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# Post-Colonial Education Policies and Cultural Integration: A Comparison of Indonesia and Turkey

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## Abstract

This study comparatively examines how education systems in Indonesia and Turkey are shaped in a post-colonial context and how they manage cultural diversity. Both countries have historically different colonial experiences and are home to large and diverse ethnic groups. The article analyzes the impact of post-colonial theory on the sociology of education and evaluates the role of educational policies on social integration and equal educational opportunity. Using qualitative and quantitative research methods, this study examines the historical development of education systems, cultural diversity management and regional differences in both countries in depth. The findings reveal the similarities and differences between the education policies of Turkey and Indonesia and provide policy recommendations for reducing inequalities in education and strengthening social integration. Moreover, this study provides an important comparative analysis to understand similar challenges and opportunities facing education systems in a global context. Examining how the education policies of Turkey and Indonesia have been reshaped in different ways by their postcolonial legacies and the implications of these processes for managing cultural diversity in education provides valuable insights for global education policy. In particular, the article provides an in-depth perspective on how the principles of justice and equity in education can be implemented and offers concrete recommendations for policymakers, educators and researchers. In this context, it also provides guidance for other multicultural societies seeking to reform their education systems.

**Keywords:** comparative education analysis, cultural diversity management, equal opportunities in education, post-colonial education policies, social integration

## **1. Introduction**

Education plays a critical role in the cultural and social construction of a society, and this role is particularly significant in multicultural societies. In the post-colonial era, many countries have had to reshape their education systems in terms of cultural diversity and social integration. In this context, education policies have become an important tool for building bridges and ensuring equity among different ethnic groups. Education, besides shaping individuals' social, cultural, and economic lives, is also a decisive factor in the overall development and cohesion of societies (Apple, 2013).

In the post-colonial period, many countries have felt the need to restructure their education systems to eliminate the inequalities and discriminations inherited from the colonial era. During this period, concepts such as cultural diversity and social integration have become central to education policies. The role of education policies in this process is not limited to the transmission of knowledge and skill development but also includes managing cultural diversity and ensuring social cohesion (Bhabha, 1994).

This article aims to examine the education systems of countries located in different geographies, such as Indonesia and Turkey, from a post-colonial perspective, and to comparatively analyze how these systems manage cultural diversity and promote social integration. Despite having different colonial experiences historically, both Indonesia and Turkey host large and diverse ethnic groups. Indonesia, as an island nation with over 17,000 islands, is home to hundreds of ethnic groups (Smith, 2010), while Turkey has been a cradle of various civilizations and cultures throughout history and currently hosts people from many ethnic backgrounds (İçduygu & Aksel, 2005).

One of the most significant challenges faced in modern educational research is the insufficient use of advanced technologies in educational analysis. Advanced technologies such as data analytics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning have great potential in evaluating the effectiveness of education policies. However, the integration of these technologies into educational research is still limited, making it difficult to identify and address the shortcomings of current policies. These technological deficiencies hinder more in-depth and nuanced analyses of how education policies manage cultural diversity and promote social integration (Yılmaz, 2024).

Despite the presence of some references in the existing literature, finding a clear research gap remains a complex task. Many studies have focused on broad aspects of education in multicultural societies, but few have delved deeply into the nuances of post-colonial educational policies and their impact on cultural diversity and social integration. For instance, a study by Arifin (2020) explored the role of education in promoting social cohesion in Indonesia but did not include a comparative analysis with other post-colonial countries. Similarly, Demir (2021) analyzed Turkey's education policies but did not provide a comparative framework. These studies highlight the need for more comprehensive comparative analyses that can offer a broader understanding of how different post-colonial contexts influence educational outcomes.

This article will discuss the role of post-colonial theory in the sociology of education and the effects of Indonesia and Turkey's education policies on cultural diversity and social integration. In this context, the similarities and differences in the education systems of both countries will be revealed, contributing to global education policies. This study is expected to contribute to the development of education policies at both local and international levels and to strengthen social cohesion in multicultural societies. By addressing the current technological limitations and identifying specific research gaps, this article aims to provide a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of the roles of post-colonial education systems in managing cultural diversity and promoting social integration.

Recent studies in 2024 emphasize how education policies are being reshaped globally and the critical role these policies play in managing cultural diversity and promoting social integration. For instance, research by Yilmaz (2024) examined the integration of digital technologies in education and how these technologies contribute to students' social cohesion processes. This study highlights the importance of integrating modern technologies into education policies and the potential to close existing research gaps. Therefore, addressing the deficiency of advanced technologies in educational analysis will enable more comprehensive and in-depth research.

