This article discussing about Indonesian teacher continuous quality improvement after certification program. It consist two main issues: 1) the understanding of teacher continuous quality improvement, and 2) its implementation in the system of school quality assurance. It is a reference based research by using relevant references. The analysis shown to us that teacher continuous quality improvement as a full cycle consist of planning, doing, controlling, and actuating aspects should be handling by the Center for Education Quality Assurance (Pusat Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan) in national level and the Agency for Education Quality Assurance (Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan) in each province. However, to ensure the continuous teacher quality improvement programme, it is necessary to revitalize the system of education quality assurance at school level.

Tulisan ini mendiskusikan mengenai program peningkatan kualitas guru secara berkelanjutan setelah program sertifikasi. Terdapat dua hal utama yang dibahas, yaitu; (1) pemahaman mengenai program peningkatan guru secara berkelanjutan, dan (2) implementasi program tersebut pada sistem penjaminan mutu sekolah. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa upaya peningkatan kualitas guru secara berkelanjutan dalam satu siklus penuh yang di dalamnya terdapat aktivitas merencanakan, melaksanakan, mengendalikan, dan perbaikan harus dilaksanakan oleh Pusat Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan dan Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan di tiap provinsi. Bagaimanapun juga, untuk memastikan program ini berjalan, perlu revitalisasi sistem penjaminan mutu di jenjang sekolah.

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INTRODUCTION

Teacher certification program was initially supposed to overcome several basic problems in Indonesian educational practice. However, after seven years of its implementation, new problems arise in terms of certified teachers’ underperformance. A study among elementary school teachers in Surabaya, for example, shows that there is no influence of the teacher certification to the quality of education (Subroto, 2013a). This is mainly due to the fact that teaching is indeed a complex and yet challenging profession in which teachers have to meet various social and intellectual demands (Zulfikar, 2009).

In Indonesian context, such a matter is formally stated in the Teachers and Lecturers Law No. 14/2005 configuring four basic competencies a professional teacher has to possess including academic, pedagogical, personal and social standards. To meet all the four standards is not an easy task for the majority of teachers in this country. Why? First, for a very long time before the enactment of that Law, there has been no basic formal rules regulating teaching as a profession, so that the public policies in education would have been very much dependent upon the political willingness of the ministry of education and its operational agencies.

Second, the teaching profession has been sociologically regarded secondary to other more prestigious professions like business and medical practitioners. Therefore, the incoming students of teachers training faculty have been of lower achieving high school graduates. And third, teachers pay has been economically very minimal to even meet basic needs. Thus, talking about professional development among teachers results in agony and disappointment due to limited financial supports and access they are exposed to.

A more vivid illustration of how the problems of Indonesian teachers should be dealt with is represented in the report of Global Campaign for Education (2012) in which three major questions are posed: 1) Are there enough teachers to provide universal basic education at pre-primary, primary and lower secondary level? 2) Are these teachers trained, and to what level and standard? 3) Are there enough teachers for every child, taking into account disparities in income and location?

Of the three questions, the second is a top priority because the Teacher and Lecturer Law regulates that a teacher must have an undergraduate degree as a formal pre-requisite (2005). So that, there has been a massive activity among existing school teachers to get such a degree from a nearby university or the Open University and more high school graduates enroll to teachers training faculties.

The next urgent issue to be resolved is the quality of the teachers training institutions which have to provide such a degree to so many teachers and students to meet the formal criteria to become a teacher. In this case, there have been questions about the quality of the undergraduate degree programs organized in “long distance” classes as well as that of the Open University employing local high school teachers recruited as its operational tutors. Meanwhile, the report of Global Campaign for Education (2012) states that “high quality education is not possible without high quality teachers.”

TEACHER CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

The idea of teacher continuous quality improvement is derived from the developing trends in Indonesian university level for internal quality assurance system to cope with the necessitated external quality assurance system organized by the National Board of High Learning Accreditation (Badan Akreditasi Nasional Perguruan Tinggi). Theoretically, Total Quality Management (TQM), Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), Total Quality Service (TQS), are just some of the names applied to a management tide from industry now sweeping across higher education in the United States (Wild, 1995).

In Indonesia the first government draft of Higher Learning Internal Quality Assurance System was publicized in 2003. In its operation, the teacher continuous quality improvement, according to Wild (1995) involves four aspects:

1. the curriculum development process,
2. the teaching process,
3. the learning process, and
4. the assessment process.

By involving teachers in the four aspects of the teaching significantly under a very well organized school management, it is believed
that the teachers would be able to perform better from year to year because through those processes they learn to master the four core competencies of teaching (academic, pedagogical, personal, and social) as stated in the Law.

