



Thematic based administrative reform: A gateway to educational policy through a systematic literature review

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ABSTRACT

Administrative reform reflects the government's attempt to adjust its system to specific conditions, often requiring thematic approaches to prioritize reforms effectively. This research delves into Indonesia's implementation of thematic-based administrative reform since 2010, aiming to enhance governance by aligning government units towards shared goals. Despite these efforts, the connection between governance improvements and educational advancements in Indonesia warrants further exploration to understand its implications for educational policy. It applies the systematic literature review (SLR) to the growing literature on systematic administrative reform. Data was collected from reputable scientific article sources, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and Proquest. Furthermore, roughly 42 selected articles were carefully scanned and analyzed to generate research information. This research confirms that thematic-based administrative reforms have significantly influenced educational policy development by fostering a more responsive and context-specific approach, making educational policies more adaptable and relevant to unique community challenges. Thematic reforms have integrated new priorities, such as digital literacy, into the educational system, preparing students for the demands of the modern workforce. Furthermore, these reforms have emphasized inclusivity and competency-based education, ensuring policies are designed to provide equitable access to education. Thematic-based administrative reforms have created a more dynamic, inclusive, and forward-looking educational policy landscape.

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ABSTRAK

Reformasi administrasi mencerminkan upaya pemerintah untuk menyesuaikan sistemnya dengan kondisi tertentu, dan seringkali membutuhkan pendekatan tematik untuk memprioritaskan reformasi secara efektif. Penelitian ini menggali implementasi reformasi administrasi berbasis tematik di Indonesia sejak tahun 2010, yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan tata kelola pemerintahan dengan menyelaraskan unit-unit pemerintah menuju tujuan bersama. Terlepas dari upaya-upaya tersebut, hubungan antara peningkatan tata kelola pemerintahan dan kemajuan pendidikan di Indonesia membutuhkan eksplorasi lebih lanjut untuk memahami implikasinya terhadap kebijakan pendidikan. Studi ini menerapkan tinjauan literatur sistematis (SLR) pada literatur reformasi administrasi sistematis yang sedang berkembang saat ini. Proses pengumpulan data dikumpulkan dari sumber-sumber artikel ilmiah terkemuka, yaitu ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, dan Proquest. Selanjutnya, sekitar 42 artikel terpilih dipindai dan dianalisis dengan cermat untuk menghasilkan informasi penelitian. Hasil penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa reformasi administrasi berbasis tematik telah secara signifikan mempengaruhi pengembangan kebijakan pendidikan dengan mendorong pendekatan yang lebih responsif dan sesuai dengan konteks, sehingga kebijakan pendidikan lebih mudah beradaptasi dan relevan dengan tantangan masyarakat yang unik. Reformasi tematik telah mengintegrasikan prioritas baru, seperti literasi digital, ke dalam sistem pendidikan, mempersiapkan siswa untuk menghadapi tuntutan dunia kerja modern. Selain itu, reformasi ini juga menekankan pada inklusivitas dan pendidikan berbasis kompetensi, memastikan kebijakan dirancang untuk memberikan akses yang adil terhadap pendidikan. Secara keseluruhan, reformasi administrasi berbasis tematik telah menciptakan lanskap kebijakan pendidikan yang lebih dinamis, inklusif, dan berwawasan ke depan.

Kata Kunci: kebijakan pendidikan; reformasi administrasi; reformasi tematik; tata kelola pemerintahan yang baik

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INTRODUCTION

It has been more than thirty years since the first conception of administrative reform adorned the environment of the public sector. Administrative reform has been popularly adopted in the public sphere due to the developing of a new public management paradigm based on Hood's ideas. In this case, administrative reform is respected as a well-considered change carried out in the government's organization to increase its governing quality.

In developed countries, administrative reform is frequently associated with the movement desired by multiple stakeholders. Thus, reform design is commonly written under a clear and appropriate plan. However, the situation differs slightly from that in developing or underdeveloped countries. Under this circumstance, administrative reform in developing countries commonly emerges due to unavoidable situations such as crises, coup d'etat, or successful rebellions (Danar et al., 2020). Consequently, the reform under this stage needs to be well-designed because of a lack of a structured plan. Administrative reform in education is a multifaceted process that involves various stakeholders and considerations. The literature provides insights into the importance of administrative support in facilitating educational reforms (Wang et al., 2023). Moreover, restructuring bureaucratic systems is seen as a means to enhance governance within the public sector.

As a developing Southeast Asian country, Indonesian administrative reform is no exception. It emerged as a consequence of the East Asian financial crisis in 1997 – 1998, forcing President Soeharto to leave his tenure and alter the constitution of Indonesia (Gaus et al., 2017). This alteration created a process to reform the primary administrative system in Indonesia. This reform has undergone a fatiguing process without a straightforward design and roadmap for over a decade. Some scholars even argue that the reformation process has no significant impact on increasing society's welfare (Garritzmann et al., 2023). Furthermore, the effect of administrative reforms on educational equity has been a subject of interest, with studies showing that decentralization can influence educational inequity by shifting power back to states for designing educational systems (Felix & Trinidad, 2020).

However, in 2010, the situation slightly changed, especially when President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, commonly known as President SBY, declared a grand design of Indonesia's administrative reform through Peraturan Presiden (Perpres) Nomor 81 Tahun 2010 tentang Grand Design Reformasi Birokrasi 2010-2025. This grand design outlines various aspects that merge all government units into a single administrative reform movement. On this occasion, the road map of administrative reform was directly addressed to tackle current government problems or potential threats regarding the government's future performance, later recognized as thematic-based administrative reform (See: <https://peraturan.go.id/id/perpres-no-81-tahun-2010>).

