

# **A STUDY ON THE EMPOWERING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE TO INCREASE TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN VOCATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study is to remind teachers that professional development and quality assurance are required to perform a good working in improving either learning process or school quality. Nowadays, teaching has been officially recognized as a profession. Consequently, teachers must be enforced professionally in their charges. To be professional in carrying their tasks, teachers must continuously improve competency themselves and perform quality assurance in their duties. This study is a literature review related to the importance of professional development and quality assurance in order to increase teachers' effectiveness in providing learning services in Secondary Vocational Schools. Professional development is the need required by any teachers. Teachers' professional development in Vocational Secondary School is expected to create changes in attitudes, improve the learning process and promote the students' learning output and outcomes. In addition, teachers are not only responsible for improving the quality of learning outputs but also for working collaboratively with other teachers to elevate the quality of learning outcomes. It suggests the quality assurance as the key to achieve and to ensure the quality of teaching learning process and also the school's effectiveness demanded by the stakeholders.

**Keywords:** teachers' professional development, teacher effectiveness, quality assurance

## **INTRODUCTION**

The quality of human resource development of Indonesia compared to other countries in the world is still left behind. This indicator can be seen from the report of United Nations Development Programme (2013) that the human resources development level of Indonesia was still far below compared to some of the ASEAN countries, such as Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. Human Development Index (HDI) value of Indonesia only increase from 0.624 in 2011 to 0.629 in 2012 and rise in rank from 124 to 121 of 187 countries. In contrast, Singapore has the highest HDI value among ASEAN countries with 0.895 and ranks 18<sup>th</sup> in the world. Brunei has HDI value of 0.855 and ranked 30<sup>th</sup>, while Malaysia has HDI value of 0.769 HDI and ranked 64<sup>th</sup>. Thailand and Philippines were respectively at 103 and 114 in the rankings with HDI values of 0.690 and

0.654. This condition can be understood that Human Resource Development (HRD) in Indonesia is still weak. It means education has not been major triggered in HRD quality improvement.

In preparing human resources development, education must be able to produce professional and excellent human resources in accordance with the national goals of education. The teacher is the key in preparing human resources development in the classroom scope. The role of the teachers cannot be replaced even by sophisticated machines because the duties of teachers are regarded to advice human mental characteristics associated with the aspects of human nature that have unique sense and are different from one another (Moh. Usman Uzer, 2008). This statement is reinforced by (Stronge, 2006) that the core of education is teaching and learning, and teaching-learning connection works best when teachers have effective working with

every student every day. This means that education cannot be separated from teaching-learning activities and teachers have an important role in the process. The teachers' performance in their roles is one of the most significant factors that directly affects the students' achievement (Junianto, 2015). Thus, the teacher is a key in human resources development in a smallest unit of a classroom for teaching and learning activities.

The Indonesian government has appreciated teaching as a profession. Teacher, as professional, has a function, a role and a strategic position in achieving the national goals of education. Teacher must have awareness to improve their professionalism through some activities that can develop their ability to manage learning and other capabilities in order to make students have skills in acquiring knowledge (learning to know), developing identity (learning to be), executing of certain tasks (learning to do), and being able to coexist with each other in harmony (learning to live together). Teachers in carrying out their profession should have four teacher's competency standards, namely: pedagogical competency, professional competency, personal competency, and social competency. In addition, teachers have professionalism duties to improve and to develop their academic qualifications and their competence continuously in line with the developments of science, technology, and arts. Teacher professional development is basically as the teachers' personal demands and responsibility in maintaining and developing their profession that cannot be done by anyone else except herself or himself. However, in fact, many teachers still do not understand the importance of self-development capacity for the improvement of their profession quality.

Furthermore, in implementing education, teachers and schools should also provide quality assurance in accordance with the national standards of education. Based on the Government Regulation Number 32 of 2013, each education unit of formal and non-formal

education is required to perform the quality assurance of education. The quality assurance of education is aimed to meet or exceed the National Standards of Education. Quality assurance process is conducted in order to achieve a good learning process to produce graduates who have good characters and competitiveness. Achieving these goals, teachers and schools must have consciousness to take responsibility to provide educational services for students and stakeholders. The goals can be achieved by maximizing the teachers' effectiveness in the learning process.

To be called professional in carrying out her or his profession duties, someone generally required professional certificate as the proof of its competency. Teaching, as profession, has main duties for educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, conducting assessments, and evaluating the students, so that as a professional, teachers should be able to demonstrate their professional certificates as the admission proof to be professional teachers. On the other hand, the demands of quality education should be able to deal with changes that are being and will happen such as in technology, science, and labor structures. Teachers at vocational secondary schools also have equally primary tasks as mentioned above, they should also be able to solve each of changes that might be occurred in learning process. This means that teachers are required to improve their career and self-development in order to adapt to changes.