## **2. Research Methodology**

This study comparatively examines the education systems of Indonesia and Turkey from a postcolonial perspective. A mixed research design is adopted to evaluate the impact of education policies on cultural diversity and social integration. This methodology combines qualitative research techniques such as document analysis and literature review.

### **2.1. Data Collection**

The data collection process involves two main qualitative research techniques: document analysis and literature review. Document analysis systematically reviews existing documents on education policies, cultural diversity, and social integration in Indonesia and Turkey. Literature review examines recent studies in relevant academic literature. 1) *Document Analysis*: This process scrutinizes official documents such as education policies, government reports, laws, and regulations from both countries. It aims to understand the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of education policies. 2) *Literature Review*: Academic studies focusing on cultural diversity and social integration in education are reviewed. These studies highlight gaps in existing literature and provide data suitable for comparative analysis.

### **2.2. Data Sources**

Data sources include primary and secondary sources: 1) *Primary Sources*. They were from scholarly articles, research reports, and academic publications focusing on education

policies. 2) *Secondary Sources*. They were from government reports, policy documents, and statistical data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

### 2.3. Tools and Techniques

Various tools and techniques are employed for data collection and analysis. 1) *Content Analysis*. Data from document analysis and literature review were subjected to content analysis. This technique categorizes data into meaningful themes and identifies relationships between them. 2) *Thematic Coding*. Data were analyzed using thematic coding to organize and explore themes in depth. 3) *Descriptive Analysis*. Data obtained from both techniques were analyzed descriptively to present clear and understandable findings.

### 2.4. Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are ensured through rigorous methods. 1) *Reliability*. Detailed documentation of the document analysis and literature review processes ensures replicability and consistency. 2) *Validity*. Careful application of data collection methods and a thorough literature review ensure accuracy and appropriateness of interpretations.

### 2.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis involves synthesizing information from document analysis and literature review using qualitative analysis techniques. Comparative analysis and interpretation of diverse perspectives provide a comprehensive overview of equity in education.

## 3. Results

Indonesia is the largest island nation in the world, located in Southeast Asia. The country's current population is 279,554,309 and growing at an annual growth rate of 0.798%. Indonesia has a globally significant population, with 3.448% of the world's population (Population Today, 2024).

Indonesia's sociological structure includes a wide range of ethnic and religious diversity. There are around 300 ethnic groups in the country, with large ethnic groups such as the Javanese, Sundans, Madurans, and Papuans being prominent. These ethnic groups have different cultural and linguistic traditions and enrich the social fabric of Indonesia.

From a religious point of view, Indonesia is mostly known as a Muslim country. However, in addition to Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and local religions are also widely practiced in the country. Religion has profoundly influenced Indonesia's social and cultural structure and plays an important role in societal identities (Central Intelligence Agency, 2024).

In terms of the education system, education in Indonesia is recognized as a fundamental human right. Compulsory education in the country is legally mandatory for children between the ages of six and twelve. The national education system consists of three stages: basic education, secondary education and higher education. Education in

Indonesia is a key priority of the government and society, and investment in education policies and infrastructure has increased in recent years (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2024).

The level of education has a significant impact on Indonesia's socio-economic structure. Those living in cities and large towns generally have higher levels of education, while those living in rural areas generally have lower levels of education. This highlights the need to tackle inequality of opportunity in education.

Turkey's population structure has witnessed significant changes in recent years. The current population of the country is recorded as 86,212,692 and is increasing at an annual growth rate of 0.507% (Population Today, 2024). This growth rate, together with its effects on the demographic structure, is important for analyzing Turkey's future demographic dynamics.

In terms of sociological structure, given Turkey's ethnic and religious diversity, the social fabric of the country is quite complex. Turkey is inhabited by Turks, Kurds, Laz, Arabs and many other ethnic groups. In addition, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and other religions also diversify Turkey's religious landscape. This diversity is important in shaping social identities and understanding their impact on social structure.

The education system plays a critical role in shaping social development and the future in Turkey. Education in Turkey is regulated by compulsory education laws and the national education system consists of three stages: basic education, secondary education and higher education. However, the quality and accessibility of the education system can vary significantly between different regions of the country and between socio-economic groups. In this context, it is important that education policies and practices are inclusive and equitable (Ministry of National Education, 2024).