The concept of thematic-based-administrative reform was introduced in 1993 when the federal government of the United States attempted to enhance government performance by changing the culture of federal bureaucracy. The thematic context cultivates a proactive problem-solving approach that successfully associates all separated parties to sustain majority reform agendas. The substance of thematic reform can vary depending on the situation of implementing agencies, including political will or decision-making process. Both of these arguments have proven their relevance to the case of Indonesia, in which two primary considerations construct the thematic context of administrative reform in Indonesia. On the one hand, they refer to the country's agenda to improve society's welfare. On the other hand, they also carry the political will of the country's leader in a specific tenure.

Previous studies have extensively explored various dimensions of administrative reform. Accordingly, some of them have been explored in terms of educational context (Farooqi & Forbes, 2020; Bondarenko et al., 2021; Kashin & Yankova, 2022). Most of them are explored in the context of China, Ukraine, and

other European Union countries. Yet, the link between governance improvements and educational advancements in developing countries like Indonesia still needs to be explored. Thus, it is also essential to consider the educational implications of administrative reforms. Administrative reform can be a gateway to enhancing education policy, which is crucial for developing informed and capable citizens. The intersection of governance and education is significant, as administrative efficiency and effectiveness improvements directly impact the quality of education and learning outcomes.

This paper aims to reveal the result of thematic-based administrative reform in Indonesia using a systematic literature review. In this case, we will assess the set of selected literature by applying specific software called publish or perish (PoP). It has been acknowledged that the literature chosen also offers a contextual discussion beyond Indonesian cases. Therefore, our research scenario will separate the literature selection based on reform context and thematic implementation. This research is expected to strengthen thematic-based administrative reform literature, especially in the Indonesian context, and highlight its implications for education policy and learning improvements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Thematic Based of Administrative Reform

In the early decades after the reformation, it was popularly trusted as a mechanism for public organizations to adapt and adjust their performance, and most governments agreed that it would bring better conditions for society's welfare (Shao et al., 2020). However, some may even result in an undesired outcome due to an unsuccessful reform process. The failure of administrative reforms in Ireland was due to a lack of reform pressure through ineffective campaigns. Furthermore, the reform movement challenges reformists to force the status quo supporters in whom they strive for their current position (Godbole, 2002). In this case, the collision between reformists and status quo supporters frequently creates tension in the public organization environment.

The existence of the reform's road map and grand design is essential to minimize this collision. However, it may not fully guarantee it will be free of conflict of interest. However, the grand design of reform frequently emerges due to consensus between one party and the other. Therefore, it may reduce the conflict of interest under the reform process. Focusing on this grand design and roadmap discussion allows us to examine what would happen if the grand design or roadmap is not fully implemented, which would result in untied problems.

The thematic-based administrative reform introduced in 2020 addresses specific untied problems under the reform process (Faedlulloh et al., 2020). The problem may vary, ranging from social issues to administrative trouble or particular threats to the current situation. In the Indonesian case, the thematic basis of administrative reform is focused on four primary concerns: 1) poverty alleviation, 2) increase of Investment, 3) acceleration of digital transformation, and 4) domestic product usage. All of these concerns have been settled due to the failure of the previous reform movement in the preceding agenda.

Poverty alleviation has become a national concern since the early stage of reform in Indonesia. The poverty rate has always become a national highlight in almost every tenure of Indonesian presidents. Furthermore, the current government's regime considers the investment either from domestic or FDI as one of the viable solutions combined with increasing domestic product usage. Therefore, both of these priorities were channeled together under a thematic plan. Finally, the acceleration of digital transformation reflects the positive gesture of the Indonesian Government to respond to the dynamic change of current society's digital culture.

Between the Reform Movement and Good-Clean Governance

Plenty of literature discusses the nexus between reform ideas and the realization of better governance quality (Sappe, 2019; Aji, 2019). Most of them mainly talk about the range within purpose and action. In this context, the reform movement is performed as an action, and the purpose is determined by the ideal condition desired by the countries' political leaders (Ugoani, 2017). Therefore, the reform's goal can vary depending on the leader's preference and political environment. This section will elaborate on the goals of thematic administrative reform in Indonesia as a manifestation of past leaders' choices on how the ideal country should be constructed.

Meanwhile, reform has its soul and spirit delivered by reformists' great desire for change. From 1997 to 1998, the reform movement in Indonesia was motivated by the reformist movement due to its dissatisfaction with Soeharto's regimes. The primary critiques of the regimes underlined the centralized-oriented government and authoritarian behavior of Soeharto's government. On this occasion, the main agenda of the reform was to shift the central government structure to avoid the absolute position of the president and share the balance authority in council representative hands, especially marked by Undang-undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1999 Tentang Pemerintahan Daerah and Undang-undang Nomor 32 Tahun 2004 Tentang Pemerintahan Daerah, which are describing decentralization and local autonomy.