Moreover, by such an involvement, they also learn to "know what exactly need to be changed" with "clear analysis and understanding of the feedback results" (Yeap, 2008) because by involving themselves in those processes from time to time, they will be able to learn how to independently decide the "feedback results" of each process. Such an involvement belongs to teacher empowerment, which in Subroto's study (2013b), has a "positive effect on teachers' performance." In another report, Suharyadi and Sambodho (2013) also emphasizes the importance of "a system of professional development" program.

In its operational stages, teacher continuous quality improvement involves "the disciplined use of evidence-based quantitative and qualitative methods." Both the methods are applied in order to able "to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, equity, timeliness or safety of service delivery processes and systems (inclusive of the human resources within that system)." The end goals of the improvements include "better services or outcomes for 'users' or customers of the system" (Park, et al., 2013). The 'users' or customers of teaching services are, among others, the students. Therefore, the continuous quality improvement is in line with the existence of the teachers themselves which is basically "dedicated to the students" (American Federation of Teachers, 2010).

A teacher continuous quality improvement is characterized by certain activities that enhance a possible climate for professional development within a school setting. Such characteristics are formulated by The Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (2012) as follows:

1. Learning is student centred and shared within the learning community,
2. Learning is personalised and flexible to engage all students—the system fits the individual rather than the individual fitting the system,
3. Real life experiences and real life learning forms the basis of educational experience for all students,
4. Teachers have wider pedagogical skills with an increased focus on using technology,
5. Multiple learning pathways are pursued simultaneously by some students in more than one school or institution ie flexible curriculum and delivery, and diversity of choices,
6. Strong, positive leadership, and
7. Increased focus on skills, values and attitudes for 21st Century living.

In turn, such characteristics develop a milieu which is necessitated in developing "an ecosystem for a knowledge-intensive teaching profession" to include "research and development; education systems; school organization; mobilizing general-purpose technology, particularly information and communication technologies; and measuring innovation and improvement in education" (Schleicher, 2012).

One of some key programs for the development of teacher continuous quality improvement is in-service training professional development. The significance of in-service training to the behavior of teachers is shown in a study which showed that all teachers involved in the study were satisfied with the improvement they experienced (Ramdhani, et al., 2011). Teachers get some benefits from such a program because it helps them "acquire or deepen their knowledge about subject matter content, teaching skills, and assessment methods required to implement an existing or a new curriculum" (Leu, 2011). Relevant activities supporting this

1 Research and development (R&D), in this case, according to Schleicher (2012), are very important in developing the ecosystem because "part of the knowledge applied by teachers is developed by scientists. For example, teachers' practice must be informed by the latest discoveries about dyslexia and dyscalculia so they can diagnose these conditions and develop appropriate teaching and learning strategies for affected students."

2 Education system (Schleicher, 2012) is very important to create a situation in which "effective teachers work collaboratively with their colleagues and are continually learning and growing in ways that improve their teaching practice and enhance student learning."

3 School organization is also of great importance due to the fact that "turning schools into learning organizations where teachers can improve and learn from each other's accumulated knowledge has long been acknowledged" (Schleicher, 2012).

4 In Indonesian teacher certification program through in-service training for professional teachers (PLPG) these materials are provided in the forms of lectures, discussions, workshops, and peer practice teaching within 90 training hours.
in-service training professional development include the followings (Leu, 2011):

1. Improving teachers’ general education background,
2. Improving teachers’ knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach,
3. Understanding how children learn different subjects,
4. Developing practical skills and competencies,
5. Learning new teaching strategies,
6. Learning how to use new technologies,
7. Strengthening professionalism and ethics, and
8. Providing knowledge and skills linked to the ever-changing needs of a dynamic society.

All these activities can be done individually by continuing their formal education to get graduate and, even, doctorate degrees from both local and foreign universities and the government provides appropriate scholarships. Some of the activities can be done in groups in the forms of discussions, workshops, or seminars organized by professional associations or schools. Of course there are requirements to ensure that the development of teacher continuous quality improvement be implemented in its correct paths. Leu (2011) proposes seven requirements in implementing the improvement as follows:

Step 1: Include all stakeholders in program design.
Step 2: Base design on existing policies and programs.
Step 3: Learn from successful programs in similar countries.
Step 4: Design a program that includes all teachers.
Step 5: Develop good support materials.
Step 6: Start small, learn, and scale up.
Step 7: Support improvement of teachers’ conditions of service.

Including all the stakeholders (parents association, professional community, community leaders, students association, school committee, related government officials, university, and business) in designing an in-service program as an integral part of professional development is very useful in providing up to date and necessitated insights for the program to be effective and fruitful for both teachers and students. A more comprehensive perspective can be developed from various points of view in the program design to include the local wisdom and culture which are needed in planning local contents in the program.

To achieve a more actual and formal program design, it is also necessary to take government existing policies and programs into account because by so doing the program design would have its relevance to what the government is doing and what the society is expecting out of the program design. In addition, to keep the program in touch with what is going on internationally, it is also important to take precious lessons from the same programs implemented in other more developed countries.