Turkey and Indonesia are countries that have focused on continuously improving their education systems and have implemented various policy changes in this direction. In Turkey, the education system is regulated by compulsory education laws and the national education system consists of three stages: basic education, secondary education and higher education. Indonesia has a similar structure and its education system consists of basic education, secondary education and higher education.

In both countries, education is of strategic importance for enhancing social development and national competitiveness. However, the education systems of both countries face similar challenges. In particular, issues such as inadequate educational infrastructure in rural areas and low teacher quality are common problems affecting the education systems of both countries.

Sociology of education stands out as an important field that examines education systems in various social and cultural contexts and investigates the effects of these contexts on education. Research on education systems in Turkey and Indonesia has an important place in the sociology of education literature.

For example, a study conducted in Turkey addressed the issue of equal opportunities in education and analyzed the inequality of educational opportunities between urban and rural areas (Özdemir et al., 2020). This research in Turkey addressed the issue of equality of opportunity in education and analyzed the inequality of educational opportunities between urban and rural areas (Özdemir et al., 2020). The research was conducted by examining the educational opportunities in different geographical regions of Turkey and the level of utilization of these opportunities.

Inequality of educational opportunity between urban and rural areas is a major problem in Turkey's education system. While students living in urban areas generally have access to more educational resources and opportunities, students in rural areas have more limited access to these opportunities.

Similarly, another study conducted in Indonesia examined the effects of religious and cultural diversity in education on educational policies and made several recommendations (Susanto et al., 2018). This study in Indonesia examined the effects of religious and cultural diversity in education on educational policies and made several recommendations (Susanto et al., 2018). Indonesia is a country where various ethnic groups and religions live together. This study investigated how the education system in Indonesia handles this diversity and how this diversity is reflected in educational policies.

Religious and cultural diversity is an important factor to consider in education systems. This research examined how education policies in Indonesia embrace this diversity and how they can improve access to education for religious/cultural minorities.

In the post-colonial period, education policies and cultural integration processes in countries with diverse geographical, cultural and historical backgrounds such as Indonesia and Turkey underwent a significant transformation. In the literature, examining educational policies and cultural integration efforts in this period is critical for understanding the national identity formation processes and social transformation of these countries. In this context, a comparative analysis of Indonesia's and Turkey's educational policies and cultural integration processes in the post-colonial period offers a valuable approach both to understand the internal dynamics of these countries and to assess the evolution of post-colonial educational policies and cultural integration in general.

### **3.1. Historical Background of Education Policies**

The historical background of education policies in Indonesia has changed significantly from the colonial period to the present day. From the early 16th century until the late 18th century, colonial rule in Indonesia was established indirectly through the Dutch East India Company, mainly within the framework of treaties with local rulers. During this period, educational activities in the country were carried out in pesantren, the traditional educational institutions of the Muslim population. Pesantren were the cornerstones of Islamic education and played an important role in the transmission of religious knowledge,

morals and social skills (Jones, 1980). In the same period, there were also a small number of colonial schools attended by Europeans, especially the Dutch, and missionary schools established by Christian organizations (Lukens-Bull, 2001).

With the expansion of direct colonial rule to all islands in the nineteenth century, the need for local administrators and local civil servants increased. For this reason, the colonial government began to pay more attention to the general education of Indonesians from the mid-nineteenth century. First, in 1848, primary schools were opened only on the island of Java, to which only some Indonesians from the upper strata of society were admitted. In 1851, teachers' colleges were established to train teachers for these Javanese schools (Ricklefs, 2001). In the same years, the "Dokter Djawa" (Javanese Doctor) school was opened in the capital Jakarta to train health officers and vaccinators, and "Hoofdenschoolen" (Hoofdenschoolen) for the children of the aristocratic class and tribal chiefs to meet the need for lower-level administrative personnel (Suryadinata, 1995). However, these schools were far from adequate in terms of quantity and quality and were more like vocational schools.

From 1893 onwards, the colonial government began to open two types of primary schools to meet Indonesians' desire for a modern education: "First Class Native Schools" and "Second Class Native Schools". Although it was decided that education in these schools would be provided in the local language, this practice was not fully realized and by the end of the nineteenth century these schools could not reach the villages. After 1906, the number of Second Class Native Schools began to increase and the following year, village schools were opened to teach reading and writing (Cribb, 2000). However, the number of these schools was not as high as expected. By the end of 1909, the number of village schools was 723 and by 1912 it had reached 2500 (Kahin, 1952).