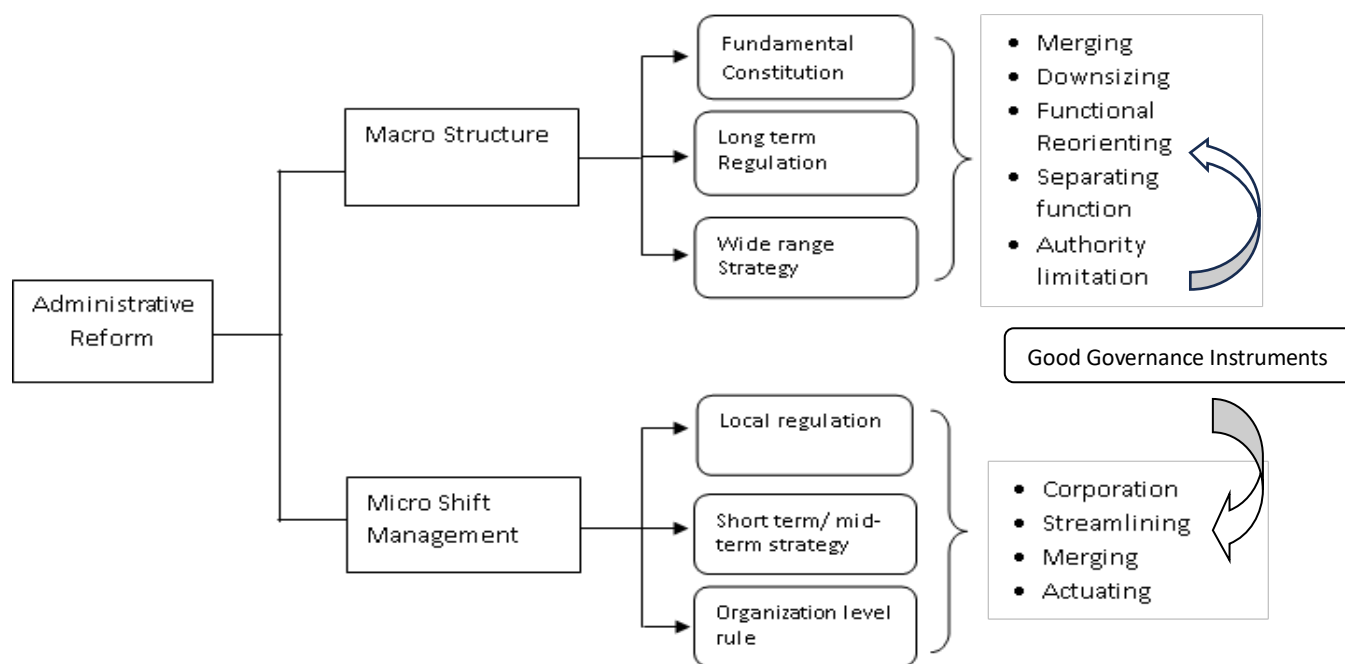


Figure 1. Administrative Reform Scope
Source: (Ngok & Zhu, 2007) Source modified

A structural shift at both the macro and micro levels can actually be considered administrative reform coverage, which is commonly associated with good governance implementation (Ngok & Zhu, 2007). **Figure 1** illustrates how the administrative reform component is basically inseparable from the nature of good governance.

From a macro perspective, the coverage of change commonly involves more fundamental attributes of law, for instance, the constitution, long-term regulation including basic law instruments of the nation, or long-term strategies such as national strategy for general development agenda or specific ones. In the narrower scope, administrative reform can be represented by shifting local regulations, standard rules, or short-term development strategies. In some cases, both macro and micro can also be delivered together to accommodate specific organizational issues (Ngok & Zhu, 2007).

The Nexus Between Administrative Reforms and Educational Policy

Administrative reforms typically involve restructuring governmental operations to improve efficiency, accountability, and service delivery. The New Public Management (NPM) paradigm, emphasizing privatization, decentralization, and performance-based management, has influenced many of these reforms. The aim is often to make public administration more responsive to citizens' needs and to foster greater transparency and accountability (Abhayawansa et al., 2021; Bauhr & Carlitz, 2021). Meanwhile, educational policies are designed to shape the educational landscape by setting goals, standards, and regulations that govern educational institutions. Key challenges in this domain include ensuring equitable access to education, improving educational quality, and integrating technological advancements into teaching and learning processes Ramberg in his book "*UNESCO - Global Education Monitoring Report 2021: Inclusion and education: All means all*". Stockholm University". The alignment of educational policies with broader administrative reforms can significantly influence these outcomes.

Recent studies have highlighted the role of decentralization in bridging the gap between administrative reforms and educational policy. Decentralization transfers authority from central to local governments, potentially leading to more context-specific and responsive educational policies. For instance, research found that the impact of decentralizing education through the local curriculum can reduce the dropout rate of poor students, while decentralization has enabled local governments to tailor educational policies to meet local needs more effectively, resulting in improved student performance (Setiawan et al., 2023). Performance management systems, a hallmark of administrative reforms, have been increasingly applied in the education sector. These systems set performance targets, monitor outcomes, and hold schools accountable for results. Introducing performance management in Jordan's education sector has significantly improved teacher performance and student outcomes (Firman et al., 2024). However, they also caution that excessive emphasis on metrics can lead to unintended consequences, such as teaching to the test.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) have emerged as a strategy to leverage private sector efficiencies in the provision of public education. Studies show that PPPs can enhance educational infrastructure and resource availability, particularly in underfunded regions. However, the success of PPPs depends on robust regulatory frameworks to ensure that private sector participation aligns with public educational goals (Verger & Moschetti, 2019). Administrative reforms often include initiatives to integrate technology into public services. In education, this translates to policies promoting digital tools for teaching and learning. A recent study examined the impact of administrative reforms in Denmark, highlighting how digitalization efforts in public administration have facilitated the adoption of e-learning platforms in schools, enhancing access to educational resources (Mountasser & Abdellatif, 2023). Ensuring equity and inclusion in education is a critical goal of educational policy. Administrative reforms prioritizing social equity can significantly impact educational access and quality for marginalized groups. For example, research found that administrative reforms in India to improve social equity have led to more inclusive educational policies, thereby increasing enrollment rates among disadvantaged communities (Ali et al., 2024).

