

Between Educational Autonomy and Social Justice: A Qualitative Analysis of PTN-BH Policy in Indonesia

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Higher education governance; Qualitative Policy Analysis; social justice; State Universities with Legal Entities (PTN-BH); university autonomy.	The reform of higher education governance in Indonesia through the State Universities with Legal Entities (PTN-BH) policy aims to strengthen institutional autonomy to improve the quality, efficiency, and competitiveness of higher education institutions. However, this expansion of autonomy has also given rise to debate regarding the potential commercialization of education and its implications for social justice in access to higher education. This study aims to analyze the direction of PTN-BH policy, the construction of autonomy in its governance model, and the relationship between higher education autonomy and social justice. The study uses a Qualitative Policy Analysis (QPA) approach with an evaluative-normative orientation through the analysis of policy documents and scientific literature, interpreted using Higher Education Autonomy Theory and Rawlsian Social Justice Theory. The results show that PTN-BH constructs a managed autonomy model by expanding authority in the academic, organizational, human resources, and financial fields while maintaining public accountability. Furthermore, the relationship between higher education autonomy and social justice is dynamic and mutually balancing. Therefore, the successful implementation of PTN-BH is determined not only by improving the institution's performance and competitiveness, but also by its ability to ensure inclusive, equitable, and sustainable access to higher education.
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INTRODUCTION

Higher education is increasingly expected to play a transformative role in realizing sustainable development through the creation of knowledgeable graduates, fostering innovation, and reducing social inequality.¹ Within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), universities are encouraged not only to enhance academic excellence but also to ensure equitable access, affordability, and inclusive governance.² Therefore, higher education governance has become a strategic issue because institutional arrangements significantly influence the ability of universities to carry out their academic missions while fulfilling broader social responsibilities.³

In many countries, higher education governance reforms are moving toward granting greater autonomy to universities. These reforms are based on the assumption that autonomous universities will be more adaptive, innovative, financially sustainable, and globally competitive.⁴ Greater autonomy allows universities to make independent decisions in academics, financial management, human resources, and strategic planning.⁵ However, despite these anticipated benefits, governance reforms have also raised debates about accountability, public responsibility, and social justice.⁶ Greater institutional independence has the potential to create undesirable disparities if universities become increasingly market-oriented and less accessible to economically disadvantaged groups.⁷

In Indonesia, the higher education governance reform agenda, emphasizing expanded institutional autonomy, is realized through the State Universities with Legal Entities (PTN-BH) scheme (Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education;

¹ Maia Chankseliani and Tristan McCowan, "Higher Education and the Sustainable Development Goals," *Higher Education*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-020-00652-w>.

² Ahmed G. Abo-Khalil, "Integrating Sustainability into Higher Education Challenges and Opportunities for Universities Worldwide," *Heliyon* 10, no. 9 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e29946>.

³ Michael Shattock and Aniko Horvath, *The Governance of British Higher Education: The Impact of Governmental, Financial and Market Pressures*, *The Governance of British Higher Education: The Impact of Governmental, Financial and Market Pressures*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2020.1810482>.

⁴ Jo Ritzen, "University Autonomy: Improving Educational Output," *IZA World of Labor*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.15185/izawol.240>.

⁵ Shattock and Horvath, *Gov. Br. High. Educ. Impact Gov. Financ. Mark. Press.*

⁶ Harry De Boer, Jürgen Enders, and Uwe Schimank, "On the Way towards New Public Management? The Governance of University Systems in England, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany," in *New Forms of Governance in Research Organizations: Disciplinary Approaches, Interfaces and Integration*, 2007, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-5831-8_5.

⁷ Simon Marginson, "Higher Education, Economic Inequality and Social Mobility: Implications for Emerging East Asia," *International Journal of Educational Development* 63 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.03.002>.

Government Regulation Number 4 of 2014). Under this governance model, universities are granted broader authority in the areas of academic governance, financial management, organizational development, and resource mobilization.^{8,9} The PTN-BH policy is designed to strengthen institutional performance, increase international competitiveness, and encourage innovation in higher education management.¹⁰ Despite the various benefits offered, the implementation of PTN-BH policies still faces significant challenges and risks in realizing effective, accountable and equitable higher education governance.¹¹ Some believe that greater financial autonomy could encourage the commercialization of education and increase access barriers for students from disadvantaged economic groups. Conversely, proponents of this policy argue that university autonomy can improve the quality, efficiency, and competitiveness of institutions. These differing views reflect the tension between university autonomy and the state's responsibility to ensure education as a public good.