Professional development is one of activities that can be pursued to achieve career advancement and personal development for teachers in order to improve self-quality in carrying out their duties. The importance of professional development for teachers is mentioned in Golding and Gray (2006) that the professional development refers to skills and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement. Individuals may participate in professional development because of an interest in lifelong learning, a sense of moral obligation, to

maintain and improve professional competence, enhance career progression, keep abreast of new technology and practice. Furthermore, Bybee and Loucks-Horsley (2001) stated that professional development was an opportunity for teachers to learn what is needed to know and what can be done to help students to achieve their desired competencies. They further explain that professional development standard should be considered in two things, firstly the content of professional development, which is what teachers need to learn, and secondly pedagogy professional development, namely how to learn. It indicates that professional development is necessary for teachers to be able to maintain and increase their competence, career, and able to adapt to changes in technology and work environment to improve learning process.

The goal of teacher's professional development is to improve educational quality that is done continuously, regardless of successfulness that can be achieved in practices (Adey, 2004). As an individualized professional development, the need of professional development of each teacher is different (Gordon 2004). Furthermore, Finch and McGough (1982) described the individualized or personnel development for teachers' vocational education can be conducted in three ways, namely: professional development, technical development, and general development. Professional development is an effort to increase teachers' ability that is expected to contribute in improving educational quality. Technical development is an engineering effort to increase teachers' ability in learning process relevant to the development of world of work. General development was exerted to improve teachers' ability with regard to writing and oral communication. Early description shows that improving teachers' capacity building are necessary for each of teachers, while the technical development and general development are more specifically suited to every teacher's need.

Brown (2000) conveyed the advantages of teachers' professional development which is meaningful and leads to new knowledge, skills, and practices will enable them to better serve their students. Vocational teachers' need to be self-directed in their pursuit of learning and take responsibility for matching opportunities to their students. To ensure that professional development attached to every teacher's needs, according to Diaz-Miggioli (2004), depends on the awareness level of teachers. There are four types of awareness associated with teachers' professional development, namely technical awareness, personal awareness, problematic awareness, and critical awareness. Technical awareness is a reflection primarily related to the procedure or method of teaching. Personal consciousness is a reflection of how classroom activities relate to life of outside work. Problematic awareness is a reflection of how to solve a problem in a professional manner. Critical awareness is a reflection to construct thoughts, feelings, or actions embodied in questions. It can be assumed that teachers' professional development is a series of learning activities followed by teachers to improve their knowledge and skills. Teachers should have independence in learning process, which means teachers served as learners who are categorized as adult learners.

Implementing teachers' professional development in secondary education level, the term of professional development refers to continuing professional development (CPD). It has the same meaning in learning achievement. National Education Ministry (2010) stated that CPD is continuous learning for teachers which is the primary vehicle in order to achieve desired changes related to the student successfulness in learning. CPD is expected to encourage teachers to maintain and improve their overall competency standards that cover areas related to their work as a profession. Thus, teachers must have an awareness to meet the teachers' competency standards as well as to renew and enhance their professional

competency over a working period as a teacher. So that teachers can maintain, improve and build their knowledge and skills as well as to construct personal qualities that are required in their professional life. In the Indonesian context, CPD is conducted in accordance with the needs of teachers to achieve the teacher's competency standards and or to improve their competencies that benefit their career and promotion. There are three activities carried out in implementing teachers' CPD, namely: self-developments, scientific publications, and innovative works.

Self-developments are prioritized CPD programmes by the teachers (Santoso, 2014). Self-developments can be defined as the efforts to increase self-professionalism to elevate the competence in accordance with the laws and the regulations to be able to perform main tasks as a teacher and additional tasks relevant to school functions, such as: principal, head of laboratory, and head of the library. The activities of self-developments cover functional education, training activities and or teacher's group activities. Functional education and training is an activity that aims to achieve or exceed the teacher's competencies standard within a certain time, particularly with regard to conducting services learning. Furthermore, teachers' group activities are activities that are followed by teachers in scientific meetings or collective activities aimed to achieve the teacher's competencies standards, such as: (1) workshops or group activities for preparing curriculum or learning activities; (2) as a presenter, a reviewer or a participant in seminars, colloquiums, discussion panels or other scientific meetings; and (3) other collective activities in accordance with duties and responsibilities of teachers.