METHODS

This descriptive research was conducted through a desk literature study. It attempts to explore the contextual discussion of thematic-based administrative reform through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The mechanism of SLR has been selected as part of this method for several reasons. First, this research attempts to avoid individual biases from researchers by examining the literature. Therefore, in this research, we applied Publish or Perish (PoP) literature search engine software and combined it with Vosviewer to carefully select the documents to gain neutrality under the data searching process. Second,

although this study is focused on exploring the contextual discourse of the theme based on administrative reform, it also pays attention to the mutual relation with other dimensions.

The SLR procedure, which covers three primary phases with eight relevant procedures (see **Table 1**) (Xiao et al., 2022).

Table 1. Procedure of SLR

No	Phase	Procedure	Description
1	Planning the Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulate the problem Develop and Validate Review Protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining a limitation and border within the context of the research. Establishing a research framework to determine the straightforward procedure.
2	Conducting a Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search the Literature Screen for Inclusion Assess Quality Extract Data Analyze and synthesize data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Searching the literature correlated to the problem and context of the research. The screening phase ensures the inclusion process.
3	Reporting the Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports Findings 	

Source: Xiao and Watson (2019)

According to **Table 1**, the first step used was defining the specific aspects of administrative reform and educational policy that were examined. The focus is on reforms initiated between 1997 and 2023, covering the transition from the early stages of administrative reforms to the implementation of thematic administration and policies in education as key terms. We also used the search terms combinations of keywords such as "thematic administrative reform," "educational policy," AND "educational governance". The geographical scope is limited to studies conducted in various international contexts, ensuring a diverse perspective on the subject matter. Furthermore, the educational policies will include those directly influenced by administrative reforms such as governance, curriculum development, and resource allocation.

The second one is the criteria for inclusion and exclusion. This study establishes strict criteria for including studies in the review to ensure relevance and quality. Only peer-reviewed articles, available in full text and published between 1997 and 2023 from reputable sources such as ScienceDirect, ProQuest, and Google Scholar, will be considered. Articles must focus on administrative reforms, their impact on educational policies, and the specific topic regarding how thematic-based administrative reforms have influenced educational policy development.

The data analysis process will follow the SLR approach which involves summarizing and synthesizing qualitative data to identify common themes, patterns, and insights regarding the impact of administrative reforms on educational policies (Mengist et al., 2020). The synthesis will evaluate the synthesized data and its valuable information correlated to the research questions. This comprehensive analysis will allow for the inference of concluding information, offering a nuanced understanding of how thematic-based administrative reforms have shaped educational policy over the specified period. It may involve qualitative and quantitative databases that are gathered to infer concluding information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this research have generated roughly 71 articles from various reputable sources, including Science Direct, Google Scholar, and Proquest databases. We then carefully identified relevant keywords with 17 eliminated papers. Furthermore, the research process continues into literature quality assessment and eliminates 13 articles. In this case, there are 41 remaining articles before being identified for the relevant meta-analysis stage. This meta-analysis removes only three articles by considering their relevance to our research scope. Finally, the last process of this literature study matches the analysis process of every article with our research substance, as illustrated in **Figure 2**.

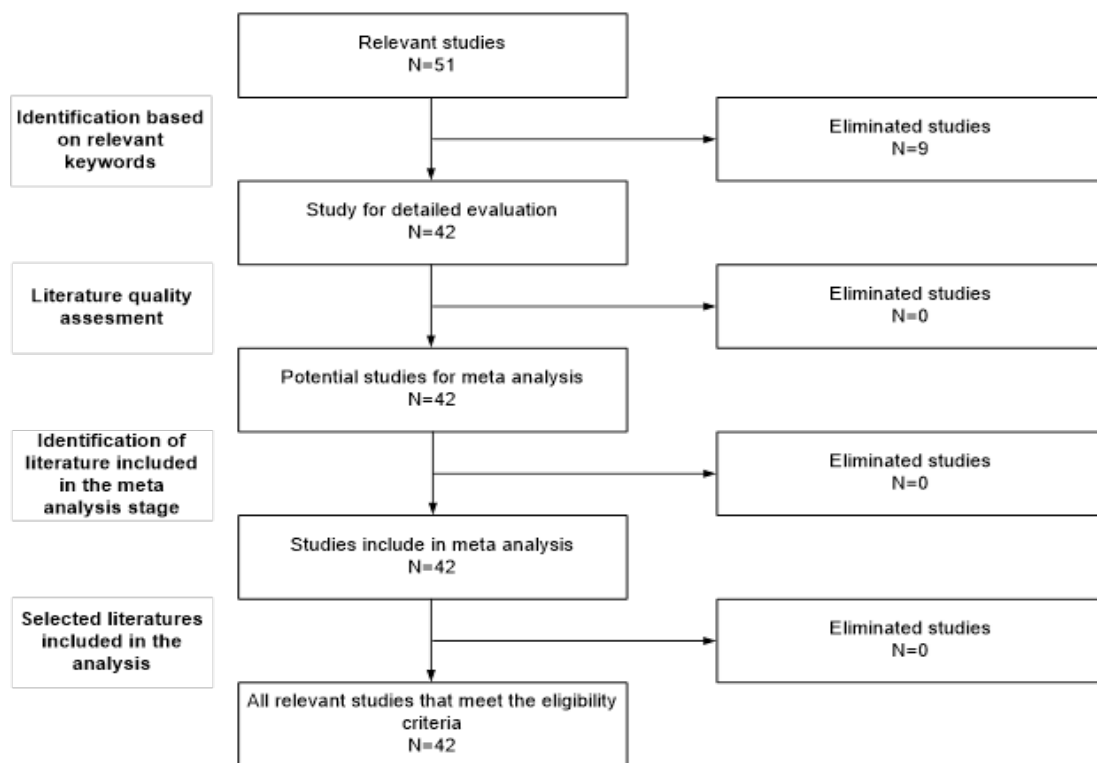


Figure 2. SLR Process
Source: Research (2023)