The debate over legal state universities (PTN-BH) reflects a broader dilemma faced by higher education systems worldwide. Greater institutional autonomy is expected to strengthen universities' capacity for innovation, competitiveness, and responsiveness to changing educational and societal demands.¹² However, expanding institutional autonomy also raises concerns regarding accountability, equitable access, and social justice, particularly in developing countries where higher education continues to serve as an important pathway for social mobility.¹³ When institutional autonomy is accompanied by unequal financial capacity and insufficient public safeguards, governance reforms may unintentionally reinforce educational inequalities, making the balance between autonomy and social justice a central challenge for sustainable higher education development.¹⁴

Understanding how PTN-BH policies negotiate the relationship between institutional autonomy and social justice is important for several reasons. First, this study can

⁸ Kemenkumham RI, “Undang-Undang RI No. 12/2012 Tentang Pendidikan Tinggi,” Pemerintah RI § (2012).

⁹ Pemerintah RI, “Peraturan Pemerintah No 14 Tahun 2014 Tentang Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Tinggi Dan Pengelolaan Perguruan Tinggi” (2014).

¹⁰ Kemendikbudristek, “Permendikbud RI No. 4 Tahun 2020 Tentang Perubahan Atas Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan No. 88 Tahun 2014 Tentang Perubahan PTN Menjadi PTNBH” (2020).

¹¹ kemdiktisaintek, “Transformasi PTN BH Menuju Kampus Unggul Dan Berdaya Saing,” *Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi, Sains, Dan Teknologi*, 2022, <https://kemdiktisaintek.go.id/news/article/transformatasi-ptn-bh-menuju-kampus-unggul-dan-berdaya-saing>.

¹² Marginson, “Higher Education, Economic Inequality and Social Mobility: Implications for Emerging East Asia.”

¹³ Jamil Salmi, “All around the World - Higher Education Equity Policies across the Globe,” *Global Tertiary Education Expert*, 2018.

¹⁴ Chankseliani and McCowan, “Higher Education and the Sustainable Development Goals.”

provide insight into the extent to which higher education governance reforms support the achievement of SDG 4 by providing quality, inclusive, and equitable education.¹⁵ Second, this study provides insight into the alignment between higher education autonomy and SDG 10, which emphasizes reducing inequality in access to opportunities.¹⁶ Third, from an educational governance perspective, the research findings can provide input for policy refinement to ensure that institutional flexibility does not diminish higher education institutions' social responsibility.

To understand this dilemma, the PTN-BH policy needs to be viewed more critically, not only as a reform of higher education governance but also as a policy with implications for social justice. Therefore, this study uses social justice theory to analyze how the autonomy granted to higher education institutions affects educational access and opportunities for various community groups.

This research utilizes two main theoretical perspectives: the Theory of Higher Education Autonomy and the Theory of Social Justice. The Theory of Higher Education Autonomy, developed by Burton R. Clark, explains that higher education institutions require flexibility in managing academic, organizational, financial, and human resource aspects to enhance their capacity for adaptation, innovation, and institutional competitiveness.¹⁷ From this perspective, autonomy is understood as the ability of higher education institutions to make strategic decisions independently without excessive intervention from the state. However, Clark emphasizes that autonomy must go hand in hand with public accountability so that higher education institutions continue to fulfill their social function as providers of educational services to the wider community.^{18,19}

To complement this analysis, this study utilizes John Rawls's Theory of Social Justice, which emphasizes the importance of equitable distribution of opportunities and resources in society.²⁰ Rawls proposed two main principles: equal liberty for every individual and the difference principle, which states that social inequality can only be justified if it benefits the

¹⁵ UNESCO, "Inclusion and Education," *Global Education Monitoring Report: Inclusion and Education-All Means All*, 2020, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.54676/JJNK6989>.

¹⁶ Ch Devi Palaka and S.V.V.D.M.B. Prasad, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS* 13, no. 8 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.56975/ijcrt.v13i8.292474>.

¹⁷ Burton R. Clark, "Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organizational Pathways of Transformation," *Issues in Higher Education* 12 (1998).

¹⁸ Clark.

