

STRATEGIES IN IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY IN INDONESIA

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A. Teacher Education under the Law No. 14/2005

Teacher Education which is now running in Indonesia implements a concurrent model for teacher education in which the prospective teachers are educated at the teacher training colleges and after completing the teacher education program they are directly promoted to be teachers. The teaching licence is awarded in form of Teaching Certificate to be provided on completion of the bachelor degree in education. Bachelors majoring in pure sciences program (non-educational program), who have desires to become teachers, can take the Teaching Certificate Program within six months up to one year which is equivalent to 20 credit hours.

A fundamental change of the Teacher Education in Indonesia under the Law No. 14/2005 on Teacher and Lecturer indicates that professional teachers are those who meet an academic qualification of bachelor degree (S-1/D-IV) and pass the Education for Teacher Profession. Education for Teacher Profession, hereinafter referred to as *Pendidikan Profesi Guru* (PPG), is held for one year or equivalent to 36-40 credit hours on the completion of bachelor degree without any differences for those majoring in educational and non-educational programs. PPG is to be completed by awarding a Certificate of Professional Teacher.

A mandate of the Law is intended not only to the prospective teachers through in-service education, but also to the in-service teachers. Within ten years, all in-service teachers who have already held bachelor degree (S-1/D-IV) should have Certificates of Professional Teacher through teacher certification and those who haven't held the bachelor degree (S-1/D-IV) should have got the degree within 15 years after the Law is being implemented. It is a big work for Indonesia to undertake the teacher certification and increase the teachers' academic qualification to obtain bachelor degree. Of the 2.78 million teachers in Indonesia, 1.7 million teachers have not held their bachelor degree and 70% of them are teaching at the Elementary Schools.

The main standard used for the teacher certification is that the competence standard indicated in the Law stating that a professional teacher should have pedagogic, professional, personality, and social competences. These four competences invite controversy since these do not reflect an integrated teacher's competences. The separation of pedagogic aspect emphasizing on the educational competence and professional aspect emphasizing on the subject mastery indicates incomplete educational academic competence since the educational competence is separated from subject mastery. Educational academic competence is the essence of the teacher competence as the foundation in developing the professional competence through the education for teacher profession. Therefore, a synergy of juridical and academic aspects is done as the basis for assessing the teacher certification and education for teacher profession.

B. In-service Teacher Certification

According to the Law, in-service teacher certification is intended to those who have held the bachelor degree. There are various varieties of teacher certification to be considered, however, the Teacher Certification Consortium decided to apply portfolio as the documents to show the teacher's performance as the basis for assessing the teacher's competence. The average number of 200,000 teachers follow the certification program per year under the coordination of the local office of education in preparing the portfolio. The portfolio is sent to the Teachers Training Colleges (LPTK) to be assessed by assessors prepared nationally. The assessors are lecturers of LPTK specially prepared for the certification.

The teachers can follow the certification after they have been in-service for the minimum of five years. The teachers who have not held a bachelor degree are allowed to follow the teacher certification if they have been 50 years old and in-service for 20 years or obtain at least IV-a in their job rank. Teachers who have held doctorate or master degree obtaining at least IV-b in their job rank are certified automatically.

Currently, there are 32 state LPTKs and hundreds of private LPTKs in Indonesia. There are more than 1.1 million teachers who have held a bachelor degree or a higher degree, therefore, the implementation of portfolio assessment requires many numbers of LPTKs. The number of LPTKs involved in the process of certification is 61 LPTKs in 2008 and 66 LPTKs in 2009. It is not easy to improve the number of LPTKs in the certification since not all LPTKs run the study programs required by the teachers. An LPTK which doesn't have any assessors for certain study programs has to find assistance from the other LPTK and it is not easy considering the geography and other related factors.

