

DO THE TEACHERS PRACTICE THEIR SCHOOL OF MASTER TEACHER LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN THEIR REAL TEACHING?

Jayanti¹, Mohammad Ali^{2*}

¹Ms., Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia, jayanti2016@student.upi.edu

²Prof. Dr. MA., Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia, emaa.laith@upi.edu

*Corresponding author

Abstract

School of Master Teacher (SMT) is one of the Teacher Development Programs conducted by *Sekolah Guru Indonesia-Dompot Dhuafa*, a non-profit organization focused on teacher improvement. The teachers who participated in the program acquired learning experiences on teaching media, classroom display, class rules, authentic assessment, literacy-based learning, rewards and classroom action research. This paper addresses a problem dealing with which extent those who had been participating in the program implement their learning experiences in their real teaching. The sample of this study is eighty-four primary school teachers from six different provinces who completed the SMT program for three months. Data was collected during the year of 2016 using questionnaires in the form of Rating Scale, consisting of five scales, indicating frequencies of practicing their SMT learning experiences, i.e., always; often; sometimes; seldom; and never. The findings showed that the teachers generally implemented the learning materials they learned during the SMT program. 50% of the sample admitted that they always apply clear class rules. More than 50% of them often make complete, detail and systematic lesson plans; create interesting classroom display together with their students; create educative and useful teaching media; use at least two kinds of assessment; apply literacy-based learning; and give creative rewards to their students. However, There were only 4% of them who always conduct classroom action research. The findings imply that in regard to improving their teaching quality the teachers should be encouraged to conduct classroom action research.

Keywords: School of Master Teacher; Primary School Teacher, Professional Development Program.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher and education cannot be separated. The teacher holds the core role in achieving the education goals as well as it is one of the most influencing factors in education successful. Teacher's quality plays the central role in the education quality improvement (World Bank, 2010). The core of education is the interaction among teacher and the students in order to gain education goals (Sukmadinata, 2011:191). The way the teacher teach and tutor their student's impacts on the education outcomes, hence they are expected to be more professional as it plays a central role in the improvement of human resources quality (Ali, 2009).

The teacher is a professional work that everyone who takes this way as a choice must own teacher competencies. To complete their tasks, the teacher must own some specific skills (Badrudin, 2014: 10). Teachers suppose to own (1) commitment to their student's development, to serve and to improve

professional learning; (2) professional culture and managerial ability related to their position as a part of school; and (3) leadership to design policy, service, and solidarity (Montecinos, Pino, Campos-Martínez, Domínguez, & Carreño, 2014).

Suparman (2014), suggested that there are five competencies which have to be mastered by teachers; (1) subject knowledge; (2) design and implementation of instructional strategy; (3) using learning sources from the library, teaching aids in the laboratory or in the class, or creating media; (4) design and use of assessment tools; (5) gaining support from the schools where they work. In other words, teacher competencies related to good communication skill with the students, mastering the subjects, instructional design, classroom management, teaching media, mastering the education foundations, student's psychology, ability to design and use assessment tools, able to play roles as a counselor and school administrator and to do educational research (Samana, 1994).

In relation to the teacher professionalism, Indonesia faces a very low achievement. A study completed by the Ministry of National Education in 2004, a large percentage of teacher applicants demonstrated poor content mastery with the average score being 34 correct answers in a test of 90 questions (Chang et al., 2014). Furthermore, the 2006 data from Research and Development board shows that there are still many teachers who are not eligible to teach, especially at elementary school level (1.140.836 or 84.70%) in state and private schools. Despite the fact that most teachers have participated in some development on the 2004 competency-based curriculum, the review team's observations were that most teachers do not apply this in their classrooms. One way to address this may be through using the useful network of professional learning communities that Indonesia has developed within and across schools (OECD, 2015).