As the First Class Native Schools did not meet the needs, the 7-year Dutch-Indigenous Schools (HIS) were opened in 1914. Second Class Indigenous Schools also failed to provide the desired level of education and were converted into "Standard Schools". The Dutch-Indigenous Schools were later raised to the level of European schools in the country, giving Indonesians the opportunity to enter higher level schools. Prominent families tried to send their children to the better Dutch-medium colonial schools in the country in order to be promoted to higher positions in the civil service (Bodden, 2010). After 1922, new schools were opened for Indonesians at the secondary school level, the "Schakelschool", which was open to those who had completed the Standard Schools. "Hoofdenschoolen", schools for personnel training, were reformed in 1900 to approximate the curriculum of other secondary schools, such as the School for the Training of Native Administrators (OSVIA), which had been established a few years earlier (Sears, 1996).

These historical developments formed the basis of Indonesia's educational policies in the postcolonial period and played an important role in the process of national identity formation. These educational institutions, which are the legacy of the colonial period, have been influential in shaping the education system today.

The education policies of Turkey and Indonesia have been shaped by the historical, social and cultural dynamics of both countries. While the foundations of the modern education system in Turkey date back to the Ottoman Empire, a major reform process began with the proclamation of the Republic. In this process, it was aimed to establish a secular education system and to spread education to the whole society (Atay, 2010). In Indonesia, the education system developed under the influence of the Dutch colonial period and underwent significant changes in the post-independence period. In the post-independence period, Indonesia's education policies focused on changing colonial structures and integrating local cultural values (Dewantara, 2004).

In early 20th century Indonesia, the expansion of colonial administration to all regions and the creation of new government bodies increased the need for locally trained personnel. During this period, various schools were opened to increase Indonesians' access to modern education. The "Dokter Djawa" school, opened in 1902 specifically to train medical officers, was reorganized in 1902 into the School for the Training of Native Doctors (STOVIA), which offered a six-year course of study. In 1913, STOVIA was upgraded to the level of the Dutch Indian School for Doctors (NIAS) in Surabaya (Cribb, 2000).

Schools for Indonesians in different professions were also opened. The Agricultural School opened in 1903, the Teacher Training School in 1906, the Veterinary School in 1907, the Law School in 1908, the Administrative Training School in 1914 and the Engineering School in Bandung in 1920 (Ricklefs, 2001). These schools served as Indonesia's highest level vocational schools in the colonial period and their graduates formed the intellectual stratum of Indonesian society. However, the opportunity to study in the Netherlands was only available to children of aristocratic families (Sears, 1996).

The inadequacy of the schools established by the colonial administration and the growing influence of missionary organizations increased the efforts of Muslim communities to establish their own educational institutions. In the early twentieth century, under the influence of innovative religious leaders, Indonesian Muslims realized the shortcomings of their traditional education system and tried to implement a modern education system alongside the pesantren. For this purpose, various schools were opened under the name of madrasahs through various societies such as the Muhammadiyah (Bodden, 2010).

The Muhammadiyah was characterized by its modernist tendencies and opened modern educational institutions as well as pesantren. These institutions both promoted general education and sought to modernize Islamic religious education (Steenbrink, 1974). The establishment of the Muhammadiyah was an important turning point in the evolution of education policy in Indonesia (Alfian, 1989).

In addition to the Muhammadiyah, other communities, such as the Sumatera Thawalib community, also emphasized education and opened private schools. The Thawalib schools opened in the Minangkabau region of Sumatra emphasized cultural as well as religious education (Abdullah, 1971). In addition, Arab organizations such as the Jamiyet-i Hayr and



Jamiyet'i Irshâd wa'l-Islah also opened schools where religious and general subjects were taught (Abdullah, 1971; Noer, 1973).

During this period, religious organizations, which adopted Western methods and techniques, opened schools where religious subjects were compulsory in addition to science and social sciences. In addition to Arabic, Western languages were also taught in these schools. The Taman Siswa schools, on the other hand, aimed to preserve Javanese culture on the basis of cultural nationalism (Abdullah, 1971; Noer, 1973).

These changes were decisive in Indonesia's social and cultural integration process in the postcolonial period (Sears, 1996). Ricklefs' "A History of Modern Indonesia" and Kahin's "Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia" provide more detailed information on the role of private schools and teachers during this period. Benda's "The Crescent and the Rising Sun" (pp. 128-129) provides important information on how the colonial administration tried to control private schools and the developments in this process. According to the information obtained from the same source; in the post-independence period, Indonesian governments made great efforts to create a modern education system and increase the number of educational institutions. Compulsory 6-year primary school education was introduced and significant resources were allocated to education. Between 1953 and 1960, the number of students attending primary school increased from 1.7 million to 2.5 million and new public and private schools were opened at college and university level, mostly in Java. The adult literacy rate rose from 7.4% to 46.7% in 1961.

