

Improving Teacher Profesionalism through Certification Program: An Indonesia Case Study

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Abstract—Government of Indonesia held a certification program to enhance the professionalism of teachers by using portfolio assessment. This research discusses about the effectiveness of certification programs to enhance the professionalism of teacher in Indonesia. Portfolio assessment method has drawbacks. The certified teachers do not show significant performance improvement. Therefore, the government changes the portfolio assessment method to the education and training for teachers.

Keywords—Profesionalism, Teacher, Certification, Indonesia

I. INTRODUCTION

THE quality of education plays a vital role in determining a nation's competitiveness. Therefore, most societies and governments have promoted strategies to improve the quality of education. Indonesia, in particular, has acknowledged the importance of improving the quality of its education system in order to supply the country with highly competitive human resources [6].

Indonesia is developing country. The country is trying to improve education quality. Law No. 14/2005 regarding Teachers [13], stipulates that teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree (S1) or a four-year diploma program (D4). The act stipulates that teachers must have four basic competencies namely: pedagogical competence, professional competence, social competence, and competence of personality. The government held a certification program to improve teacher profesionalism. Teachers who pass the certification program will receive an additional allowance same as their basic salary. This research discusses about the effectiveness of certification programs to enhance the professionalism of teacher in Indonesia.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Roles of Teachers

Substantially, teachers have two main roles in the classroom [8]. The first is to create the conditions under which learning can take place (the social side of teaching). The second is to impart, by a variety of means, knowledge to their learners (the task-oriented side of teaching).

The first is known as the 'enabling' or managerial function, the search for the proper conditions and means for teaching. The second is an instructional function with the teacher as the so-called "instructor" [8].

The two functions are complementary each other. The latter would be more or less impossible without the former. In practice, it is very difficult to separate the two and often one act in the classroom can perform both functions simultaneously [8].

The instructional side of a teacher's role is likely to be goal-oriented, task-dependent, knowledge-based and underpinned by a set of attitudes and beliefs, not only about knowledge, but also the appropriate instructional strategies to employ in the classroom. Furthermore, it is likely to influence the types and modes of evaluation most favored by teachers [8].

A teacher can pursue his instructional role in a variety of modes. It is rare for a classroom language teacher to stick to only one mode during the course of a lesson. However, teachers tend to favor particular modes of instruction which suit either the personality of the teacher, the materials being used, the expectations of the learners, the prescriptions of school administrators, the subject matter being treated, the preferences of teachers for certain types of classroom process or the teacher's interpretation of the idea of 'instruction' [8].

The 'school of thought' or discipline in which a teacher is trained will undoubtedly influence his ideas about teacher and learner roles. This set of beliefs and attitudes is likely to be reinforced by views about the role of teaching materials, including textbooks, in the language classroom [8].

Schools are one of the first places where kid's behavior and future educational success is shape. Teachers are carriers of either positive or negative behavior toward students. The reason why the first years of school are so critical is because kids learn the base of their educational life. Teachers must love their career in order for them to pass enthusiasm, to assists, and to provide a warm environment to the students. Teachers are the second mothers for the students because students spend a lot of time with their teachers. At the same time, a real teacher becomes through many years of training and experiences in the field. The same way, mothers are not born being great mothers but as their experiences with their kids expands they become experts on the field. We know that mothers look the best for their kids and one of their goals is to raise their kids so they can become professionals and pioneers for the society. Some of the mother's role toward kids is to give them care, love, respect, lead, instruct and to try to form a safe and pleasant environment at their homes [1].

A teacher is someone who becomes through many years of training and experiences in the field. There is not a teacher who is an expert the first day of their profession. It is urgent for everyone who is a teacher or is planning to become one to get prepare in the field the best they can. All teachers who get prepare will know how to set up rules in the classroom. Those kinds of teachers will probably have less problems in their classroom because they will be able to control the classroom [1].

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There are all types of teachers some are better than others. There were some professors who were well prepared and some who were not. Some teachers just came into the class and started teaching. They did not get involve with the students. Those teachers did not show any concern about what the students were feeling. One way for a teacher to get students involve in the classroom is to ask them questions. There were some students at the class that were shy including me who did not have the chance to get involve in the class or to participate. Therefore, the way students act depends on the teacher's attitude. That is why it is strongly recommend for all teachers to invite the student to participate in the class. It is very important that teachers encourage students because students will benefit from it [1]. A teacher carries a big responsibility in her classroom. One reason is that all students depend on her/him. Everything the teacher says will have an impact on the students. If the teacher feels joy of feels anger, it will be spread among children because the attitudes of the teacher gets contagious. If the teacher laughs, students also laugh. Teachers are responsible for the social behavior in the classroom. If something goes wrong the only responsible is the teacher even if it was not their fault [1]. The teacher must create a warm and protective environment but at the same time professional. If students feel secure in the classroom the result will be shown in the academic progress. A good start could be a mutual trust with each student.