Based on the selected article from various databases, we can retrieve the information that the general concept of administrative reform has been discussed for more than three decades. Then, Crawford and Hermawan highlighted exploring the conceptual reform agenda in the early 2000s (Crawford & Yulius, 2002).

In another way, some social scholars have criticized how administrative reform in Indonesia has been delivered and directed. Meanwhile, those papers presented a detailed illustration of its process, underlining the process of shifting the authority and governance structure from central government-oriented to local government-oriented (Bratakusumah, 2019; Wibawa et al., 2020). The administrative reform academic discussion trend can also be traced by looking at **Figure 3**.

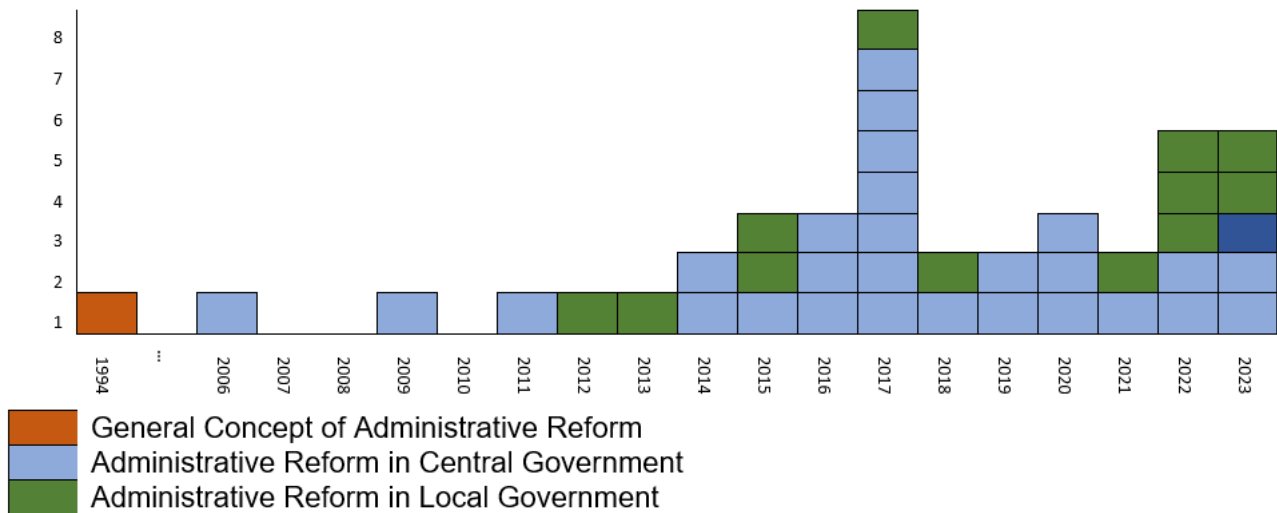


Figure 3. The Trend of Administrative Reform Academic Articles
Source: Author (2023)

The trend of administrative reform discourse in Indonesia has undergone a notable shift over the last few decades, as depicted in **Figure 3**. Initially, the focus was predominantly on discussions at the central government level, addressing macro-level structural configurations. However, there has been a noticeable transition towards local government discussions, emphasizing micro-level arrangements. This shift reflects a nuanced understanding of administrative reform dynamics and highlights the evolving priorities and challenges policymakers and scholars face.

During the early decades of administrative reform in Indonesia, scholarly discourse predominantly centered around central government dynamics and macro-level structural configurations. Articles and studies from this period often examined overarching policy frameworks, institutional arrangements, and top-down reform initiatives implemented by the central government. In contrast, recent decades have significantly shifted towards discussions centered on local government dynamics and micro-level arrangements. Scholars have increasingly focused on the role of local governments in driving administrative reform initiatives and addressing grassroots-level challenges.

Moreover, in the educational context, the emphasis on local government dynamics in recent administrative reform discourse has increased recognition of the importance of decentralization in education policy. Thematic reforms focused on empowering local governments and communities have contributed to devolving decision-making authority and resources to the district and municipal levels. For instance, the School Operational Assistance (*Bantuan Operasional Sekolah* = BOS) program has empowered schools and communities to manage their budgets and prioritize educational needs locally. By devolving decision-making authority to the grassroots level, decentralization has enabled communities to address local educational challenges more effectively and promote inclusive and equitable education policies tailored to their specific contexts.

Thematic-Based Administrative Reforms and Educational Policy Development

Integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the education system is an example of thematic-based administrative reform influencing educational policy. Many countries have implemented reforms prioritizing ICT education in response to global trends and the need for digital competence. This has led to the inclusion of ICT in the national curriculum, the development of digital teaching materials,

and comprehensive teacher training programs focused on ICT skills. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Education and Culture introduced the "ICT in Education" initiative, which aimed to equip students with essential digital skills and prepare them for the demands of the 21st-century workforce. This reform included updating the curriculum to incorporate ICT competencies, distributing digital learning resources, and providing extensive training for teachers to integrate ICT into their teaching practices (Setiawan et al., 2023).