¹⁹ De Boer, Enders, and Schimank, "On the Way towards New Public Management? The Governance of University Systems in England, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany."

²⁰ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice (Revised Edition)*, *Revista Transilvania*, vol. 2018, 1971.

most disadvantaged groups. In the context of higher education, this theory serves as the basis for assessing the extent to which higher education autonomy policies and the implementation of PTN-BH continue to guarantee inclusive, affordable, and equitable access to education for all levels of society.

The combination of these two theories allows for a more comprehensive analysis of PTN-BH policies. The Theory of Higher Education Autonomy is used to explain the rationality of policies to increase the flexibility and effectiveness of institutional governance, while the Theory of Social Justice is used to evaluate their impact on equal access to higher education. Therefore, this study assesses not only the success of PTN-BH in terms of efficiency and institutional performance, but also its ability to achieve social justice in access to higher education.

Several studies have examined the relationship between university autonomy, university governance, and access to higher education. Internationally, research by Shin, Li, Nam, and Byun shows that institutional autonomy is a crucial prerequisite for effective university governance, although its success is heavily influenced by institutional capacity to implement governance policies.²¹ Meanwhile, Moodley emphasizes that strengthening university autonomy needs to be balanced with public accountability and the protection of academic freedom to ensure it aligns with societal interests.²² In Indonesia, research by Siregar and Putra indicates that the implementation of PTN-BH governance requires strengthening the principles of transparency, accountability, stakeholder participation, and managerial innovation to enhance institutional competitiveness.²³ This finding is reinforced by Nisak who shows that the implementation of good university governance has a positive effect on the performance of higher education, so that the balance between institutional efficiency and public responsibility becomes an important aspect in the management of higher education.²⁴

²¹ Jung Cheol Shin et al., "Institutional Autonomy and Capacity of Higher Education Governance in South Asia: A Comparative Perspective," *Higher Education Policy* 35, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-020-00220-y>.

²² M. Moodley, "Exploring Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and Public Accountability in the Global Landscape of Private Higher Education," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 39, no. 4 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.20853/39-4-7516>.

²³ Kardina Engelina Siregar and Ali Musri Semjan Putra, "Enhancing Governance in Indonesian Legal Entity State Universities: Insights from Global Best Practices," *Journal of Educational Management and Instruction (JEMIN)* 4, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.22515/jemin.v4i1.9158>.

²⁴ Nuril Ainun Nisak et al., "Good University Governance on Higher Education Performance," *International Journal Business, Management and Innovation Review* 2, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.62951/ijbmir.v2i2.103>.

However, most previous studies tend to discuss higher education autonomy and equity in access to higher education separately. Therefore, there is still a research gap in understanding how the policy of State Universities with Legal Entities (PTN-BH), as a form of higher education autonomy, influences the principle of social justice in access to higher education. This study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing PTN-BH policies through the perspectives of Higher Education Autonomy Theory and John Rawls's Theory of Social Justice, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between institutional independence, global competitiveness, and equal opportunities to obtain higher education.

Based on the above description, this research aims to answer the following research questions: 1. What is the direction of PTN-BH policy in higher education reform in Indonesia? 2. How is higher education autonomy constructed through the PTN-BH governance model? 3. How is the relationship between higher education autonomy and social justice constructed in PTN-BH policy?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a Qualitative Policy Analysis (QPA) approach with an evaluative-normative orientation to analyze the policies of State Universities with Legal Entities (PTN-BH) in Indonesia.²⁵ This approach was chosen because it allows researchers not only to identify the objectives and implementation of policies but also to evaluate their normative implications for social justice values in higher education. In this context, policies are understood as social constructions containing a set of assumptions, objectives, and consequences that influence the distribution of educational opportunities in society.²⁶

The research analysis draws on the Rawlsian Social Justice Framework developed by John Rawls.²⁷ This framework serves as an evaluative lens to assess the extent to which PTN-BH policies support the principle of justice in higher education, particularly regarding access, opportunity, and the distribution of educational benefits. Thus, the research not only describes PTN-BH policies but also assesses their normative legitimacy from a social justice perspective.

The research data is sourced from primary and secondary documents.²⁸ Primary

²⁵ Ainun Nisak et al.

²⁶ Ainun Nisak et al.

²⁷ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice (Revised Edition)*.