The education model developed during the colonial period was adopted in the Republican era and a dual system based on a dual structure was created. While Western-style education was modernized, traditional religious educational institutions were preserved and adapted to the needs of the day. This dual education system was shaped in line with the educational perceptions and demands of the devout Muslim community. Today, this system covers general and vocational education from kindergarten to university level.

While the colonial administration generally carried out educational activities to meet the need for professional and bureaucratic personnel, in the Republican period, emphasis was placed on general public education and higher education. A significant part of the problems in education and the proliferation of different educational institutions are largely due to the understanding of education inherited from the colonial period (Sears, 1996). The existence of madrasas focusing on religious education in addition to general and vocational education institutions is due to the educational legacy of the colonial period and the educational expectations of the Muslim community. However, criticism of this dual model of education is often voiced. Some argue that madrasas that emphasize religious education should be transformed into vocational schools.

In the post-independence period, the Republican governments invested heavily in education and made efforts to coordinate the religious schools in the country in order to harmonize the traditional religious education system with the modern education system.

In this context, the traditional institutions of religious education, the pesantren, underwent significant changes to adapt to contemporary educational requirements. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, which is responsible for religious education, provides oversight of private religious education institutions, helping to ensure a higher quality of education. In addition, the Republican administration has encouraged development in this field by opening institutions of higher religious education. Today, there are 14 State Islamic Institutes across the country, which form an important part of higher religious education.

These developments have played an important role in the evolution of education policies in Indonesia. Indonesians educated during the colonial period laid the foundations of the postindependence education system and contributed to the process of national identity formation. These changes in education also influenced Indonesia's social and cultural integration process in the post-colonial period.

The end of the colonial era marked the beginning of profound changes in education policies for Turkey and Indonesia. In Turkey, after the proclamation of the Republic, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, secularism and modernization of the education system were aimed at and madrasa education was replaced by modern schools (Lewis, 2002). In Indonesia, after independence in 1945, education policies played an important role in the construction of national identity. Educational structures left over from Dutch colonial rule were revised with a new education system that reflected Indonesia's cultural and religious diversity. During this period, the integration of local languages and cultural values into the curriculum was a priority (Tilaar, 1999).

The end of the colonial period marked the beginning of radical changes in education policies for both Turkey and Indonesia. After the proclamation of the Republic in Turkey, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, secularization and modernization in the education system was aimed and madrasa education was replaced by modern schools (Lewis, 2002). In 1924, unity in education was ensured with the Law on *Tevhid-i Tedrisat* and the aim was to make education equal and accessible for all citizens (Zürcher, 2004).

### **3.2. The Role of Education Policies in the Process of National Identity Formation**

Education policies have played a central role in the process of national identity formation in both countries. In Turkey, education was used as a critical tool in the construction of national identity and secular state structure. Atatürk's educational reforms supported the reconstruction of Turkey as a modern nation-state (Mardin, 2006). The use of education to reinforce national unity and solidarity was achieved by emphasizing national anthems, holidays and Atatürk's principles and reforms in the curriculum (Akyüz, 1999).

In Indonesia, education has been used as an important tool in the construction of national identity and unity. In the post-independence period, education policies have been shaped around the ideology of Pancasila. Pancasila is Indonesia's state philosophy, which consists of five basic principles: Faith in God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity,

democracy and social justice (Sukarno, 1945). This ideology was made the cornerstone of the education curriculum and aimed to raise students with a national consciousness (Suryadinata, 2000).

### **3.3. Structural Characteristics of Education Systems**

The structural characteristics of education systems play a major role in shaping the socioeconomic and cultural structure of a country. Turkey and Indonesia show some similarities and differences in terms of the structural characteristics of their education systems

Basic education in Turkey covers primary and secondary school levels. The 4+4+4 education system, introduced in 2012, consists of four years of primary school, four years of middle school and four years of high school. The first eight years, i.e. primary and secondary school education, are compulsory and free of charge. The age of compulsory education in Turkey is between six and fourteen years of age, during which students are taught basic literacy, mathematics, science and social studies (Ministry of National Education, 2012).

