

Education Policy Analysis On Teacher Professional Development And Improvement

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze education policies related to the development and improvement of the teaching profession in Indonesia. Teachers, as the spearhead of education, play a strategic role in determining the quality of learning and the achievement of national education goals. Therefore, the development of teacher professionalism is a priority within the education system. This study uses a qualitative research method with a policy study approach to examine various regulations and government programs related to the teaching profession, including Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, Government Regulations on teacher qualification and competency standards, as well as competency-enhancement programs such as the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG), Continuing Professional Development (CPD/PKB), and teacher certification. The results of the analysis show that policies for teacher professional development have been comprehensively designed to cover aspects of academic qualifications, pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. However, policy implementation still faces various challenges such as disparities in teacher quality between regions, limited access to training programs, and insufficient infrastructure and budgetary support.

Keywords: education policy, teacher professional development, teacher competence, teacher professionalism, education quality improvement

Introduction

Background

Education is the primary foundation for building civilization and advancing a nation. The quality of education is determined by various factors, and teachers, as educators, hold the most strategic role in the learning process. Teachers are not only responsible for transferring knowledge, but also for shaping character, developing potential, and preparing students to face future challenges. Therefore, teacher professionalism is a key factor in improving the quality of national education.

Indonesia, as a developing country, continues to strive to improve the quality of its education through various strategic policies. Awareness of the importance of the teacher's role has encouraged the government to issue regulations governing the development and enhancement of the teaching profession. Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System and Law Number 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers serve as legal foundations that affirm the status of

teachers as professionals who must possess academic qualifications, competencies, educator certification, and meet national education standards.

Field realities indicate that challenges in the development of the teaching profession remain complex. Data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology indicate disparities in teacher quality between urban and rural areas, between Java and regions outside Java, and between public and private schools. These disparities contribute to unequal learning outcomes for students across regions. Additionally, the shift in educational paradigms in the digital era and the demands of 21st-century skills add further complexity to the challenges faced by teachers.

The government has launched various programs to enhance teacher professionalism, such as teacher certification programs, the Teacher Professional Education (PPG), Continuing Professional Development (CPD/PKB), training and technical guidance, as well as scholarship programs for improving academic qualifications. These programs are designed to ensure that each teacher possesses adequate pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies in accordance with established standards.

However, the implementation of teacher professional development policies still faces numerous obstacles. Budget constraints, limited supporting infrastructure, uneven teacher distribution, low motivation among teachers to participate in professional development programs, and insufficient coordination among stakeholders hinder the achievement of policy goals. Furthermore, dynamic and frequently changing policies sometimes cause confusion at the implementation level and reduce the effectiveness of existing programs.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a policy analysis method. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on examining the content, implementation, and impact of educational policies related to the development and improvement of the teaching profession in Indonesia. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to deeply understand the meaning, context, and dynamics of the policies.

Results

Based on the analysis of various regulations and policy documents, such as Law Number 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, Government Regulation Number 19 of 2017 on Teachers, and several Continuing Professional Development (PKB) programs, it is evident that the government has a strong commitment to building teacher professionalism. These policies

emphasize three main aspects: academic qualifications, professional competence, and continuous development. The main goal is to create competent, ethical teachers capable of responding to the dynamics of 21st-century education.

However, the analysis indicates that although the regulatory framework is clear, policy implementation in the field still faces several challenges, especially regarding equal access, funding limitations, and inconsistencies in program execution across regions.

DISCUSSION

1. Relevance of Policies to the Concept of Teacher Professionalism

Government policies regarding the development and improvement of the teaching profession align with professionalism theory, which underscores the importance of competence, autonomy, and commitment to professional ethics. According to Hoyle (1995), teacher professionalism includes the ability to integrate knowledge, skills, and moral values into teaching practice.

The findings show that national regulations, such as Law Number 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers and Government Regulation Number 19 of 2017 on Teachers, position teaching as a profession with established competency standards and obligations for continuous self-development. This aligns with the principle of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) widely adopted in modern education systems.

Nevertheless, implementation of these principles in Indonesia still faces challenges due to disparities across regions and gaps between normative policies and practical realities.

2. Policy Implementation and Structural Challenges

The study found that the implementation of teacher professional development policies is not yet optimal. This condition can be explained using the policy implementation theory of Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), which states that successful implementation is influenced by six variables: policy standards, resources, communication, implementer disposition, institutional characteristics, and social-economic-political conditions.

In this context, obstacles such as budget limitations, weak inter-agency coordination, and low teacher motivation demonstrate that teacher development policies are not adequately supported by institutional structures and resources. Additionally, geographical and social differences lead to unequal access to training and certification programs between urban and rural areas.

3. Impact of Policies on Improving Learning Quality

Teacher professional development policies are ultimately aimed at improving classroom learning quality. According to professional education theory (Darling-Hammond, 2000), teachers who engage in continuous professional development will enhance reflective and innovative teaching practices.

However, this study indicates that improvements in teacher professionalism have not fully translated into better learning quality. This is due to several factors, including the formalistic nature of training programs, their lack of relevance to teachers' actual needs, and the absence of post-training follow-up.

Thus, policy effectiveness would improve if teacher training were need-based and carried out collaboratively through learning communities such as KKG, MGMP, and other professional teacher forums.

4. Social and Cultural Dimensions in Teacher Professional Development

The analysis also suggests that teacher professionalism is influenced not only by structural policies but also by workplace culture and social perceptions of the teaching profession. In some cases, teachers participate in training merely to fulfill administrative requirements rather than genuine professional motivation.

This aligns with Fullan's (2007) view that change in the teaching profession requires cultural transformation within schools and personal motivation among teachers. Therefore, policy strategies should focus on building a professional culture that encourages collaboration, innovation, and critical reflection.

5. Future Directions for Policy Strengthening

Based on the analysis and field findings, strengthening teacher professional development policies should focus on the following aspects:

- a. Decentralizing teacher training policies to align with local needs and school contexts.
- b. Integrating professional development with teacher performance appraisal systems so that competency improvements have tangible impacts on career development and teacher welfare.
- c. Enhancing collaboration among stakeholders, including the government, universities, professional organizations, and teacher communities.
- d. Utilizing educational technology to expand access to online training and digital learning resources.

Participatory, adaptive, and needs-based policies will improve the effectiveness of sustainable teacher professional development.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Educational policies regarding teacher professional development in Indonesia have clear legal foundations and directions. Regulations such as Law Number 14 of 2005 and Government Regulation Number 19 of 2017 affirm that teaching is a profession requiring academic, professional, social, and personal competencies, as well as continuous self-development.
2. Implementation of teacher development policies still faces obstacles, particularly in equity, program effectiveness, and resource support. Training and professional development programs are uneven between urban and rural areas and are often administrative in nature rather than aligned with teachers' actual classroom needs.
3. The impact of these policies on teacher professionalism and learning quality remains suboptimal. Although policies encourage improved qualifications and competencies, changes in classroom practices have not been significant due to weak post-training follow-up and limited reflective culture among teachers.
4. The success of teacher development policies depends greatly on stakeholder synergy, including the government, education offices, schools, training institutions, and teacher communities. Strengthening collaboration, policy decentralization, and the use of learning technologies are key to achieving sustainable and equitable teacher development.
5. A paradigm shift is needed in teacher professional development—from an administrative approach to a participatory, contextual, and needs-based approach. Teacher development should aim to build lifelong learning, innovation in teaching, and a sustainable commitment to improving educational quality.