Thematic-based administrative reforms have had a significant impact on educational policy development. These reforms aim to streamline and focus educational policies around specific themes or objectives, leading to more coherent and targeted policy implementation. Thematic-based reforms often influence curriculum development by emphasizing themes such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), digital literacy, or environmental education. For instance, in Indonesia, administrative reforms have led to the inclusion of local cultural content in the curriculum to promote local wisdom and national identity. Reforms focused on thematic areas often result in creating and disseminating specialized teaching materials. For example, the thematic emphasis on environmental education in certain regions has led to the development of textbooks and resources that integrate local environmental issues and sustainable practices (Gani et al., 2023). Thematic administrative reforms also shape educational policy through targeted teacher training programs. These programs ensure teachers are well-equipped to deliver the new curricula and use the updated teaching materials effectively. For instance, training programs focusing on digital literacy have been implemented to prepare teachers for integrating technology into the classroom (Afriliandhi et al., 2022). The shift from central to local governance in educational reforms has allowed for more context-specific and responsive educational policies. Local governments are better positioned to address their educational systems' unique needs and challenges, leading to more effective policy implementation and improved educational outcomes (Bano & Dyonisius, 2022).

Discussion

Early Portrait of Administrative Reform in Indonesia

Discussing the process of administrative reform in Indonesia is inseparable from the contextual background of why it might have occurred. Hence, the first lesson is that reform may occur not only through the internal initiative of political leaders but also by correlated external pressures. Especially regarding the threat of a political or economic crisis. The result of this study highlights the narrow classification of administrative reform context in Indonesia to be 3 (three) phases of criteria.

1. Initial Adjustment under Chaotic Situation

Some prominent studies, It was nearly impossible to embrace and force reform ideas under chaotic situations. Consequently, the process of alteration should be maintained under periodic phases (Christensen & Laegrid, 2003; Cohen, 2022). Under Indonesia's reform case, the reform is triggered by the clash between the government's regime of President Soeharto and the reformist movement with their demand for clean governance. On this occasion, the reformists are composed of various groups with different willingness and interests. Suparno wrote in his book *"Reformasi dan Jatuhnya Soeharto"* that reformists may have many intentions. Still, they have one way to realize their further action: demanding the new order regime's downfall and revising the constitution with no supreme leader position.

Undang-undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1999 Tentang Pemerintahan Daerah is described as the first product of Indonesian administrative reform intended to distribute centralized power to local governments with the decentralization principle. Under this scenario, there was a significant power shift from central

government domination to the local level. Law number 25, Year 1999, provides fiscal regulation to sustain the implementation of decentralization. Both of these laws have been performed as an instrument to reduce the tension of chaotic reform along with the newly appointed president of Indonesia.

Roughly half a decade later, after the reformation era was born, the phenomena under the political environment and bureaucratic sphere were getting more complex. The new design of decentralization failed to satisfy some local government interests; latent maladministration diseases such as corruption, collusion, and nepotism also became a stigma under government performance. Consequently, 2004 also became a turning point in waking up from those wicked problems. 2004 was an essential period for comprehensive adjustment of administrative reform, especially after establishing the Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, locally known as KPK (Suwitri, 2007). Furthermore, Declaration of local autonomy for city and regency-level governance in 2004 has also become a significant movement to distinguish central and local government affairs. At the same time, decentralization initiatives empowered local governments to tailor educational policies and programs to meet local needs, fostering innovation and responsiveness in education delivery. This autonomy allowed regions to address specific educational challenges and leverage local resources more effectively.

2. Redesigning Reform Trajectory

In 2010, by the hand of President SBY, he declared a grand design of administrative reform through Peraturan Presiden Nomor 81 Tahun 2010 Tentang Grand Design Reformasi Birokrasi 2010-2025. It remains to all stakeholders and policymakers that the implementation of administrative reform should be delivered on the roadmap track with a specific assessment and evaluation mechanism. Therefore, it carries many reform agendas on its roadmap and redesigns a reform trajectory by highlighting excellent and clean governance and increasing public sector performance to maximize public service.

The existence of administrative reform grand design and its roadmap enables all public embodiments in Indonesia to integrate their planning and program. Thus, the reform movement from all public institutions can be delivered harmoniously with planning and systematic mileage. Under this administrative reform roadmap, merging, reorienting functions, separating authority, and downsizing were easily monitored under the Ministry of State Apparatus Utilization and Bureaucratic Reform. This phenomenon has led to efficient and effective intergovernmental coordination with a single integrated system.

3. Prioritizing important issues

Exploring the administrative reform grand design allows us to zoom in on the contextual discussion about its detailed roadmap (Simangunsong, 2018). He explains the 9 (nine) acceleration reform programs, including: 1) Restructuring of Government Organizations; 2) Resetting of Number and Distribution of Civil Servants; 3) Development of Open Selection and Promotion System; 4) Improvement of Professionalism of Civil Servants; 5) Development of integrated Electronic Administrative System; 6) Improvement of Public Service; 7) Improvement of Integrity and Accountability of Performance of Apparatus; 8) Improvement of Welfare of Civil Servants; and 9) Increasing of Efficiency in Personnel Expenses. Each program pertains to integrated millages written on an administrative reform roadmap.