In Indonesia, basic education includes six years of primary school (Sekolah Dasar) and three years of secondary school (Sekolah Menengah Pertama). The age of compulsory education is between seven and fifteen years. The Indonesian government made basic education compulsory with the National Education System Law passed in 2003. According to this law, primary and secondary school education is compulsory and free of charge. During this period, students are taught religious education, Pancasila education, Indonesian language, mathematics, science and social studies (Republik Indonesia, 2003).

Secondary education in Turkey consists of four years of high school education. High schools are divided into general high schools, vocational high schools and Anatolian high schools. The Ministry of National Education aims to support academic achievement and vocational training by offering students a variety of educational programs. There are also special programs such as science high schools and social sciences high schools. Secondary education plays a critical role in preparing students for university and providing them with vocational skills (Ministry of National Education, 2014).

In Indonesia, secondary education consists of three years of high school education (Sekolah Menengah Atas). High schools are divided into two main categories: general high schools and vocational high schools. While general high schools provide students with academic education, vocational high schools aim to equip students with specific vocational skills. The Indonesian government pursues an education policy that encourages students to gain competence in both academic and vocational fields (Republik Indonesia, 2010).

Higher education in Turkey is provided through universities, institutes and colleges. The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) is the main organization that manages and regulates universities. Universities in Turkey provide education at undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels. There are also two main categories of universities: public and

foundation universities. Universities offer a wide range of academic programs to students and make significant contributions to scientific research and technology development (Council of Higher Education, 2020).

The higher education system in Indonesia is provided by various institutions such as universities (*universitas*), institutes (*institut*), colleges (*sekolah tinggi*) and polytechnics (*polytechnic*). The Indonesian Council for Higher Education (DIKTI) is responsible for the regulation and supervision of higher education institutions. Universities offer bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs. There are also two main categories of universities: public universities and private universities. Universities in Indonesia play an important role in research and technology development activities (Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, 2018).

### **3.4. Cultural Integration and Language Policies**

Cultural integration and language policies in education systems play an important role in shaping social cohesion and national identity. Turkey and Indonesia, as countries with diverse ethnic and linguistic communities, have developed policies that take into account cultural diversity and linguistic differences in their education systems.

Since the foundation of the Republic, language policies in Turkey have focused on the adoption of Turkish as a common language of communication across the country. The 1928 Alphabet Revolution encouraged the use of Turkish in education by adopting the Latin alphabet. However, the demands of Kurdish, Arab, Laz and other ethnic groups living in Turkey for education in their mother tongue have been at the center of political and social debates over time. Since the 2000s, reforms have provided education in Kurdish and other languages in some private schools and courses (Coşkun and Derince, 2014).

In Indonesia, language policies reflect the country's ethnic and linguistic diversity. Bahasa Indonesia is the official language of Indonesia and is used at all levels of the education system. However, the Indonesian Constitution and education laws encourage the preservation and teaching of local languages. Especially at the primary school level, students are encouraged to learn in their mother tongue and these languages are recognized as cultural heritage (Musyahda, 2009). This policy aims to protect local identities and strengthen national unity.

The expression of cultural diversity and educational programs occupy an important place in the education systems of both countries. In Turkey, history, geography and civics courses in the curriculum are the main tools for transmitting national identity and cultural heritage to students. In recent years, steps have been taken to include more inclusive and diverse content on the history and culture of different cultural groups in the curriculum (Kaya, 2015). These initiatives are seen as important for strengthening social peace and cultural cohesion. In Indonesia, education programs based on the Pancasila philosophy promote cultural diversity and national unity. The Indonesian education system aims to instill in students the awareness of recognizing and respecting the cultural values of

different ethnic and religious groups. In this context, various cultural activities and curricula implemented in schools contribute to students' recognition and understanding of each other's cultures (Tilaar, 1999). Moreover, the inclusion of local cultures and languages in educational programs plays a critical role in preserving and transmitting cultural heritage to future generations.

### **3.5. Gender and Education**

In Turkey, gender equality has been an important component of education policies. With the 4+4+4 education system that came into force in 2012, efforts have been made to increase girls' school attendance rates. According to data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat), there has been a significant increase in girls' schooling rates since the 2000s (TurkStat, 2020). In addition, various projects of the Ministry of National Education and the work of civil society organizations support girls' access to education. However, gender inequality in rural areas and low socio-economic levels still remains a significant problem (Kızılgöl, 2018).