²⁸ Glenn A. Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009), <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>.

sources include official policy documents that serve as the legal basis and guidelines for the implementation of PTN-BH in Indonesia, namely Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education, Government Regulation Number 4 of 2014 concerning the Implementation of Higher Education and Management of Higher Education Institutions, and Government Regulation Number 26 of 2015 concerning the Forms and Funding Mechanisms for State Universities as Legal Entities. Secondary sources consist of peer-reviewed national and international scientific journal articles discussing higher education reform, higher education autonomy, academic capitalism, educational equity, and social justice. Data collection was conducted through documentation studies and literature searches in Scopus and Google Scholar databases. Documents were selected based on their relevance to PTN-BH policies, higher education autonomy, governance, funding, access to higher education, and social justice.

Data analysis was conducted through four stages: policy identification, thematic coding, normative evaluation, and interpretation of findings.²⁹ In the first stage, policy documents were analyzed to identify the objectives, principles, and implementation mechanisms of PTN-BH. Next, supporting documents and literature were coded into themes related to higher education autonomy, institutional governance, funding, educational access, and equal opportunity. These themes were then evaluated using three key principles in Rawls's theory of justice: the Equal Liberty Principle, the Fair Equality of Opportunity Principle, and the Difference Principle.³⁰ The results of the analysis were then interpreted to explain the implications of PTN-BH policies for governance and justice in higher education. The validity of the research was achieved through source triangulation by comparing regulatory documents and relevant academic literature, as well as theoretical triangulation by using the perspectives of Higher Education Autonomy, Academic Capitalism, and Rawlsian Social Justice in the interpretation process of the findings.³¹

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Direction of PTN-BH Policy in Higher Education Reform in Indonesia

Table 1. Results of the Analysis of PTN-BH Policy Documents Based on the Qualitative

²⁹ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide* (SAGE Publication, 2022), https://books.google.co.id/books?id=mToqEAAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=id&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

³⁰ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice (Revised Edition)*.

³¹ John W Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, *Australasian Emergency Nursing Journal*, vol. 11, 2007.

Policy Analysis Framework

Regulation	Policy Substance	Analysis Findings	Relation to Theory
Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education	Article 65 regulates the form of organization of PTN, including PTN-BH which has autonomy in academic and non-academic management.	Autonomy is positioned as an instrument to improve the quality, efficiency, and competitiveness of higher education through institutional flexibility.	In line with Higher Education Autonomy (Clark, 1998) which emphasizes the importance of institutional independence in strategic decision making.
PP Number 4 of 2014 concerning the Implementation of Higher Education and Management of Higher Education Institutions	Regulate the scope of PTN-BH autonomy in academic, organizational, financial, student and human resource governance.	Autonomy is not only administrative in nature, but also expands the authority of institutions in overall governance while remaining within the framework of public accountability.	Reflects the principles of Good University Governance, namely the balance between autonomy and accountability.
PP Number 26 of 2015 concerning the Form and Mechanism of Funding for PTN-BH	Regulate funding mechanisms originating from the government, community, cooperation, asset management, endowment funds, and other legitimate sources.	Funding for PTN-BH is directed at diversifying funding sources to improve institutional sustainability, but has the potential to increase dependence on market mechanisms if not balanced by affirmative policies.	Describes the characteristics of Academic Capitalism and serves as an evaluation point using Rawlsian Social Justice, particularly regarding equal access to education.

Source: Author's analysis based on Law Number 12 of 2012, PP Number 4 of 2014, and PP Number 26 of 2015.

As shown in Table 1, an analysis of Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education, Government Regulation Number 4 of 2014, and Government Regulation Number 26 of 2015 shows that the State Universities with Legal Entities (PTN-BH) policy is part of a higher education reform agenda oriented towards increasing institutional autonomy, governance efficiency, and global competitiveness. These three regulations consistently position autonomy as the primary instrument for strengthening the institutional capacity of higher education institutions by granting broader authority in academic, organizational, human resource, and financial management. These findings indicate that the government views governance flexibility as a prerequisite for higher education institutions to respond to the dynamics of an increasingly competitive higher education environment.

