Reflecting Theories in Three Themes of Professional Development

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Abstrak. there are three themes of professional development will be discussed in this paper; a commitment to professional development, a commitment to collaborative reflection on practice, recognizing context and culture in professional development. All Themes are elaborated respectively and relate the professional development theories to the Indonesian education system, and as a result, develop any potential understanding. All themes seem to support each other. the succeed effort of a teacher will contribute positively to their profession, in collaborative work or in the context and culture. The progress of the teacher professional development should come from the all parties' effort. As we all know that education does not only stand alone but it is strongly influenced by the present context of politics, social, culture, or religious. In, Indonesia the advancement of this sector would strongly rely on government action rather than grassroots or professional organization initiatives. Based on the reflection, the paper proposes narrowing gaps between the universities and the schools. Implementing this direction is believed to some extent would reach certain advancement in teacher professional development in Indonesia.

Kata kunci: reflection, theories, three themes of professional development, Indonesia.

Introduction

This paper is concerned with the theories in advancing professional development to be discoursed. I perceive that all the theories were resided in the core of each professional development theme. Moreover, a theory usually represents the common issues and perspective in some area in the present times. These are the reasons why a reflection of the theories in teacher professional development is significant to be portrayed.

To build a reflection, an experience takes a major role. Having somewhat experience in the world of education, the paper presents all theories of the three themes of professional development from different angles; the points of view of an outsider of education system.

This paper is typically written as an effort of advancing professional development subject in Indonesia. The content of this paper attempts to relate professional development theories to the Indonesian education system, and as a result, develop any potential understanding. There are three themes of professional development which will be discussed are a commitment to professional development, a commitment to collaborative reflection on practice, recognizing context and culture in professional development. In the paragraphs bellow, it elaborates every theme respectively.

Theme 1: A commitment to professional development

A teacher is an official profession who has significant contribution to society. Every country might consider the development of this profession as a major concern. However, to develop teacher profession ideally is difficult because the complexity of personal, social, and contextual situation are different across the geographical and cultural barriers.

One way to support teacher professional development is through

maintaining their commitment to their own profession. However, it is not an easy way for every teacher. There are several theories supporting professional development in certain point of view.

In an article of Jackson (1992), he mentioned - adapting from Hoban's model (1992) – what we know as an "outside–in" term which approaches to help teachers develop by telling them how to teach better, to improve their work condition, relieving them with psychological discomfort and their emotional depth. Although this understanding was not what Hoban actually meant as outside-in model, but all of Jackson's suggestions can only be realized if some assistance intervenes from the outside into the personality of person. In the other words, the subject here is the outside person. And this understanding is quite close to what Hoban meant as "outside-in" term.

Meanwhile Clark (1992) emphasized that the main importance of professional development relies on the person itself; a self direction. The teacher is an active agent who is able to develop themselves independently and professionally. By this reason thus Clark offered potential steps of design to help the teacher professional development process.

A teacher could write their own credo of teaching and start with their own strength. Moreover, he suggested also that 5 years plan and the view of our own backyard might be also useful. Lastly, he advised not to hesitate in asking support, going first class, blowing our own trumpet. Referring what was Clark offered, it seems that he approaches the theme from the opposite way of Jackson's suggestions. Clarks tends to suggest something which should be done by the person. In other words, the subject here is the individual itself. Adapting from Hoban's model (1992), again, this understanding could very like to close what Hoban meant as "inside-in" term

Differently, Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) tried to focus on teacher development from other view. They tend to see a teacher comprehensively as a total person, including age, stage of carrier, life experience, and gender factor. This is a complexity of teacher development components and it is often be marginalized and would result in partial effectiveness of professional development programs.

Now, let put aside all the theories we have explained and look from a typical aspect. All theories of this first theme approach the teacher's professional development from different angles. However, all those have a similar characteristic which focuses on personality of the teacher. This theme presents as a foundation or pillar of professional development. From this starting point, a teacher could move further across his subjectivity to the social system. Hence we need to look at the social condition.

In recent times, almost all teachers in school were employed as permanent status. In Indonesia, many teachers who have reached this status tend to stop to learn since they have taught as a teacher. In relation to self-directed professional development, the actualization of this professional development becomes more difficult. In the government level, the Indonesian Ministry of Education (2007) has created a policy regarding "teacher certification" to encourage the teachers to develop their self professional development. This policy however creates a stereotype revealing the personal development equals to certificate and lastly equals to the money. On the other hand, although the implementation of regulation has been under reviewed--by reason of the effectiveness--, this regulation generates a positive image of the teacher, because the amount of money they can possibly gain, and it results in the

growing intention of youngsters to choose education college.

Comparing all theories above and the reality of educational condition we face in Indonesia, there is a gap between these two parts. The theories emphasize that the teacher could develop by themselves while in reality, people moves commonly by force of regulation. This is what we face in reality, and in this case therefore the professional development should also be seen from the social angle.

In this far, therefore, we have reached the limit of personal professional development in personal role, and there should be other theories explained how a teacher profession relates to their social.

Theme 2: A commitment to Collaborative Reflection on Practice

As we have developed our understanding of the basic theme; the personal professional development, in this second themes we will see how a teacher commits on his profession by involving other people in practice based on the theories.