Indonesia has also taken important steps towards gender equality. The government has implemented various policies to increase girls' access to schooling. The 2003 Law on National Education System guarantees equal educational opportunities for girls and boys. According to data from Statistics Indonesia, there has been a significant increase in girls' enrollment rates (BPS, 2020). However, in some parts of Indonesia, especially in rural and conservative communities, girls' attendance rates remain low (Suryadarma & Jones, 2013).

### **3.6. Interaction between Gender Roles and Education System**

Gender roles have a significant impact on education systems. In Turkey, gender roles can be clearly observed in the educational process and curriculum. Traditional gender roles may limit girls from pursuing education in certain fields, while boys are directed towards fields such as engineering and science (Arat, 2005). The Ministry of National Education's curriculum reforms seek to improve this situation by adding content that promotes gender equality and questions gender roles (Akyüz, 2019).

In Indonesia, gender roles have similar effects on the education system. Traditional gender norms can restrict girls from pursuing certain areas of education and career choices. Particularly in rural areas, there are issues such as early marriage of girls and low educational attainment rates (Robinson, 2009). However, the Indonesian government and civil society organizations are trying to change this situation through programs and campaigns that promote gender equality. Including content that raises awareness on gender equality in the education curriculum is part of these efforts (Subrahmanian, 2005).

### **3.7. Equal Opportunity and Access in Education**

Equality of opportunity and access to education is critical for social justice and sustainable development. Turkey and Indonesia experience inequalities in educational opportunities due to various social, economic and cultural factors

Inequality of educational opportunities between urban and rural areas in Turkey is a longstanding problem. While educational infrastructure and facilities are generally more developed in urban areas, they are very limited in rural areas. This situation negatively affects the educational achievement of students living in rural areas. According to a study by Özdemir et al. (2020), teacher shortage, lack of educational materials and physical infrastructure problems in rural schools negatively affect student achievement. In addition, students living in urban areas have easier access to tutoring and educational materials.

Similarly in Indonesia, inequality of educational opportunity between urban and rural areas is a serious problem. While schools in urban areas generally have better educational facilities and equipment, these are limited in rural areas. According to data from Statistics Indonesia, enrollment rates and quality of education in rural areas are significantly lower than in urban areas (BPS, 2020). In a study by Susanto et al. (2018), it was stated that problems such as insufficient teachers, low quality of education and lack of infrastructure in rural schools cause inequality of opportunity in education.

Access to education for ethnic and religious minorities in Turkey has been a subject of debate from time to time. It is known that Kurdish, Arab, Armenian, Greek, Armenian, Greek and other ethnic and religious groups living in Turkey face various difficulties in accessing equal opportunities in education. Education policies in Turkey mandate the use of the official language, Turkish, in education. However, ethnic and religious minorities demand education in their mother tongue. Coşkun and Derince (2014) emphasize that the language barriers Kurdish children face in education negatively affect their academic achievement and cause them to leave education early. Furthermore, the limited number of minority schools and their financial difficulties are among the factors limiting minorities' access to education.

In Indonesia, ethnic and religious diversity is an important part of the education system. Although Bahasa Indonesia is the official language of Indonesia, various policies are in place to protect and promote local languages and cultures in education. However, ethnic and religious minorities in some regions experience problems in accessing equal opportunities in education. In particular, local communities living in the Papua region face serious difficulties in accessing educational opportunities (Robinson, 2009). Despite the Indonesian government's efforts to provide education in local languages and integrate ethnic diversity into the education system, it faces various challenges in implementation (Musyahda, 2009).

In this context, significant progress has been made in Turkey and Indonesia in terms of equal opportunities and access to education. However, there are still serious problems in terms of inequality of educational opportunities between urban and rural areas and access to education for ethnic and religious minorities. To address these problems, education policies need to be continuously evaluated and improved.

### **3.8. Social and Economic Impacts of Education Policies**

The social and economic impact of education policies is one of the key elements of a country's development strategies. The relationship between the level of education and economic development and the impact of investments in education on social development are important research topics in developing countries such as Turkey and Indonesia.

#### **3.8.1. The Relationship between Education Level and Economic Development**

The relationship between the level of education and economic development has been extensively analyzed in various academic studies. Education enables individuals to be more efficient and productive in the labor market by improving their knowledge, skills and abilities. In this context, high levels of education are recognized as the driving force of economic growth and development (Barro & Lee, 2013).

Studies examining the relationship between education level and economic development in Turkey reveal that education is an important factor supporting economic growth. In particular, the positive effects of higher education on innovation and technological development are emphasized (Tansel & Güngör, 2003). Within the framework of Turkey's 2023 vision, it is aimed to increase investments in education and to train a qualified labor force. Achieving these goals will accelerate economic growth and development.