Scientific publications are scientific papers that are published to the public as contribution in improving the quality of teachers' learning process and generally in the educational development. They includes presentations in scientific forums, research publications or innovative ideas in education,

and teaching media publications. The innovative works are educational products resulted through development, modification or new invention as contribution strengthening the quality of teachers' learning process, and educational development in science, technology, and arts, such as the development of applied technology developments, artistry developments, or instructional media developments. Based on the explanation above it can be concluded that if vocational secondary school teachers have high awareness of professional development, this will be helpful for improving the quality of themselves and schools as the part of quality assurance in education.

Improving the quality of education is closely related to the quality management. The quality management is carried out to provide optimal services in accordance with or exceed the National Standards of Education. In general, the orientation of quality management is to improve quality, productivity and efficiency in education services for producing graduates who satisfy the expectation of the stakeholders. In the world of education, quality assurance is a part of applied quality management. The quality assurance is about designing quality into the process to ensure that the product is produced to a predetermined specification. Quality assurance is about consistently meeting product specification or getting things right first time, every time (Sallis, 2002).

Quality assurance is an activity that aims to prevent errors occurrence from the beginning of production process. Quality assurance is designed to ensure a production process in order to produce products that meet certain specifications. Total Quality Management (TQM) is a very popular approach in education. TQM creates a quality culture by encouraging all people in schools to be able to satisfy customers. The nature of TQM is continuous improvement to meet the stakeholders' expectations. Quality management in education is a management system to direct and to control in determining policies, objectives, plans and

quality procedures, and achievements on continuous improvement at educational unit (school).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to improve the quality of national education, the Indonesian government through the Minister of National Education issued The Ministry Regulation Number 63 of 2009 concerning the Quality Assurance System of Education. This regulation states that the quality assurance of education is systemic and integrated activities conducted by schools or educational program organizers, local government, government, and society to increase the intelligence level of the nation through education. Quality Assurance Paradigm of Education are: (1) education for all with inclusive and no discrimination based on students' background whatsoever; (2) life-long learning for students centered on treating, facilitating, and encouraging students to become independent learners who are creative, innovative, and demonstrate entrepreneurial spirit; and (3) education for improvement, development, and or education for sustainable development, which is able to construct students to be a mercy to all of life. This means

the Quality Assurance System of Education will not be successful without the involvement and empowerment of schools and school stakeholders, including the government.

The implementation of quality education model above refers to the fulfillment of the national standard of education, which consisted of eight standards namely the graduates' competency standard, the contents of subject matter standard, the learning process standard, the learning assessment standard, and the educator and educational personnel standard, the educational budgeting standard, the educational facilities and infrastructures standard, and the school management standard. The relationship of the eighth standards in order to improve the quality assurance of education is illustrated in Figure 1. Figure 1 describes that the graduates' competency standard is the outcomes of quality assurance resulted from learning process, while the content of subject matter, learning process, and learning assessment standards are the services to the students in order to achieve the graduates' competency standards. Furthermore, the other national standards of education are the ancillary services to support the implementation of the first four national standards of education in regarding to the national goal of education.

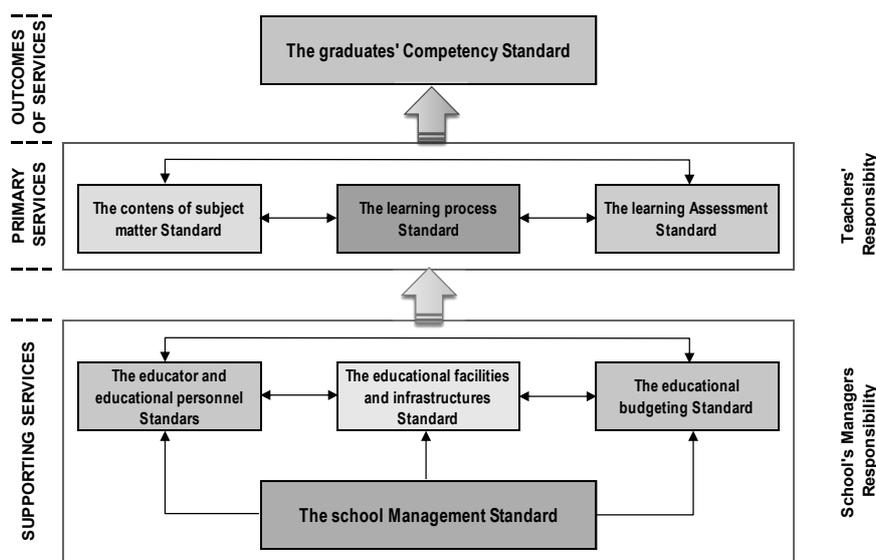


Figure 1: Applying of the National Standard of Education into the Quality Assurance of Education

