and there is strong government support for higher education, including scholarships and low loans.
Inclusive Education:	Even though there are efforts to encourage inclusive education, there are still challenges in making it happen as a whole.	Germany has a strong inclusive approach to education, where students with diverse needs are taught in the same classes as other students.

Although there are significant differences between the Indonesian and German education systems, there are also lessons that can be drawn from each system to improve the quality and accessibility of education in both countries (Mukhlis, 2020).

Response

A Brief History of the German State begins with the formation of the German Confederation in 1815 which was encouraged by the Kingdom of Prussia. The region that is now Germany has been inhabited since prehistoric times, with evidence of Cro-Magnon, Old Stone Age, and New Stone Age human remains. The historical era began in the 5th century, marked by the discovery of Old Germanic documents. Over time, Germany developed into a country with an important economic and political position in Europe and the world.

The aim of education in Germany is to provide a fair opportunity for every individual to develop their full potential, creating citizens who are independent, think critically and contribute positively to society. The German constitution guarantees freedom of art, science, religion, as well as basic human rights, with education determined by each state.

The education system in Germany is decentralized, with each state having control over the educational arrangements in its territory. Schools have a high degree of autonomy in managing their curriculum and resources. The structure of formal education includes primary, secondary, and higher education, with variations in school type and curriculum depending on the state.

Education funding comes entirely from states and local communities, with special federal government support for higher education. Most educational programs in Germany are free, including tuition waivers at universities. Germany's holistic and inclusive educational practices can be an example for Indonesia, including a strong vocational approach, character education, and

close partnerships between schools, families, and communities. Although there are differences between the Indonesian and German education systems, lessons learned from each can help improve the quality and accessibility of education in both countries.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several things that can be concluded, namely:

1. A brief history of Germany, namely that the country of Germany has a long and rich history, starting with the formation of the German confederation in 1815. The German region has a history of settlement that has been going on since prehistoric times, with a variety of cultures and civilizations.
2. The aim of German education is to provide a fair opportunity for every individual to develop their full potential, create citizens who are independent, think critically, and contribute positively to society.
3. The education system and policies in Germany in Germany are based on decentralization, where each state has the authority to formulate education policies according to local needs. There are different types of secondary schools that offer education according to students' interests and abilities.
4. The structure and types of education in Germany include primary, secondary and higher education. There are several types of secondary schools, such as hauptschule, realschule, gymnasium, and gesamtschule, which offer education according to students' interests and abilities.
5. The educational curriculum in Germany is formulated by the education ministry in each state, with an emphasis on core subjects such as languages, mathematics, science and the arts.
6. Education funding in Germany comes from regional governments and local communities. Almost all educational programs in Germany are free, including higher education, and the federal government provides financial assistance to students.
7. Best educational practices from Germany are known for their holistic and inclusive approach. Some best practices that can be taken from the German education system include inclusive education, dual vocational system, school autonomy, character education, free education, competency-based education, and school-family-community partnerships.
8. Comparison between the German and Indonesian education systems, namely that there are significant differences between the German and Indonesian education systems in terms of structure, duration of education, curriculum, funding and inclusive education. However, there are lessons that can be drawn from each system to improve the quality and accessibility of education in both countries.

By understanding comparisons and best educational practices from Germany, Indonesia can take steps to improve its education system, ensure more inclusive and quality education, and prepare a better generation to face future challenges.

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