

# DEVELOPING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONALISM THROUGH CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Quality assurance pada konteks akademik pada sebuah institusi pendidikan sangatlah diperlukan. Ini karena kualitas pendidikan menjadi salah satu fenomena yang sering menjadi pusat perhatian masyarakat. Dalam konteks ini, kualitas guru merupakan tuntutan untuk terciptanya kualitas yang baik. Dengan demikian, guru selalu dituntut untuk meningkatkan profesionalismenya. Salah satunya dengan melaksanakan penelitian tindakan kelas.*

***Keywords: Quality assurance, classroom action research.***

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Quality assurance of an educational institution, in this case schools, in academic context is really needed since the quality of education becomes a phenomenon which always becomes an attention. In the academic context, the goal of quality assurance is to ensure the development and maintain of high standards of teaching, assessment and research by academic staff.

Nowadays, quality assurance has become “a key- word” in educational setting. This phenomenon gives evidence that we have realized on the importance of quality; in giving good services in formal education. This condition must be responded positively by institutions that are involved in improving the quality of education for all aspects. One of the aspects who is responsible for improving

this quality is teacher. To improve the quality of education, it needs professional teachers since teaching - learning process is one of the components of academic contexts of the schools that must be in high quality. In teaching-learning process, the quality assurance is achieved by evaluating staff performance and through internal and external monitoring..

This paper will discuss on the teachers' professionalism, classroom action research and how to develop teachers' professionalism through classroom action research.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this part, some related theories which become the basis of this study are presented.

### **B.1. Definition of Profession**

There are some definitions related to profession. One of them is Hoyle and John's definition. Hoyle and John(1995) state that profession is an occupation which performs a crucial function. Further, they state that to accomplish this function, it requires a considerable degree of skill, requires a body of systematic knowledge grounded in theory while professional is one who has (i) a specialized knowledge base (technical culture); (ii) commitment to meeting client needs (service ethic); (iii) strong collective identity-professional commitment (professional commitment); and (iv) collegial as against bureaucratic control over practice and professional standards (professional autonomy). In line with above definition of profession, Gilley and Egglan (1989) define profession as an area of human business that is based on knowledge, skills and experience and it is needed by the society. With similar point of view, Nugroho Notosusanto (1985: 16) states that profession is a special work which has characteristics such as expertise, responsibility, and conformance.

From this definition, we can conclude that profession involves knowledge, application of skills and it is related to social need. Someone will be professional if he/ she possess a specialized skill enabling them to offer a specialized service and collectively has sense of a responsibility for maintaining the competence and integrity of the professional as a whole.

## **B.2. Professional Teachers**

A teacher as an educator is as one of the factors that determines the success of the improvement of education. In each educational innovation, especially in curriculum and human resources development, the teacher is the central. It shows that the existence of the teachers in educational setting. Therefore it needs professional teachers in this context.

According to Usman's opinion (2002), Professional teacher is a teacher who has high self confidence, high learning motivation, serious teaching motivation and is able to encourage and motivate the students. In line with Usman, based- on UUGD (laws of teachers and lectures), professional teacher is a teacher who masters the four competencies of the lecturers/ teachers. They are pedagogical competence, professional, personal and social competence. Further it is stated that pedagogical competence is the ability of a teacher to plan, implement and to evaluate teaching- learning process. Professional competence is the ability of a teacher to master the subject, ICT and classroom action research. Personal competence is the ability of a teacher to be a model and accept the criticism. And finally the social competence is the ability of a teacher to communicate and contribute to the development of education.

Discussing professional teachers, there are some strategies that can be applied to develop their professionalism. As stated by Diaz-Maggioli (2003) professional development strategies

are as follows.

a. Peer Coaching

Peer coaching and peer review are professional development strategies for educators to consult with one another, to discuss and share teaching practices, to observe one another's classrooms, to promote collegiality and support, and to help ensure quality teaching for all students. It is based on the three- phase model of planning, observing, feedback known as clinical supervision.

b. Study Groups

Study group Involves teachers in reviewing professional literature or analyzing samples of student work.

c. Dialogue Journals

According to Peyton (1993), dialogue journals are conversation in writing. Teachers who cannot meet with colleagues may keep a written conversation with them. The purpose is to share expertise and reflections on their instruction. It is particularly suitable with teachers who have different levels of expertise or different needs.