Teachers have the responsibility to know his/her students in the classroom. Each day, the teachers show one of their attitudes that the students are unaware. Also, the students do the same in order for the teacher to get to know them, too. This is a good exercise to do because it benefits the whole class to break the ice. The first days most of the students are afraid of the teacher because they do not know how is the teacher's personality. It will change until the point that the teacher and students discover to have common hobbies with each other [1]. School is not only a place where student goes to learn but also the place where fun is a necessity. A teacher should also have fun with the students. Kids learn faster when they feel attracted to an exciting lesson. Teachers must not forget that kids get bored fast that is why creative lessons must be planned ahead. There should be interest in what people want to learn says Mr. Spayde [9] in his article "Learning the Key of Life" [1]. A teacher should also be someone who guides student rather than someone who is a totalitarian in the classroom. The teacher needs to show respect toward the students so the students also respect the teacher. Teacher must not forget the s/he teaches to different students who brings different students who brings different traditions and customs because the students come from different backgrounds.

"One of the keys that is useful for teachers is to understand and accept the way students are acting the way Thomas [4] says in his article "The Mind of Man". Therefore, teachers need to create a curriculum that guides students to a path of success. Consequently, they need to receive guiding depending on their students need [1]. Sometimes, the teacher's caring attitudes could have a long positive or negative influence on students. Student's self-esteem could be lifted up because it could create ambitions in their minds for future academic success.

As Mike Rose [14] explains in "Lives in Boundaries" that an educator must be an open mind person that must respect the students diversity and give love and caring attitudes toward students. It is crucial to make students believe in themselves. One of the roles that a teacher carries is to encourage students in the issues that bother them about school in their personal life. It could make a big difference in the student's life if he/she is lifted up to keep going and to not let anything put us down. Psychologically, students could be affected if they have problems with their teachers. One of the results could be that students will avoid going to school. As professional teachers, we do not want any conflict with the students [1].

Sometimes, the behavior of students demonstrates that something is not going right. Therefore, teachers must pay attention to any suspicious signs that could bother the student. As teacher is our responsibility to find out what is going on with the students in the classroom. Kids deep in their hearts feel that teachers could help them but sometimes they are afraid to ask the teacher. The students prefer to talk to their friends about their problems and sometimes teachers are the last person to find out about the problem. Sometimes is the teacher's fault that students do not seek his/her help because sometimes the teachers do not form a bond of communication. The teachers must let students know how she feels when students do not trust her maybe it would help students to change their minds about telling the teacher his/her problem [1]. Teachers need to think about what are the students feeling. As teachers, one good way to do this is to look back in our school years and remembered what we went through when we were students. We will realize that most of the kids have problems with their teachers. There are not students who have not encounter a problem with the teacher. Therefore, there is not a perfect relationship between teachers and students because the relationship of teachers and students is perfect. Therefore, teacher's priority should only be the benefit of the student's feelings [1]. Often, there is a debate about if a teacher should be a role model for students.

Teachers are respected by society because they are viewed as knowledgeable about different subjects of school. Even if teachers do not like to be pointed out as being role models, they certainly think they are. Teachers have the qualities to be or become role models for students. Because most teachers respect, love, care, instruct, and guide their students to become a successful person. Students view teacher as being wise therefore they look up to them. Students know that if they need something they just need to ask them. Kids learn from every lesson the teacher gives. Therefore, a teacher has an enormous responsibility on his/her actions. Even if teachers are considered to be role models, they still make mistakes. It is normal to make mistakes because it is our nature of being humans. At the same time, students should not look to their teacher to copy them but rather to compare and to see the mistakes to not do them in our lives. Students should concentrate in doing their work and being proud of the way they are [1].

All teachers have the key to provide a good environment for the students. The benefits of having a pleasant environment are for the teacher and students. But before that happen a teacher needs to be well prepared in order that the students receive the best treat. It is essential and crucial for teachers to be prepared because the first years of school are very important for the students. The future education success of the students depends on their first years. It's never late to start a bond of a relationship between teacher and students. Consequently, the contact of the students with the teacher is an everyday act. Even though, there will be some days in which students will have inappropriate but other days where there will not be a problem at all. As humans, sometimes teachers do things that are not correct however we always have another chance to do it better. In conclusion, teachers need to show respect, caring, become role models, make a pleasant environment, treat students right, instructs them but not be totalitarian, and guides them through the road of success. The only who gets the benefits are the students and sometimes it could be a negative or positive [1].