Figure 1 presents the assurance marked "*primary services*" consisting of three national standards of education are the responsibility of teachers as part of guarantees in students' learning output, while the assurance signed "*supporting services*" containing four national standards of education are the responsibility of the school's managers. One of guarantees in operating educational process is at the school level. Afterwards, the assurance labeled "*outcomes of services*" becomes shared responsibility of both teachers and school's managers to realize the quality assurance of the school in performing learning outcomes. Thus, the quality assurance of education at school is determined mostly by the synergies between teachers and school leaders to organize education in order to produce graduates who meet the stakeholders' demands.

The teacher effectiveness is closely related to the teacher's performance in carrying out her or his duties and profession as teacher. Teachers who have high performance are expected to produce teachers with high efficiency as well. Anderson (2004) addresses four characteristics of teacher effectiveness namely (1) effective teachers have an awareness in achieving working goals, (2) teaching is an intentional act, (3) the goals which are determined directly or indirectly is related to student's learning, and (4) teachers cannot implement every aspect of their profession effectively. This means, of course, it is not easy for a teacher to be able to apply their competence directly into students' learning process. A teacher is said to be effective in teaching if she or he can motivate learners to learn and to grow learning spirit according to the students' self-awareness, not because of fear to teachers. Teacher effectiveness is teachers' ability to actualize their competency in achieving the objectives of assigned tasks in their duties and profession.

Another statement was delivered by Stronge (2007) that teacher effectiveness can be seen through four aspects, which are: (1) care, (2) recognizes complexity, (3) clearly

communicates, and (4) conscientiously serves. Teacher who has concerns will be able to overcome challenges at work, with family, or with students at the school. Teacher must understand the students' characters, experiences, and perspectives in learning process. In other words, teachers must be able to understand and to solve complex problems for carrying out their duties. The communication ability is the key to success a teacher be in charges, because teacher needs interpersonal relations at the school or at other organization. To enable the effective communication in teaching, teachers are required to hold teaching materials and to be able to convey clearly in the learning process to the students. Effective teachers should be care in continuing the student's learning process and in realizing their performance continuously. Thus, one of indicators of teacher effectiveness can be seen from how teachers can teach in classrooms. It is closely associated with four teacher's competency standards as outlined previously and teachers should be able to apply the quality assurance in learning.

As in other secondary education levels, in vocational secondary schools, teacher effectiveness is also necessarily required because the purposes of vocational schools are to prepare students to enter workforce and to conduct learning process in classrooms. Certainly, teacher effectiveness will be able to define efficiency of learning process that will impact to quality improvement of vocational secondary schools.

## CONCLUSION

The main aim of vocational secondary school education is to prepare students to enter workforce and to enforce learning process. Learning programs at vocational secondary schools should be able to adapt to changes in science, technology, and labor competencies demands. Thus, teachers of vocational secondary school should have higher awareness to increase self-quality in order to upgrade

competency, profession, and changes that continuously be occurred in life. Teacher's professional development is one of media to strengthen self-competency in carrying out the profession to be a professional teacher. In accordance with government regulations, teacher's professional development is implemented through three main activities, namely self-developments, scientific publications, and innovative works. Empowering the features of teachers' professional development required awareness of teachers and school's leaders themselves. Furthermore, performing learning required quality assurance as part of accountability to students and stakeholders. It should be conducted in compliance with the national standards of education which consists of eight standards namely graduates' competency, subject matter, learning process, learning assessment, teacher and educational personnel, educational budgeting, facilities and infrastructures of the school, and the school management. The teachers' obligation is achieving the quality assurance to fulfill standards of subject matter, learning process, learning assessment, while the school's managers have responsibility in creating quality assurance of teachers' and educational personnel, educational budgeting, facilities and infrastructures of the school, and the school management. This means that quality assurance is a necessity that must be realized by the teachers and the school leaders in order to produce good quality education in accordance with learners and stakeholders expectations. If the teachers' professional development and quality assurance in learning have been applied by the teachers, teachers' effectiveness in performing learning activities and professions will also be achieved and it will bring benefits to the students and the teachers themselves. Obviously, the results of teachers' professional development will enhance the teachers' competence and professionalism, moreover if it is followed by strong awareness of quality assurance in carrying out their duties and they

are accomplished effectively, the overall results will surely elevate the quality of vocational secondary schools.

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