For English teachers, dialogue journals can provide an opportunity to practice their writing skills.

d. Professional Development Portfolio

Professional Development Portfolio provides a way for professionals to focus on and document their own development in specific areas. A portfolio is a systematic collection of teaching artifacts and reflections. A portfolio can have four main components: a statement of the teacher's philosophy, a goal statement, samples of teacher or student work with reflective captions that describe why they were included, and concluding reflective statements.

e. Mentoring

Mentoring is collaboration between knowledgeable professional and a less experienced colleague. Mentors

provide advice, support, encouragement, and modeling for their mentees. Mentors get opportunities to use and reflect on their expertise. Mentoring relationships work best when structured and developed over time.

f. **Participatory Practitioner Research**

It is generally known as action research. It involves groups of colleagues in diagnosing a situation, reflecting on that diagnosis, and planning and carrying out an intervention in order to improve current conditions. The focus for this inquiry can range from students' learning, to school culture and climate, to teachers' own individual issues (language proficiency and use, handling of classroom procedures, etc.). The value of this research lies in the opportunity for teachers to examine their teaching strategies in order to better understand and improve them.

From the above statements, it can be concluded that to be professional teacher, it needs teachers' efforts. Teacher must be able to be leader who can inspire and influence the students through expert and referent power. He/ she must be able to help/ guide the students to improve on their skills and knowledge.

### **B.3.Classroom Action Research**

Action research can affect teacher's understanding of classroom action research as an attempt to improve their professionalism. Talking about Classroom Action Research, Kemmis and Mc Taggart in Nunan (1992) state three defining characteristics of action research are that it is carried out by practitioners (for our purpose, classroom teacher) rather than outside researchers; secondly, it is collaborative; and thirdly' that it is aimed at changing things. With similar point of view, Kemmis (1993) states action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in a social (including educational) situation in order to improve the

rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices (b) their understanding of these practices, and (c) the situations in which practices are carried out.

From the above definition, it can be concluded that classroom action research is carried out by practitioners (classroom teachers), It is collaborative and It is aimed at changing things. By conducting classroom action research, it will improve teachers' professionalism.

### **C. DISCUSSION**

Teacher professionalism is a combination of many things. Developing teachers' professionalism as it is recommended by UUGD (laws of teachers and lectures) can be done by some strategies. One of the strategies that can be applied is Participatory Practitioner Research or it is known as Classroom Action Research. As we know that professional teacher is a teacher who masters the four competencies of the lecturers/ teachers. They are pedagogical competence, professional, personal and social competence. Through classroom action research, the teachers can do self reflective teaching in order to improve their competences; pedagogical competence, professional, personal and social competence.

For example, one of the pedagogical competence is related to the readiness in giving lecturing/ Practice. We as teachers can measure whether we have done the above activities well or not we can do self reflective teaching and we can improve these by conducting classroom action research.

Besides pedagogical competence, we can also conduct classroom action research in order to improve the other three competences because action research is a process of asking important questions and looking for answers in a methodical way. The questions are meaningful; that is, the researcher wants or needs to know the answers to the question, and the questions are closely connected to real work.

Action research is very practical and is grounded in the day-to-day work of the researcher. One way it is different from traditional or scientific research is that the researcher is not removed from what is being studied, but rather is a part of it. Teacher researchers are researching their own problems or new practices. The research is modest, manageable, and, again, directly related to daily work.

For teachers, principals, and district office personnel, action research promises progress in professionalization. The process allows them to experience problem solving and to model it for their students. They carefully collect data to diagnose problems, search for solutions, take action on promising possibilities, and monitor whether and how well the action worked. The cycle can repeat itself many times, focusing on the same problem or on another. The process can help develop a professional problem-solving ethos. Action research can revitalize the entire learning community, as well as helping teachers change or reflect on their classroom practices. It can support initiatives by individual teachers, schools, and districts. In addition, more than one type of action research can be used in a given setting at the same time.

Action research is a recursive process, similar to writing and thinking. Researchers must go through four stages: planning, implementation, and analysis and reflection. However, researchers often leap back and forth between the stages. Each stage involves researchers in specific actions and behaviors. A problem, a challenge, or the desire to try something new is the impetus for educators to design an action research project. To get started on the ***planning stage*** of action research, educators identify the topics or ideas that the research may be related to, draft questions, revise questions, draft plans, revise plans, and create a timetable to guide the research. As the ***implementation stage*** begins and researchers carry out the new actions, they also begin to collect data. They must track what they do and the results of what they do. Even as the researchers work, they revise their plans and their questions. During

the *analysis and reflection stage*, researchers look closely at the data collected, analyze the information, and reflect on what the data mean in relation to the questions asked. This final stage is when the real learning comes. As researchers work to make sense of the information they have collected and to articulate the answers to their questions, they make meaning from their work.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

To assure the high quality of an education institution, the role of the teachers is very important. In this case, it needs professional teachers. They must have four competences, they are pedagogical, professional, professional and social competence. To improve these competences, there are some strategies that can be done. One of them is classroom action research. By conducting classroom action research, hopefully, it will improve the quality of the teachers.



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