An analysis of these three regulations also reveals a paradigm shift from a higher education management model oriented toward bureaucratic control toward more adaptive and performance-based governance. This shift is reflected in the expansion of decision-making space at the institutional level, which is expected to increase innovation, efficiency,

and the quality of higher education services. From the perspective of Higher Education Autonomy, this policy direction aligns with the notion that increased institutional capacity can only be achieved if higher education institutions have the flexibility to set their own strategic priorities.³²

On the other hand, the analysis also shows that the expansion of autonomy has consequences for higher education funding patterns. Government Regulation No. 26 of 2015 expanded funding sources for PTN-BH through revenue diversification, which not only comes from the government but also from the community, partnerships, asset management, and other legitimate sources.³³ This finding indicates a tendency to strengthen more flexible financing mechanisms, while simultaneously opening up space for the emergence of a market orientation in higher education management. Therefore, PTN-BH reform represents not only the strengthening of institutional autonomy but also a transformation in governance that demands a balance between organizational efficiency, public accountability, and the social responsibility of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions are no longer understood solely as social institutions carrying out educational functions, but also as organizations required to produce measurable performance and be able to compete in a global environment. Thus, PTN-BH represents a transformation in higher education governance that aims to increase institutional capacity while strengthening the position of Indonesian universities in the global higher education landscape.

These findings indicate that PTN-BH policies are closely linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda, particularly SDG 4, which emphasizes the provision of quality, inclusive, and equitable education, and SDG 10, which focuses on reducing inequality in access to various development opportunities. Increasing institutional autonomy, as stipulated in PTN-BH policies, has the potential to strengthen the quality of higher education through more adaptive, innovative, and responsive governance to environmental changes. However, at the same time, flexibility in funding and resource management needs to be balanced with affirmative action mechanisms and public accountability to avoid creating new barriers for disadvantaged groups in accessing higher education. Therefore, achieving SDG 4 and SDG 10 depends not only on improving institutional performance but also on the ability of PTN-BH policies to maintain a balance between institutional autonomy and the principle of social justice.

³² Clark, "Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organizational Pathways of Transformation."

³³ S Slaughter and G Rhoades, *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy: Markets, State, and Higher Education*. (Johns Hopkins University Press., 2004).

2. Construction of Higher Education Autonomy in the PTN-BH Governance Model

Table 2. Dimensions of Autonomy in PTN-BH Policy

Dimension of Autonomy	Regulatory Basis	Analysis Findings
Academic	Law No. 12 of 2012; Government Regulation No. 4 of 2014	PTN-BH has the authority to develop academic programs, curriculum, and tridharma activities according to national standards.
Organization	Government Regulation No. 4 of 2014	Universities have flexibility in developing their organizational structures and internal governance.
Human Resources	Government Regulation No. 4 of 2014	PTN-BH has the flexibility to manage teaching staff and educational staff according to the needs of the institution.
Finance	Government Regulation No. 26 of 2015	PTN-BH can diversify funding sources to support the sustainability and development of the institution.

Source: Author's analysis based on Law Number 12 of 2012, PP Number 4 of 2014, and PP Number 26 of 2015.

Based on Table 2, the Dimensions of Autonomy in PTN-BH Policy show that autonomy in the PTN-BH model is constructed through the expansion of authority in four main aspects: academics, organization, human resources, and finance (Law Number 12 of 2012; Government Regulation Number 4 of 2014). Higher education institutions are given greater flexibility to design academic programs, develop organizational structures, manage human resources, and optimize funding sources outside of government allocations. Through this mechanism, PTN-BH is expected to improve the efficiency of institutional management while accelerating strategic decision-making. This finding aligns with the concept of Higher Education Autonomy, which places autonomy as a prerequisite for increasing institutional capacity and the effectiveness of higher education governance.^{34,35}

Of these four dimensions, financial autonomy is the most prominent aspect of PTN-BH policy. Government Regulation Number 26 of 2015 explicitly provides space for higher education institutions to develop various non-governmental funding sources to support institutional sustainability. This policy demonstrates that financial independence is seen as a crucial prerequisite for improving the quality of educational services and strengthening higher education competitiveness. From Burton R. Clark's perspective, this condition reflects the development of a more entrepreneurial university, namely an institution capable of managing its resources flexibly and innovatively to achieve its strategic goals.³⁶

³⁴ Clark, "Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organizational Pathways of Transformation."

³⁵ Shattock and Horvath, *Gov. Br. High. Educ. Impact Gov. Financ. Mark. Press.*

³⁶ Clark, "Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organizational Pathways of Transformation."