The roadmap is settled for long-term goals of administrative reform that are divided periodically into 3 (three) terms, and the first period, performed between 2010 and 2014, focused on strengthening the bureaucratic value by realizing clean governance free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism. At this

settlement level, the primary agenda is to promote individual capacity, accountability, and governance quality to sustain public sector performance. Second (2015-2019), the focus of the agenda will be highlighting the result of the first round, which continues the unfinished tasks of the previous term and with a new agenda of enhancing the performance of strategic instruments. Finally, the last periodic term (2020-2024) will realize world-class governance quality and continue the unfinished task in the second term.

Adopting world-class governance within the public sector in developing countries is more complex than written in its conceptual plan. Latent problems like poverty, economic inequalities, or low education quality may become significant barriers to cultivating world-class governance principles. Therefore, a thematic action is required to tackle this barrier and realize the movement as planned. The concept of thematic administrative reform has been inherited from these processes. It is expected to be delivered along with the third stage of the administrative reform roadmap, particularly in areas such as education. Reforms that improve civil service professionalism and enhance accountability mechanisms have directly impacted educational policy. By promoting transparency and meritocracy in educational governance, these reforms have fostered a culture of excellence and continuous improvement within the education sector.

A Gateway of How Thematic-Administrative Reform Shaping Educational Policy

In Indonesia, the decentralization reforms have transformed the educational landscape. By shifting authority from the central government to local governments, schools and educational institutions have gained more autonomy to design and implement policies that cater to local needs. This decentralization has facilitated the development of localized curricula, the adaptation of teaching materials to reflect local cultures and languages, and the customization of educational programs to address specific community challenges. Thematic-based reforms also influence educational policy by promoting specific themes such as inclusivity, digital literacy, and competency-based education.

1. **Inclusivity:** Administrative reforms prioritizing inclusivity have led to policies ensuring equitable access to education for marginalized groups. This includes the development of inclusive curricula that accommodate diverse learning needs and the implementing of teacher training programs focused on inclusive education practices.
2. **Digital Literacy:** With the increasing importance of digital skills, thematic reforms have prompted the integration of digital literacy into educational policies (Bano & Dyonisius, 2022; Setiawan et al., 2022). This has resulted in the inclusion of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in school curricula, providing digital resources and infrastructure, and training teachers in digital pedagogy.
3. **Competency-Based Education:** Thematic reforms emphasizing competency-based education have shaped policies that focus on developing students' practical skills and competencies (Gani et al., 2022; Afriliandhi et al., 2022). This involves revising curricula to include competency-based modules, creating assessment methods that measure skill acquisition, and fostering partnerships with industry to ensure that educational outcomes align with labor market needs.

Thematic Based of Administrative Reform in Indonesia

We have already discussed the path of experience of administrative reform in Indonesia, commencing with its early background and ending with each reform agenda tailored to good and clean governance. However, as some scholars note, the effort to attain the goals written under the administrative reform roadmap could result in better completion. For instance, the poverty rate still makes Indonesia a developing country. Furthermore, there is an inequality of development in which some regions with richer

potential may develop faster and greater than those without a potential region. In addition, the challenge of a future dynamic culture also embraces the upcoming threat to society's welfare and government performance. Meanwhile, thematic-based administrative reforms have significantly influenced educational policy development. These reforms often focus on specific themes, such as poverty alleviation and digital acceleration, which have profound implications for educational policies. Therefore, the existence of thematic-based administrative reform is formulated to address directly to the problem by following focuses.

1. Poverty Alleviation

The issue of poverty has risen during the last decades, not only in Indonesia but also in most developing countries and some developed countries. The threat of a global crisis has always become a real possibility for current problems. In the case of Indonesia, the government has allocated plenty of financial resources from government expenditure to alleviate the degree of poverty. However, the result is still beneath the plan, and therefore, the thematic way to channel poverty alleviation programs within the administrative reform roadmap has become an option.

The targeted program to alleviate poverty, such as *Bantuan Langsung Tunai* (BLT), which provides direct cash transfers to low-income households whose financial resources reach the most vulnerable populations, helping to alleviate immediate economic pressures and improve household welfare (Ali et al., 2024). The second one is the National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM), which focuses on empowering communities by involving them in the planning and implementation of projects. Both were designed to support basic needs, stabilize household economies, and reduce the short-term impact of economic shocks.

In a more detailed look, analyzing BLT and PNPM allows students to understand the multifaceted approaches required to address poverty. They learn how direct financial assistance and community empowerment can complement each other to achieve sustainable development. These programs provide practical examples of how government initiatives can be designed, implemented, and managed to address socio-economic issues. Students may study the administrative mechanisms that ensure the effective delivery of services and resources. On this occasion, students will also learn how targeted government actions can reduce disparities and improve the living standards of marginalized communities, thus fostering a more inclusive society. Therefore, it is expected to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to design and implement effective policies, promote an understanding of the critical role of governance in social equity, and prepare them to address complex socio-economic challenges in their future careers.

2. Attracting the Investment

The second thematic agenda is to attract investment by increasing the competitiveness index to provide safety for investors in cultivating their businesses in Indonesia. During the last term of the administrative roadmap, the central government issued the omnibus law, which contained a complete regulation package that benefited investors more. The decision to maximize the investment and open the opportunity for foreign direct investment is delivered to stimulate economic growth across the archipelago area. In this case, the government distributes economic growth beyond Java and Sumatra Island. Students can learn how public administration strategies are designed to stimulate economic activity by studying these initiatives.