OECD (2015) suggested it is needed to define what the effective teaching is and how to establish it, in order to lead the teacher experience meaningful learning circumstances and to improve their professionalism in achieving the intended students learning outcomes. Teachers qualification and experience is not the indicator of students' academic performance unless they improve their pedagogical skills (Tso et al., 2015). The way they can improve all that the teacher needs to be mastered is by keep learning and take a part in the teacher development program is a must.

Completing formal education in teacher education and training at the university seems not enough to mastered teacher competencies. Keep learning is one right solution teacher can do. The teacher needs a learning community in which they are able to experience effective learning, to practice theories, to learn from other teachers and to be examined in periodical time. Katz et al., (2009) the core principle in establishing clusters (or any other structure for school improvement) is that changes in student learning come from changes in what students experience in their classroom each day. Cluster work best when they: (1) help teachers to focus on providing more effective learning experiences for their students; (2) use a disciplined process of inquiry that includes evidence from research and student achievement data; (3) support teachers to inquire into their practice, to trial changes and to examine their impact on student learning; (4) are explicitly connected to school improvement initiatives; and (5) are supported by strong leadership from principals and facilitated by skilled external facilitators.

The OECD (2009) Teaching and Learning Internal Survey (TALIS) identifies key aspects of teaching that have been shown to improve learning. They include teachers' content knowledge; teachers' pedagogical knowledge, both of general principles and those specific to their subject; teaching practices that focus on clear and well-structured lessons supported by effective classroom management; teaching practices that emphasise individual instruction; a commitment to higher-order problem solving, deep analysis of content, and activities requiring advanced thinking skills and deductive reasoning; and active professional collaboration that has a direct impact on learning and teaching. Key elements include classroom observations, team teaching, constructive feedback.

One of the teacher development programs aimed at improving the teacher's quality in Indonesia is School of Master Teacher (SMT), conducted by *Sekolah Guru Indonesia-Dompét Dhuafa*, a non-profit organization focused on primary school teacher improvement. The teachers who participated in the program acquired learning experiences on teaching media, classroom display, classroom management, authentic assessment, literacy-based learning, and classroom action research. This program ran in six provinces since 2014. In each province, the program conducted in three batches every year. One batch trained around 20 to 30 teachers in the period of three months.

2. SCHOOL OF MASTER TEACHER (SMT)

The reason for studying the impact of SMT on teacher's teaching performance is grounded in the assumption that these have a significant influence on their teaching performances. To define perception, Oluremi (2013)

stated, the professional development is a way to train and continue the teacher's self-development by systematic steps. Teacher's qualification has not a significant impact on the students academic performances but attending in-service or refresher training resulted in slight improvement in the student's academic performances (Musau & Abere, 2015).

In teacher education, practicing is the key to teacher's learning (McDonald et al, 2014). Teaching as a specialized professional practice requires specialized knowledge and a professional community where they can learn the concepts of education and its practice (Hordern, 2015). Providing continuous professional development for in-service teachers ensure the quality of the teaching workforce maintaining and improvement through up-to-date teaching methodologies and skills building (World Bank, 2010). Teacher attending in-service or refresher courses has a positive impact on the student's academic performances improvement (Musau & Abere, 2015).

Teacher development program must be well prepared (Gökmenoglu & Clark, 2015). SMT uses systematic steps on its preparation and process. It includes trainer, participant, and curriculum. Development program related to the trainer, participant, and curriculum (Montecinos et al., 2014). Preparation for teacher development discusses curriculum, trainer, and participants. Concluded from Baldwin, Paul, Shelly & Willeen, NCSS, teacher training curriculum is aimed to (1) facilitate and improve comprehensive basic knowledge and analytical thinking for teacher; (2) to own prior knowledge and understanding about learning management to develop student's analytical thinking skills and to prepare the teacher to design critical thinking-based instructional (Art-in, 2014).

A qualified teacher training and administration supports can help the teachers to own prior knowledge and skills that they need to conduct innovative education (Stein & Wang, 1988). Teacher development is effective to improve the teacher's performance when it is well prepared, completely done and sustain. Paying attention to teacher's education is an important aspect of problem-solving of the teacher's quality. Informal on-the-job training for teacher significantly increases teacher's productivity (Harris & Sass, 2011).