A reflective practice is an effective means for engaging teachers in expressing their self professional development and the result of their effort would clearly appear through their collaborative work. The collaborative work is also taking apart as a controller of self development. It is able to reduce the subjectivity of a personal view during their process of work collaboration. Høyrup & Elkjaer (2006) described a relevant and explicit idea of this second theme. Their article, might be the most important article of this theme, because it grounds several perspectives of reflection in a commitment to collaborative reflection on practice. They emphasized the reflection should be taken out from individual to social work and moved by the line of reflection, from personal, to social, and lastly to organizational pattern of perspective

The collaboration on practice also is considered as the central of activities in professional development. In the teacher context, the collaboration in practice affirms the teachers to build their own understanding, wisdom, and to take a control or make a decision. This situation creates psychological comfort as a person or a group of teacher, as they feel important and useful for others. However, the collaboration on practice among teachers is not as easy as we discussed in this paper.

In this issue, therefore, many researchers had been trying to resolve it. Holly (1997) suggested to maintain the professional journal personally and professionally as a medium of reflection. According to her, it is significant to step back from the action to record our own understanding and feelings. When we want to look back to what we have recorded, we can use the journal, not just as reflection but also as prediction. Therefore in her article she gave many examples of personal and professional journals, and how to write them.

Another study which is also involved in the teacher development area is a study by Raymond, Butt, & Townsen (1992). Their study saw the teacher professional development form a different angle; the teacher's stories. They attempted to reveal a natural and generic condition, action, and context which can be created and adapted by the teacher. Understanding the stories could generate an in-depth insight of professional development and benefits the development in term of new perspective, types of case study, and collaboration in practice.

From three stories in his article, one case study that might be relevant with the Indonesian context is the story of Lyod-a 38 years old teacher who was born

to Japanese Canadian parents. Lyod comes from a socio-economic disadvantages condition, and he was grown with a rich cultural value. This condition gave him a strong human quality to his teaching. From his past suffering experience, he has successfully created social development curriculum for lower-economic pupil.

This dramatic story tells how a professional development derived from other factors which are undetected before by other researchers but Raymond, Butt, & Townsen. Lyod's history is quite close with Indonesian context where children mostly were grown in cultural and religious values of family and community.

Last, as professional development is heavily related to the outside factors such as politics, social, and culture, a group of professional people who work in their own workplace is not enough for developing their profession without considering the factors, its relation to contextual and cultural factor.

Theme 3: Recognizing Context and Culture in professional development

The world of education has its own complexity that cannot easily be simplified - this is probably a short preface of the third theme. In this third theme, the typical context and culture are so significant for professional development. In this case, we will see how the teacher development is directed to social and cultural pattern.

In this theme, the changing contex and culture has become an issue in professional development field. The world of education system has changed rapidly. Globally, the development in education need has forced many educational institutions to privatization in education.

In Indonesia, the 5 largest universities has privatized, and this idea has become a growing attention in the Indonesian higher education nowadays.

This condition is in line with Foley's article (2004:1). He noted that in the past thirty years the provision of adult education, and thinking about adult learning have changed radically. Community based-education has largely become self supporting and more become businesslike. According to him, this changes derives from the change in paradigm of education which rapidly adopted by many educators around the world.

A new conception of learning or framework seems to be workable tempting by many educators. Similarly, a new concept such as reflection-in-action or nowadays famously known as action research introduced by Schön (1983 in Folley 2004), even though it is still scarce seen in Indonesian Education system, yet it is not impossible to be implemented.

In a study on communities of practice, Wenger (1999) mentioned that a practice resides in the community and they relate to mutual engagement. The dimension of practice as the property of community consists of three patterns; mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire. These three patterns assert the community of practice together, and this offer is a cheap and positive way to professional development. Regarding Indonesian Education, this way is undoubtedly significant concept for the field of education. As we know, instead of millions of money poured into the professional development every year in many countries, an idea of sharing repertoire might seem very easier for any authority..

Conclusion

From the three different themes explained, it concludes that all themes seem to support each other. Without trying to oversimplify the complexity of each

theme, the relation of the themes could be portrayed as follows:

The more the box moves to the right the blur the colour become. The left box is self directed professional development and the thickest colour of this box mean that this themes is strongly needed by the other themes. The implication of this diagram is that the succeed effort of a teacher will contribute positively to their profession, in collaborative work or in the context and culture.

In the broader view, the progress of the teacher professional development should come from the all parties' effort. As we all know that education does not only stand alone but it is strongly influenced by the present context of politics, social, culture, or religious. Hence, there should be a collaborative effort across the teacher profession itself, involving community, the authorities, or other stakeholders.

In the Indonesian context, where a hierarchy culture is embodied in every sector, the British council (2009) stated that some major characteristic in Indonesia, is the top-down policy. Regarding teacher professional development, the advancement of this sector would strongly rely on government action rather than grassroots or professional organization initiatives.

Seeing this context, enhancing the teacher profession in Indonesian context seems to need more comprehensive effort; from the government, university, and school level. It would be probably better if the change is derived from the university

level. All the themes of teacher professional development - self development, reflection on practice, and collaboration – need to be implemented as a culture since the teacher was at the university, and keep maintaining the culture after leaving the university. In another words, it is necessary to narrow a gap between the universities and the schools. On the government level, the policies regarding this sector - especially the policies related to with this direction - need to be promptly maintained. To actualize it, off course, is not an easy as we have discussed in this paper, but it is not impossible. By implementing this direction, I believe that to some extent there would be some advancement in teacher professional development in Indonesia.

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