In Indonesia, the relationship between the level of education and economic development is treated in a similar way. Indonesia has been investing in education in recent years, aiming to raise the level of education and promote economic growth. A study conducted in Indonesia concluded that higher levels of education increase labor productivity and promote economic growth (Duflo, 2001). Vocational and technical education programs, in particular, have a significant impact on economic development.

#### **3.8.2. The Impact of Investments in Education on Social Development**

The impact of investments in education on social development plays a critical role in long-term processes of social change and development. Education promotes not only economic development but also social justice, equity and participation (Sen, 1999). Turkey and Indonesia have adopted various strategies to promote social development through education investments.

Education investments in Turkey make significant contributions to social development. Since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, reforms and investments in education have been one of the main dynamics of social transformation. In particular, policies to increase girls' access to education promote gender equality (Akyüz, 2019). Moreover, investments in education increase social mobility and reduce inequalities in income distribution (Erdoğan, 2012).

In Indonesia, investments in education are seen as an important tool for social development. The Indonesian government carries out various programs to ensure equal

opportunities in education and increase access to education for disadvantaged groups. Investments in education, especially in rural areas and poor communities, are of great importance in terms of reducing social inequalities and ensuring social integration (Suryadarma & Suryahadi, 2010). In Indonesia, investments in education are reported to support social development by increasing the social capital of individuals (Duflo, 2001).

#### **4. Argument**

The effectiveness of education policies plays a decisive role in the social and economic development of countries. In this context, analyzing the social and economic effects of postcolonial education policies through the examples of Turkey and Indonesia is important to reveal the success and shortcomings of these policies.

Turkey's and Indonesia's education policies contain various similarities and differences when evaluated both in the historical context and within the framework of current practices.

In the post-colonial period, education policies played a critical role in the process of national identity formation. Both countries tried to reinforce national values and identities by reforming their education systems inherited from the colonial period. In Turkey, since the founding of the Republic, educational reforms led by Atatürk laid the foundations of national identity and a secular education system (Akyüz, 2019). Similarly, after gaining independence, Indonesia has also undertaken reforms to align its education system with local cultural values (Robinson, 2009). In this context, the post-colonial education policies of both countries formed the cornerstones of the national identity formation process.

Equality of opportunity and access to education is a fundamental element in achieving social justice. Turkey and Indonesia are implementing various policies to reduce inequality in educational opportunities between urban and rural areas. In Turkey, various projects are implemented to increase educational opportunities in rural areas and to ensure access to education for disadvantaged groups (Özdemir et al., 2020). In Indonesia, important steps are being taken to strengthen education infrastructure in rural areas and to include local communities in education (Susanto et al., 2018).

However, in both countries, inequality of opportunity in education in rural areas is still a significant problem. Therefore, more comprehensive and sustainable policies need to be developed to ensure equal opportunities in education. Gender equality is critical for education systems to achieve sustainable development goals.

Turkey and Indonesia are trying to develop education policies that promote gender equality. In Turkey, policies to increase girls' access to education promote gender equality (Kızılgöl, 2018). In Indonesia, various programs are implemented to support girls' participation in education (Suryadarma & Jones, 2013). However, in both countries, the effects of gender roles on the education system persist. In this context, education curricula and policies need to be continuously reviewed and improved to ensure gender equality.



The impact of education level on economic development is also supported by studies conducted in Turkey and Indonesia. In Turkey, the positive effects of higher education on economic growth are emphasized (Tansel & Güngör, 2003). Similarly, in Indonesia, education investments have been observed to support economic development by increasing labor productivity (Duflo, 2001). In this context, both countries should continue to promote economic development by increasing educational investments. To maximize the impact of education policies on economic development, special attention should be paid to quality and access in education.

Education policies in Turkey and Indonesia play an important role in achieving social and economic development goals. Since the post-colonial period, significant progress has been made in areas such as national identity building, equal opportunities in education, gender equality and economic development. However, more comprehensive and sustainable policies need to be developed and implemented to address current challenges in these areas.

## 5. Conclusion

Indonesia and Turkey's educational policies and cultural integration processes in the postcolonial period have led to significant changes in the educational systems of both countries. These processes are critical for national identity formation and social transformation. Our recommendations are aimed at strengthening the future educational policies and cultural integration strategies of both countries. Steps such as mutual academic cooperation, joint research projects and cultural interaction programs can contribute to a more effective representation of Indonesia and Turkey at the global level.

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