However, research findings also indicate that the autonomy granted to PTN-BH is not completely free from state intervention. The government maintains various oversight instruments through national higher education standards, accreditation systems, performance evaluations, and public accountability mechanisms (Law No. 12 of 2012; Government Regulation No. 4 of 2014). Therefore, autonomy within PTN-BH is more accurately understood as managed autonomy, a form of autonomy that remains within the framework of state regulation and oversight.³⁷ This condition indicates that PTN-BH policies do not eliminate the role of the state in higher education, but rather reconstruct the relationship between the state and higher education institutions to be more flexible yet accountable. These findings demonstrate that PTN-BH governance reform adopts the principle of balance between institutional flexibility and public accountability, a key characteristic of contemporary higher education governance.

3. Construction of the Relationship between Higher Education Autonomy and Social Justice in PTN-BH Policy

An analysis of policy documents shows that PTN-BH essentially seeks to accommodate two distinct but equally important goals: increasing university autonomy and maintaining social justice in access to higher education (Law No. 12 of 2012; Government Regulation No. 4 of 2014). On the one hand, this policy provides universities with greater flexibility in managing resources and developing institutional strategies. On the other hand, the government maintains various affirmative action instruments such as educational assistance, scholarships, and the Indonesia Smart Card (KIP) for College to ensure that disadvantaged groups continue to have access to higher education.³⁸

When analyzed using the Rawlsian Social Justice Framework, the PTN-BH policy demonstrates an effort to fulfill the principle of equal liberty by recognizing the right of every citizen to obtain higher education.³⁹ Furthermore, the existence of various educational assistance schemes also demonstrates a commitment to the principle of fair equality of opportunity, as these policies are designed to reduce economic barriers that can limit access to education for certain groups. In this context, PTN-BH does not directly remove the state's responsibility for equal access to education, but rather positions the state as a regulator that

³⁷ De Boer, Enders, and Schimank, "On the Way towards New Public Management? The Governance of University Systems in England, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany."

³⁸ Kemenkumham RI, Undang-Undang RI No. 12/2012 tentang Pendidikan Tinggi.

³⁹ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice (Revised Edition)*.

continues to guarantee the fulfillment of the community's right to higher education through various affirmative policies.⁴⁰

However, a more critical analysis suggests that expanding financial autonomy has the potential to have more complex consequences for the principle of social justice. From an Academic Capitalism perspective, the increasing need for universities to obtain alternative funding sources can push institutions to become more market-oriented.⁴¹ When a university's success is measured by its ability to generate revenue, enhance its global reputation, and win the competition for resources, there is a risk that economically disadvantaged groups will face greater barriers to access. From the perspective of Rawls's Difference Principle, this situation raises questions about the extent to which the benefits generated by university autonomy actually reach the most disadvantaged groups.⁴²

To better understand the relationship between Higher Education Autonomy and Social Justice in PTN-BH Policy, you can see the following diagram in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows that the PTN-BH policy cannot be understood solely as an instrument for expanding higher education autonomy, but rather as a mechanism that negotiates the relationship between increasing institutional capacity and fulfilling social justice. Autonomy granted through academic, organizational, human resource, and especially financial authority contributes to increased efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness of higher education institutions. However, at the same time, expanding financial autonomy also has the potential to strengthen market orientation (academic capitalism), thus requiring evaluation based on John Rawls's three principles of social justice: equal liberty, fair equality of opportunity, and the difference principle. The analysis shows that the relationship between higher education autonomy and social justice is dynamic and mutually balancing, so that the success of PTN-BH implementation is determined not only by improving institutional performance, but also by its ability to maintain inclusive, equitable access to higher education, and in line with the achievement of SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

⁴⁰ Kemenkumham RI, Undang-Undang RI No. 12/2012 tentang Pendidikan Tinggi.

⁴¹ Slaughter and Rhoades, *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy: Markets, State, and Higher Education*.

⁴² Rawls, *A Theory of Justice (Revised Edition)*.