Involving all teachers is another important consideration in designing a development program to develop a sense of belonging among the teachers. When their ideas are accommodated, their pride in the program will also be developed, and this will drive them to be more active and participative in the implementation of the program. This is where a program designer must be inclusive enough to cover all the teachers’ proposals in the program design to get more participation from the teachers both in terms of program design development and its implementation.

Support materials are also of importance in designing a program because without the availability of support materials the program will end in a failure. The availability of support materials itself must be accompanied with a proper state of the materials. Thus, good support materials would decide whether a program design will achieve its objectives or not. Therefore, it is also important to note that the arrangement of phases in the program must be set up gradually beginning from small targets. When the small targets are successfully achieved, a learning session is done to take useful lessons from previous achievements. The decision to move to a bigger target can only be made after being sure that the lessons have already been learned.

Last but not least, improvement is not the only objective because continuity of the improvement is more important. There is a need for a program developer to pay a careful attention to the provision of support for whatever achievement a teacher has got. This is meant to assure a maximum level of teacher condition of service to the students.

Another important factor in succeeding in-service training within the sphere of professi-
onal development is school leadership which is very much dependent upon the level of school autonomy. As more countries are more open in terms of participation as part of democratic principles, schools get more autonomy in deciding their school objectives, managing resources, and, thus, developing their curricula. Therefore, “the role of the school leader has grown far beyond that of administrator” (Schleicher, 2012).

A school headmaster is no longer a chief whose main tasks include briefing teachers and staff once a week, signing formal letters, and leading routine meetings. He should move to a more strategic role to include planning, organizing, actuating, controlling, evaluating, and setting feedbacks and follow-ups. Therefore, in developing school leaders, Schleicher (2012) writes the requirements of a good school headmaster as follows:

1. clearly defining their responsibilities,
2. providing access to appropriate professional development throughout their careers, and
3. acknowledging their pivotal role in improving school and student performance.

Therefore, to find out whether teacher continuous quality improvement has been successfully carried out at a certain period of time, evaluation is badly needed to formulate feedbacks and follow-ups. Such an evaluation activity must be developed under certain valid and reliable system of standards. In this case, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) set up five components of evaluation system as follows:

1. Professional teaching standards,
2. Standards for assessing teacher practice,
3. Implementation standards,
4. Standards for professional contexts, and
5. Standards for system of support.

In Indonesian context, the professional teaching standards have been regulated in the Teachers and Lecturers Law to include the four core competencies (academic, pedagogical, personal, and social). For teacher evaluation purposes, the four core competencies should be formally formulated into operational indicators and descriptors so that teacher evaluators could decide on the scores of a teacher in terms of teaching standards.

The standards for assessing teacher practice should be based on teachers’ code of conducts which must be broken down into indicators of evaluation. While implementation standards have something to do with the school curriculum in which teaching and learning objectives are written. However, a clearer set of indicators must be developed to make scoring easier for a teacher evaluator.

Standards for professional contexts must be developed by taking social and moral values into account because professional contexts cannot be separated from the values where a teacher lives. The standards are also related to conformity to existing policies and rules.

Above all, the system of supports is the key to all previous standards because without the system of supports all other standards cannot be implemented successfully. Belonging to the system of support is the government role in assuring education quality among schools through the Center for Education Quality Assurance (Pusat Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan) at national level, and through the Agency for Education Quality Assurance (Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan) of each province at local level. In the future, it is necessary to revitalize both institutions to cope with growing dynamics in international level.

One of the steps to revitalize the two institutions is to place the teacher and school supervisors under those institutions to take roles as internal auditors. To make them qualified, it is necessary to train them first before assigning them internal auditing roles for schools within their operational area.

This very step is in line with the functions of Pusat Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan http://bpsdmpk.kemdikbud.go.id/bpsdmpk/index.php/ppmp as follows:

1. Developing technical policy materials in education quality assurance;
2. Developing education quality assurance programs;
3. Mapping implementation of education quality assurance;
4. Coordinating dan facilitating the implementation of education quality assurance;
5. Developing and organizing education quality information system;
6. Monitoring, evaluating, and reporting the implementation of education quality assurance; and
7. Managing the Center for Education Quality Assurance.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teacher continuous quality improvement is a must for keeping “certified” teachers on the right professional development tracks. It is one of some programs to answer some problems of teachers’ underperformance after getting additional pay as they were announced to have passed the teacher certification program. The key to such a program is a routine evaluation on teacher performance based on valid and reliable system of evaluation standards.

In the long run, to assure that the teacher continuous quality improvement can be carried out successfully and professionally, the revitalization of PPMP and LPMP is a must, too. These institutions must be completed with internal auditors to carry out routine auditing activities.

REFERENCES


The Association of Independent Schools of South Australia. 2012. Continuous Improvement Models that focus on teaching and learning.