B. Teacher Professionalism

It is one of the controversial questions in the modern society of America whether teaching is (or not) a profession. Most teachers in public and private schools are college graduates with years training in teaching. However, many people are thinking that if "everybody boil water and coach basketball, then they kind of feel the same way about teaching" [2]. The emergence of home schooling and charter schools is partly based on the perception of the teaching as a "non-profession." Even though we admit the need of professional preparation of the teacher, many people think that the profession of teaching is fundamentally different from those that receive the greatest public recognition. "Teachers are not professionals in the conventional sense of the term" [18]. Though there was another effort to define teaching as a "new professionalism", there are still other reasons that teaching is not a profession in a traditional sense [3].

The perception of teaching as a semi- or quasi-profession is apparent, especially, when it is compared to the traditional professions, such as the jobs of medical doctors or lawyers. Though teachers are different from the simple laborers, from training to the characteristics of the duties, they belong to a distinctive group of professions, quite different from the more elite expert professions commonly identified with professional status. Pratte and Rury [18] defined teaching as "a craft profession, built on a conscience of craft, rather than a more conventional ideal of professionalism." Ayers [20] defined teachers as "economically marginal but symbolically significant workers" [3].

Pratte and Rury [18] defined professionalism as "an ideal to which individuals and occupational groups aspire, in order to distinguish themselves from other workers." The prestigious status that the expert professionals enjoy is based on the following characteristics of a profession: 1) a distinctive body of knowledge, 2) the membership control, and 3) the commitment to the welfare of the client [3].

As discussed so far, teachers are substantially different from the expert professionals in professional training, induction process into the field, professional autonomy, practitioner-client relationship, and social status. These differences not only characterize the nature of teaching but also determine the nature of education [3].

C. Teacher Professionalization Strategies

Sykes [7] is one of the proponents for teacher professionalism. By adopting the development of professionalism in medicine and law, he proposed the establishment developmental schools for teachers. Sykes, thus, argues that the quality of the individual practitioners in teaching should be promoted through raising the standards of the teachers. This call for standards might be feasible through the selective admission to the accredited teacher education programs and formal induction into a professional development school of the candidates. This school for beginning teachers is "the community of practice and the company of fellows that constitute the reference group for professional behavior" [3].

In addition to the professional preparation of teachers at the accredited teacher preparation program and at the professional development school, which functions as an induction center of the professional teachers and a knowledge-producing center in teaching [11], the followings were also recommended by various proponents for teacher professionalization [3]:

1. setting the national or state standards for professional teachers [10];
2. teacher empowerment at school decision making: "shared governance" of schools [5]; and
3. higher teacher compensation and establishment of career ladder in teaching.

III. METHOD

The research used a qualitative method. The samples of the research were gathered by using purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Its data were gathered through library research, in-depth interview, observation, and focus group discussion (FGD). They were then analyzed by using interactive model of analysis. The model consists of three main steps including: data reduction, data display and conclusion. Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the "raw" data that appear in written-up field notes. Data reduction occurs continuously throughout the life of any qualitatively oriented project. Data display can be defined as an organized assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking [15].

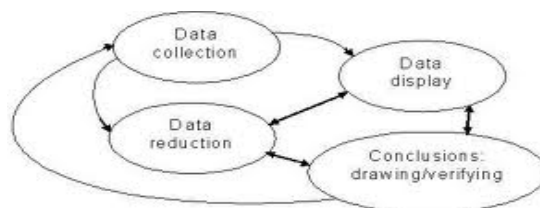


Fig. 1 Interactive model of analysis

IV. FINDINGS

A. The Background of Certification

As reported by Ministry of Education, international test evidence has identified deficiencies in the academic achievement of Indonesian students and suggests the need to improve the quality of teachers. In recent years, further research evidence has underlined some of the major reasons for weakness in teacher quality. These provide an agenda for action and foreshadow some of the initiatives in the Teacher Law [6]:

1. A study of the impact of the decentralization of 2001 on educational management shows some of the difficulties arising from ambiguity in the division of responsibilities between districts and the central agencies, and the inadequacy of skill in carrying out many of the functions at the local level [21]. Deficiencies in the ability of local district offices to plan, budget, and finance their education system continues to cause problems. Furthermore, lack of the necessary technical and management skills has resulted in difficulties in providing planning data, recruiting teachers, providing in-service training, and monitoring the quality of teaching and the achievements of students. These factors have hindered the delivery of an effective and quality service.
2. A recent employment and deployment study identified six major issues which impact on teacher management and the quality of teaching outcomes: (a) uneven distribution of teachers; (b) inequities for remote schools; (c) workloads are too low and have too much variation; (d) there is an overall excess of staff; (e) remuneration is relatively low with wide variations in allowances; and (f) there is concern about the quality of teacher competencies [22].
3. A video-study³⁰ of classroom management in Year 8 mathematics has shown that teachers spend less lesson time on new content and put less emphasis on reasoning and problem solving [22]. Compared to international best practice, Indonesian teachers should: (a) apply better time management and use time more effectively to teach relevant content; (b) put more emphasis on higher order thinking in instructional delivery; (c) apply content overlap to what is taught and what is tested; (d) apply the proper level of content coverage to ensure the level and amount of content covered is equal to the level and amount understood by the student; and (e) create an environment of enjoyable learning to maintain student engagement, involvement and attention.
4. A study of teacher working groups in Indonesia (KKG/MGMP) identified them as a critical support mechanism for teachers at the local school-cluster level [23]. Whilst providing a potentially effective continuous professional development network; the study found there is need to strengthen this mechanism through greater activation by district offices; access to more adequate funding; training for working group management committees; greater access to workshop leaders and professional trainers; greater guidance in conducting training programs; closer regulation of cluster meetings; access to innovative trainers; and leadership training for key members of the group.

B. Certification Program in Indonesia

Certification program is a process of granting certificate to teachers who have met certain requirements. Certification is done through four ways, including portfolio assessment; training for teachers; direct certification, and professional education for teachers. Certification aims to improve the quality of teachers and teachers' welfare. But, in the fact, this goal can not be achieved because the method used still contains some weaknesses.

Portfolio assessment is the recognition of professional experience of teachers in the form of an assessment of the collection of documents that describe:

1. academic qualifications;
2. education and training;
3. teaching experience;
4. planning and implementation of learning;
5. assessment of the supervisor;
6. academic achievement;
7. the work of professional development;
8. participation in scientific forums;
9. organizational experience in the field of educational and social development; and
10. relevant award in the field of education.

Portfolio assessment is followed by a teacher who has a graduate academic qualification (S-1) or a diploma four (D-IV), or do not meet the academic qualifications of the S-1 or D-IV when they are aged 50 years and has 20 years experience working as a teacher.

Training for teachers is teacher certification through professional training for teachers who:

1. do not have the readiness for self-assessment portfolio;
2. do not pass the portfolio assessment, and
3. are declared as ineligible teacher for direct certification.

Direct certification is a certification by giving educator certificate directly for teachers who already have academic qualifications S-2 (master) or S-3 (doctor).

Professional education for teachers is organized educational programs to prepare teachers to master the full competence of teachers in accordance with national standards of education so that educators can obtain an educator certificate.

C. The Effectiveness of Certification Program in Indonesia

Ministry of National Education acknowledges that the certification program has not succeeded in improving the quality of teachers in Indonesia [11]. Certification failure is caused by the use of portfolio assessment method that contains many flaws.

In portfolio assessment, assessors found some teachers who were suspected of document fraud. Many documents were not rational. For example, there was a participant hold three certificates of seminar at the same time. In general, there were several frauds done by teacher to get a certificate. There are at least 87 percent of data discrepancies, for example, allegations of bribery and falsification of documents. There is a falsification of signatures of 13 percent, 31 percent name forgery, falsification of 22 percent, and other 34 percent fraud

[19]. Studies show that teachers who are certified do not show significant performance improvement, though they have received an additional allowance as much as their basic salary. Nowadays, people watched the performance of certified teachers. The result, teachers who have obtained additional allowances have not significantly improved performance.

Based on the description above, the government finally evaluated the teacher certification program. Portfolio assessment model was replaced with model of education and training. The government finally realized that improving the quality of teachers should be done through education and training, instead of their portfolio assessment

V.CONCLUSION

Government of Indonesia held a certification program to enhance the professionalism of teachers by using portfolio assessment. Portfolio assessment method has drawbacks. The teachers were suspected of cheating on their documents. The certified teachers do not show significant performance improvement, though they have received an additional allowance as much as their basic salary. Therefore, the government changes the portfolio assessment method with the education and training for teachers.

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