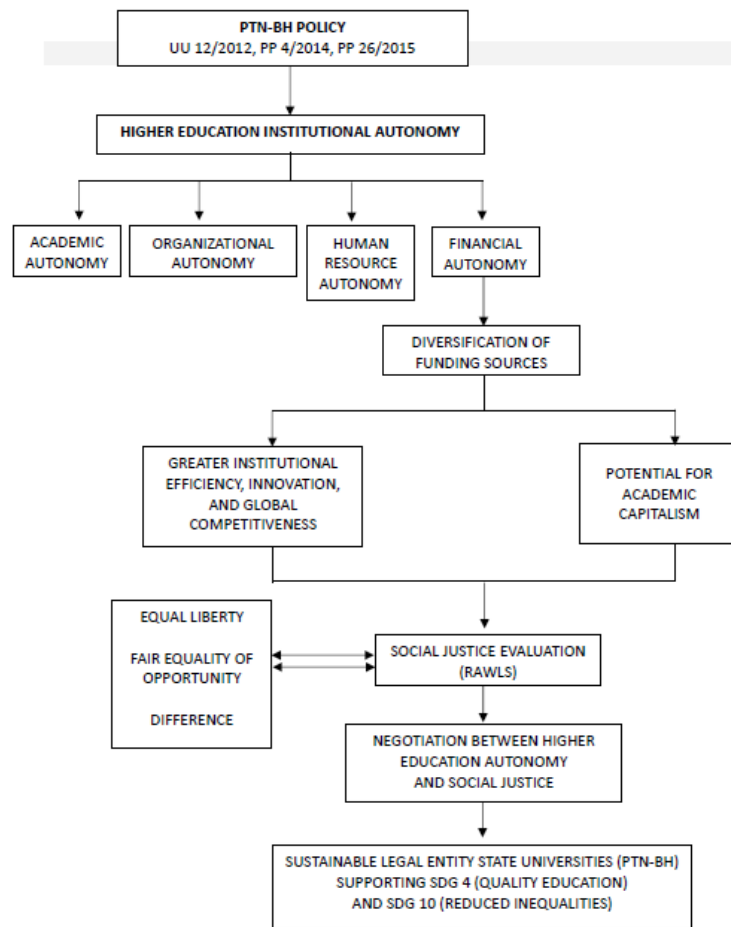


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Relationship between Higher Education Autonomy and Social Justice in the PTN-BH Policy

Thus, the relationship between higher education autonomy and social justice in the PTN-BH policy cannot be understood as entirely harmonious or entirely contradictory. This policy represents an ongoing negotiation process between demands for increased institutional efficiency and competitiveness and the social responsibility of higher education as a means of social mobility. Therefore, the success of PTN-BH needs to be measured not only by institutional performance and global competitiveness, but also by its ability to maintain inclusive, equitable, and sustainable access to higher education for all levels of society. These findings demonstrate that the sustainability of PTN-BH reforms depends heavily on the ability of the government and universities to maintain a balance between institutional flexibility and the protection of the community's right to quality higher education.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the State University with Legal Entity (PTN-BH) policy is part of the higher education governance reform in Indonesia, aimed at strengthening institutional capacity through expanding autonomy in academics, organizations, human resources, and especially financial management, in order to improve the quality, efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness of higher education institutions. The analysis shows that the autonomy developed in the PTN-BH model is not absolute, but rather takes the form of managed autonomy, namely autonomy that remains within the framework of regulations, national standards, and public accountability. However, the expansion of autonomy, especially in the funding aspect, also opens up opportunities for strengthening market orientation (academic capitalism), which has the potential to affect equal access to higher education if not balanced with adequate affirmative policies. Based on the perspective of John Rawls's Theory of Social Justice, the PTN-BH policy has essentially accommodated the principles of equal liberty and fair equality of opportunity through various educational access and assistance policies, such as the KIP Kuliah and scholarships. However, the implementation of the difference principle remains a challenge because the benefits resulting from increased institutional autonomy are not necessarily fully felt by the most disadvantaged groups in society.

This study confirms that the relationship between higher education autonomy and social justice is not a conflicting relationship, but rather a dynamic, complementary relationship that must be continuously negotiated in higher education governance. By integrating the Theory of Higher Education Autonomy and John Rawls' Theory of Social Justice, this study provides a conceptual perspective that the success of PTN-BH reform is not only understood through improving institutional performance, organizational efficiency, or global competitiveness, but must also be measured based on its ability to guarantee inclusive, equitable, and sustainable access to higher education for all levels of society. This finding expands the study of higher education reform by showing that institutional autonomy, public accountability, and social justice are three pillars that must be balanced in realizing sustainable higher education governance. Future research is recommended to empirically examine the impact of the PTN-BH policy implementation on access, quality, and equity in higher education across different university contexts in Indonesia.

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