There are approximately 50% teachers who have passed the certification nationally through portfolio assessment and the rest has to attend 90-hour Education and Training for Teacher Profession. The education and training are focused on improving the mastery of materials, lesson planning and methodology, and teaching practice. The education and training are ended by competence test consisting of writing and practice tests. The teachers who have passed the certification are awarded Certificates of Professional Teacher and given registration numbers by the Directorate General for Teacher Quality Improvement and Educational Staff (PMPTK) to get incentive for their profession.

The implementation of in-service teacher certification is done through both portfolio and education. Young teachers showing good achievement are given chance to attend education for one year in the selected LPTKs. This certification is considered as an embryo for the Education for Teacher Profession. In 2008, there were 354,363 teachers who have been certificated and obtained Certificates of Professional Teacher.

C. In-service Bachelor in Education

The Government of Indonesia is now facing a big problem in improving the academic qualification of teachers to obtain a bachelor degree. There are 1.7 million teachers who have to improve their academic qualification and they are spread out in isolated areas all over Indonesia rather difficult to cover for a geographical reason. On the one hand, they have to attend classes at the campus, but on the other hand, they are not allowed to leave their duty to teach their students at schools since it disturbs the teaching and learning processes. Therefore, there is a Regulation from the Minister of National Education to regulate the implementation of in-service teacher education through distance learning. There are 81 LPTKs assigned to hold the education for the in-service teacher to obtain their bachelor degree. This program will be implemented in the middle of the year 2009.

D. Teacher Manpower Management

Obtaining Certificates of Professional Teacher through portfolio does not automatically guarantee the improvement of education quality, but it needs an improvement of manpower management. Since the launching of Local Government Autonomy, including the educational management, the Local Government has the responsibility to control the teacher manpower management. National Standard of Education formulated by the Board for National Standard of Education (BSNP) becomes a quality reference that must be met by educational units. There are some points that should be improved in the manpower management in the Local Government, they are: (1) providing guarantee for the teachers to do their duties through effective supervision from the supervisors and school principals; (2) building quality awareness and hard work in order to achieve quality learning standards; (3) building continuous professional guidance by local educational offices, supervisors, and teachers' forum; and (4) developing school competitiveness through competitive grants through professional performance evaluation system and quality control.

E. Education for Teacher Profession

The Education for Teacher Profession indicated in the Law is open to graduates majoring in educational and non-educational programs. The controversy of the competence standards as indicated above needs several stages to undertake. Synergy of juridical and academic aspects should be carried out through the followings:

1. Each profession as in other professional education have to take two stages, they are academic education and profession education. Academic education is an education developing the academic competence master the basic knowledge (scientific bases of the art) for professional practice. Meanwhile, profession education is the implementation of academic competence in the real practices in the authentic setting.
2. Academic education is ended by awarding of a Bachelor Degree and profession education is ended by awarding a Certificate of Professional Teacher.
3. Complete competences of a teacher include academic competence developed through academic education program and professional competence developed through profession education. National Convention on Indonesian Education (KONASPI) VI in Denpasar, Bali held on 17-19 November 2008 recommended that: *“The implementation of quality teacher education should be based on a complete framework on the competence standard and teacher education. The achievement of the complete competence is achieved through academic and profession education.”*
4. The candidates of Teacher Education and Training are decided through academic competence test on their mastery of study program and educational background. The bachelors majoring in non-educational program have to take educational matriculation program to develop educational academic competence. Bachelors majoring in educational program can directly take the Education for Teacher Profession, while those who need empowerment in their academic aspect should take the matriculation program.
5. The final test on the Education for Teacher Profession covers competence tests, both written and practice through involving the association of the related profession.

F. Preparing Lecturers for Profession Education

National Convension on Indonesian Education (KONASPI) VI in Denpasar, Bali held on 17-19 November 2008 recommended that:

“LPTK has to guarantee the availability of human resources (lecturers) as professional teacher education to reinforce the healthy of governance, and the availability of other resources to support the implementation of quality teacher education.

The important stage to prepare the lecturers of the Education for Teacher Profession is done through implementing the fine-tuning program through adapting the competences of the lecturers to maintain the quality of academic and profession education.

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