2.1. SMT Curriculum

Teacher education program is designed to let them experience the teacher's real world such as observation, tutoring, small group instruction, video analysis, using teaching media and implementation of various task outside the teaching are some of the prevalent samples (Parkay & Stanford, 2010). A research about teacher perception on teacher training program in Myanmar found that the teacher who learns by student-based learning reach the goals positively (Ulla, 2017). Learning by sample also help the teacher to understand the lesson as well as understanding the context (Cho & Rathbund, 2015).

One of the most important aspects of a development program is to answer teacher's needs and to build and keep the teacher's skills (Gökmenoglu & Clark, 2015). Adult education is defined to be effective or resulting behavioral changes is when it is based on their needs (Lunandi, 1986:4). The principles of participative training include (1) learning need-based; (2) learning goals-oriented; (3) participant-centered; and (4) experimental learning.

Evaluation is needed In order to measure how effective a training to influence the teacher performances. One of the manners to evaluate the impact of training is to let the participants practice what they got from the training (Waluyo, 2016). Evaluation includes teachers competencies: (1) pedagogic; (2) social; (3) personality; and (4) professional (Bashori, 2015).

SMT is done in three batches each year. One batch take three months for eight stages: (1) studium generale; (2) military camp; (3) training; (4) class observation; (5) classroom action research; (6) formative test; (7) classroom action research evaluation; (8) Social Project; and (9) graduation.

The training content of SMT is divided into five theme, i.e., (1) *creative class* which aims to train the teacher to create and implement useful and educative instructional media; (2) *model class* introduces classroom display to the teacher and coaches them to create various kinds of classroom display; (3) *my class is my kingdom* accustomed the teacher to write and train them to implement literacy-based learning; (4) *joyful class* consist of materials related to class rules, reward and consequences and developmental psychology; and (5) *happy research* which introduces classroom action research to the teachers and guides them to do their own research.

2.2. SMT Facilitator and trainer

The trainer has an urgent role in the development program. They must give feed back to every teacher related to learning practice and characteristics. (Bergh, Ros & Beijaard, 2015). The trainer must own these

competencies: (1) create a learning environment for the adult learner; (2) leadership and contribution to the development program; (3) teach the learning for the adult learner; and (4) contextualize the education process (Montecinos et al., 2014).

Facilitator of SMT has some responsibility in handling the program, i.e., informing the program to the local stake holders and participant targets, recruiting and selecting participants, facilitating and train the participants to active learning according to program's curriculum, evaluating the participant's progressive and managing their graduation. The facilitator holds the role as the trainer as well, they must own some eligibilities as following: (1) hold minimum bachelor degree; (2) Sekolah Guru Indonesia Activist (Alumni of Sekolah Guru Indonesia) with excellent record; (3) master the SMT materials; (4) hold management skills; (5) excellent public speaker; and (6) hold administration and financial management skills.

2.3. SMT Participants

The participants of SMT recruited by three steps: (1) administration test; (2) interview test; and (microteaching test). The eligibilities of the participants are: (1) minimum 25 years old and no more than 35 years old; (2) Bachelor degree; (3) minimum 2 years teaching experience; (4) health and not in pregnancy; (5) delegation of the school which the majority of students are middle-low economy; and (6) hold statement letter from the school principal.

3. METHOD

For this study, a quantitative design was used. That is, it was conducted by the use of survey questionnaire of the participating teacher-respondents. A standardized survey tool by the program of School of Master Teacher was used in order to address a problem dealing with which extent those who had been participating in the program implement their learning experiences in their real teaching. The survey instrument comprised of eight close ended items in the form of Rating Scale, consisting of five scales, indicating frequencies of practicing their SMT learning experiences, i.e., always; often; sometimes; seldom; and never. A statistical instrument was used to analyze the data by using the mean score and standard deviation.