Investments in integrated electronic administrative systems facilitated the modernization of educational infrastructure and the expansion of digital learning opportunities. This integration enhanced educational access and quality, particularly in remote and underserved areas, by leveraging technology to

overcome traditional barriers to education (Afriliandhi et al., 2022). Analyzing bureaucratic red tape allows students to learn how regulatory frameworks, administrative efficiency, and government incentives can drive economic progress. These case studies offer practical examples of policy implementation. Students can explore the challenges and successes of these initiatives, gaining a deeper understanding of how theoretical concepts in public administration are applied in real-world scenarios.

3. Digital Acceleration

The notion of digital government has been included in the thematic-based reform agenda due to the need for adaptability to the current dynamic situation. In this digital age, the demand for responsiveness and quick responsibility of the government has become a parameter under government performance measurement. Even the latest paradigm of public administration highlights the term agility under the agile governance concept. Digital acceleration has become one prerequisite for cultivating agile governance principles. This theme gives students insights into how digital technologies transform public policy, particularly educational policy (Bano & Dyonisius, 2022).

By analyzing digital acceleration, students can appreciate the benefits of e-governance, including increased transparency, reduced corruption, and improved citizen engagement. They also explore how digital platforms can enhance democratic participation and accountability. Knowledge of digital transformation equips students with the skills and understanding needed to navigate and contribute to a rapidly evolving digital landscape. They will learn about the challenges and opportunities presented by digital technologies and how to leverage these tools for the public good.

4. Domestic Product Consumption

Last but not least is the domestic product consumption to ensure the life of the micro-scale of the local economy. The domestic product consumption Wang et al. in their book "*Technology-driven Education Reform In Indonesia: A Look Into the Current Status of the Merdeka Belajar Program*" is aligned with the investment program but has different focus areas. Therefore, it is performed under various ministries and covers different trajectories. Some of these programs, such as promoting local products, these campaigns are designed to increase public awareness and appreciation of locally-made goods. Besides, educators can educate students to appreciate how buying local products keeps money within the community, creates jobs, and stimulates economic growth. In other words, students will see how celebrating and supporting local goods can build a stronger, more cohesive national community. Therefore, they will also learn how fostering domestic production reduces dependence on imported goods, enhancing economic stability and reducing vulnerabilities to global market fluctuations.

CONCLUSION

The evolution of administrative reform over the past three decades has underscored its critical role in enhancing the quality of governance in both developed and developing countries. In developed nations, administrative reform is often a well-planned and stakeholder-driven process to achieve specific governance improvements. In contrast, reforms in developing countries like Indonesia have frequently emerged as responses to crises, leading to ad hoc and less structured implementations. This discrepancy highlights the varying contexts and challenges nations face at different stages of development in their administrative reform journeys. Indonesia's experience with administrative reform, particularly following the East Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998, exemplifies the complex interplay between crisis-driven

necessity and the pursuit of long-term governance improvements. The initial phase of reform in Indonesia was characterized by a lack of straightforward design and roadmap, resulting in a decade-long fatigue and limited impact on societal welfare. However, the declaration of a grand design for administrative reform in 2010 by President SBY marked a turning point, introducing a more structured and thematic approach to reform.

In a more detailed look, thematic-based administrative reforms have significantly influenced educational policy development by fostering a more responsive and context-specific approach to education. By shifting authority from central to local governments, these reforms have created localized curricula that reflect regional cultures, languages, and needs. This has enabled educational policies to be more adaptable and relevant to the unique challenges faced by different communities. Additionally, thematic reforms have facilitated the integration of new priorities, such as digital literacy, into the educational system, preparing students for the demands of the modern workforce. Programs like the School Operational Assistance (BOS) have empowered local schools and communities to manage resources more effectively, improving educational quality and inclusivity. Furthermore, thematic reforms in education have prioritized critical areas such as digital literacy, inclusivity, and competency-based education, ensuring that the educational system evolves to meet contemporary needs and global standards.

Moreover, thematic reforms have shaped educational policy by emphasizing inclusivity and competency-based education. These reforms have led to developing of policies that ensure equitable access to education for marginalized groups and implement inclusive education practices. For instance, teacher training programs focused on inclusivity have equipped educators with the skills to address diverse learning needs. On the other hand, competency-based education policies have revised curricula to emphasize practical skills and competencies, aligning educational outcomes with labor market requirements and fostering a more skilled and capable workforce. Despite significant progress, the journey of administrative reform in Indonesia has its challenges. Persistent poverty, economic inequality, and regional disparities hinder achieving world-class governance. These challenges underscore the need for continued thematic action, focusing on targeted interventions like poverty alleviation, investment attraction, digital acceleration, and promoting domestic product consumption. By addressing these areas, Indonesia aims to foster sustainable development and improve its citizens' overall quality of life.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations inherent in implementing thematic-based administrative reform. One significant area for improvement is the variability in political will and leadership continuity, which can disrupt the momentum of reform initiatives. Additionally, the complexity and diversity of local contexts may lead to uneven implementation and outcomes across different regions. Moreover, the reliance on digital infrastructure and technology poses challenges in areas with limited access to such resources, potentially exacerbating existing inequalities. Lastly, the dynamic nature of global economic and political landscapes requires continuous adaptation and resilience in reform strategies, which can strain developing nations like Indonesia's administrative capacity and resources. Meanwhile, thematic reform can be geared toward the spirit of clean and good governance. Thus, this study can be used as a recommendation for teaching materials that will help students understand the complexities of policy implementation and the factors that influence its development.

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