3.1. Participants

The sample of this study was eighty-four primary school teachers from six different provinces who have completed the SMT program before September 2016. The sample of participants were taken included male (n=30, 35% and female (n=55, 65%). The participants are from some different provinces, i.e., South Sulawesi (n=22); Banten (n=16); West Java (n=2); West Nusa Tenggara (n=9); South Sumatera (n=14); North Sumatera (n=9); and West Sumatera (n=12).

4. FINDINGS

This paper addresses the main question: do the teachers who had been participating in the School of Master Teacher program implement their learning experiences in their real teaching?

Table 1- Teacher's practicing their SMT experiences in their real teaching

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	Frequency
1. Designing systematic and detail lesson plan	31%	65%	4%	0%	0%	100%
2. Evaluating minimum 2 competencies (cognitive, affective, psychomotoric)	16%	69%	14%	1,2%	0%	100%
3. Making interesting classroom display together with students	12%	62%	26%	0%	0%	100%
4. Implementing clear class rules	50%	49%	1%	0%	0%	100%
5. Making and using interesting, educative and resistant teaching media	24%	63%	12%	0%	1,2%	100%
6. Applying literacy-based learning	16%	58%	27%	0%	0%	100%
7. Implementing creative reward tools	36%	55%	8%	0%	1,2%	100%
8. Doing Classroom action Research	4%	37%	37%	17%	4,8%	100%

Table 1 reports that the teachers generally implemented the learning materials they learned during the SMT program. It can be seen that the highest percentage of a teacher who always practices program's material is applying clear class rules (n=50%), followed by implementing creative reward tools (n=36%) and designing systematic and detail lesson plan (n=31%). The respondents show that most of them often practice SMT materials, for instance, 69% of them often evaluate minimum two competencies. However, doing classroom action research is generally do not be practiced by the teachers that there is 4,8% of them who never do it and only 4% of them who always do it.

Table 2- Statistic Scale for Relationship of Items

<i>Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Deviation</i>
1. Designing systematic and detail lesson plan	4.27	0.52
2. Evaluating minimum 2 competencies (cognitive, affective, psychomotor)	3.98	0.54
3. Making interesting classroom display together with students	4.13	0.60
4. Implementing clear class rules	4.49	0.53
5. Making and using interesting, educative and resistant teaching media	4.12	0.59
6. Applying literacy-based learning	3.86	0.71
7. Implementing creative reward tools	4.24	0.70
8. Doing Classroom action Research	3.14	0.98
<i>Total</i>	<i>32.23</i>	<i>5.19</i>

Table 2 reports the mean score and standard deviation for each item. The fourth item shows the highest mean score of 4.49 where the standard deviation was 0.53. This indicates that mostly the teachers implement clear class rules. In contrast, the eighth item shows the least positive perception expressed by the teachers where the mean score was 3.14 and the standard deviation was 0.98.

4.1. Discussion

In this study, the teacher's teaching practice was explored related to their experience on completing the School of Master Teacher Program. The finding shows that generally, the teachers practice their learning experiences from the program to their real teaching. Majority of the teachers often make complete, detail and systematic lesson plans, create interesting classroom display together with their students, create educative and useful teaching media, use at least two kinds of assessment, apply literacy-based learning, and give creative rewards to their students. However, there were only 4% of them who always conduct classroom action research.

5. CONCLUSION

This study was aimed at exploring how the teachers practice their School of Master Teacher experiences in their real teaching after completing the program. Findings revealed that teachers generally practice their learning experiences to their teaching practices. Teacher's opportunities to learn, deepen their pedagogic and content knowledge, teaching experience, and develop specific practice through professional development and assessment positively improve the teacher's effectiveness.

However, the findings imply that in regard to improving their teaching quality the teachers should be encouraged to conduct classroom action research. In addition, the findings of this research were only limited and could not represent the perceptions of all teacher development program. Other studies may focus on the teacher development program evaluation from the other organizers or stakeholders.

In conclusion,

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