

Community-Based Teacher Training: Transformation of Sustainable Teacher Empowerment Strategy in Indonesia

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Abstract

Teacher empowerment is a central issue in relation to the efforts to improve the quality of education. However, teacher empowerment will remain an abstract idea if its implementation is not supported by an appropriate strategy. The demands for a quality education will be unreciprocated if teachers do not have the opportunity to empower themselves. This research aims to investigate the teacher empowerment strategy in Indonesia, which has been conducted by employing a community-based teacher training program. This study has highlighted several research questions: What is meant by community-based training program? Why is the training program needed? Who is the target of the training program? What model has been used to implement the training? What are the results of the training that has been executed? This research was conducted from November 2018 to January 2019. The research data were collected by means of documentation studies and interviews. The data analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively, where the quantitative analysis was processed based on the document study data, meanwhile the qualitative analysis was performed based on the interview data. The research results showed that community-based teacher training was transformation of teacher development strategy as a follow-up on teachers' competency test in Indonesia. The community-based teacher training succeeded in increasing the professionalism of teachers in Indonesia, particularly in terms of implementing their pedagogical and professional competencies. The training is also successful in motivating the teachers to engage themselves in continuous learning efforts through building strong teachers' network and working collaboratively with colleagues. Quantitatively, training was proven to increase the average of teacher competency by 23.97 (on a scale of 100). The research results are expected to provide information about the best practice in teacher coaching that is

conducted massively in a national scope based on the local community so that a lifelong learning culture for teachers is established to support the development of sustainable education.

Keywords: teacher training, community-based training program, sustainable teacher empowerment.

Introduction

The role of education develops along with the dynamics of human life and civilization. One of the phenomena in this century is the emergence of education as the major force of human development (Leba & Padmomartono, 2014). Education is intrinsically related with human development and is the key factor in managing poverty alleviation, health promotion, sustainable livelihood, and sustainable environment (Ghorbani et al., 2018). Education should sustain and realize human potential in relation to the need (Reid & Horváthová, 2016: 67). Education is also an essential element in the context of sustainable development (Bertschy et al., 2013). History has proven that the progress and glory of a nation are determined by the education sector (Kunandar, 2007). The quality of education strongly influences the quality of human resources (HR), which determine the progress of development (Hakim, 2015). Therefore, a nation will be great and will continue to develop when it succeeds in improving the quality of education in a sustainable manner.

Teachers are one of the subsystems that have an important role in the national education system (Suparlan, 2008). Teachers, as holders of interdisciplinary education, play a key role in the process of transformation and implementation of sustainable development (Andić & Vorkapić, 2017, p. 121). Teachers are the human elements of education (Djamarah, 2010) who strongly determine the learning success at schools (Mulyasa, 2015). Teachers are important change agents and must be able to help develop students' knowledge and ability to do their tasks (Hiller & Reichhart, 2017, p. 84). Moreover, teachers are essential resources in the management of education organization (Leba & Padmomartono, 2014). Therefore, teachers are one of the main conditions that must be paid attention to in education development in order to really contribute to the improvement of human resource quality (Mulyasa, 2015). The development of a high quality of education can be achieved if the teachers can escalate their capacity in a systematic and sustainable manner.

Becoming a teacher means being ready to face the challenges and to develop skills to manage and influence change (Poom-Valickis et al., 2013). When currently the era changes into putting forward openness, democratization, and accountability, and the era of information technology has reached all parts of the human life, the teaching and learning paradigm also totally changes (Suparlan, 2008). If in the past teachers only acted as educators, now they are expected to develop their professionalism, not only within the teaching and learning environment, but also developing the world of education in a broader meaning (Priatna & Sukamto, 2013). As an implication, teachers must continuously develop their competencies and professional skills to respond to the challenges. Without teachers' motivation and willingness to keep on improving themselves, education would become a hindrance knot against the rate of human life changes.

Teachers' strategic role in improving the quality, relevance, and efficiency of education implies that teachers' professional development is a need (Saud, 2017). Currently teachers

face three critical issues, namely change, uncertainty, and increasing complexity of problems (Payong, 2011). Changes in education and teaching as well as the present demands from the society have become so complicated that it is difficult to control. On that grounds, teachers need to be ready in facing challenges that may arise. Uncertainty is the direct implication of change which sometimes triggers anxiety and inertia, whereas change and uncertainty carry along new challenges that are more complex. Such impressive demands compel teachers to continuously improve their insights, knowledge, and skills in order to provide creative and innovative solutions to problems.

A professional teacher must be willing and able to perform continuous professional development (Daryanto, 2013). The demands for continuous professional development get stronger along with the presence of current change dynamics, in which teachers are faced with a rapid change, demands for high standard, and requirements for education quality improvements (Kasmayadi et al., 2018). Teachers' professional development is a continuum which starts from pre-service period, continues throughout the first years as teachers, and goes on along their teaching career (Niemi, 2015). Quality teachers can only be produced through an integrated and continuous process, starting from the pre-service education process at the teacher training institution, up to the upgrading processes at the in-service training institution and on through the coaching process by means of on-the-job training at the educational institution where they work (Suparlan, 2008). Therefore, educational institution should have a well-designed teacher training scheme to meet their teachers' need, meanwhile teachers should be aware of the continuous learning process that they have to undergo, starting from the first stage of training until the time they get real experience that would make them better and more mature.

Various career development activities for teachers are expected to be used to renew, improve, and upgrade teachers' professional skills in order to comply with the demands of the society, the progress of time and the rapid development of science and art (Mulyasa, 2013). It does not mean that teachers are individually responsible for their own self quality development. Other education stakeholders must also participate to support the sustainable teacher competency improvement. This correlates with the fact that teachers are not the sole actors in conducting education. Sustainable professional development must be a shared responsibility, including the government. The government must take part in facilitating teacher competency improvement. Therefore, a synergy can be achieved among various parties to encourage teacher quality improvement.

Indonesia is one of the countries currently busy conducting various competency improvement programs in order to encourage sustainable teacher professional development. It began with the mapping of teachers' competencies by means of teacher competency test conducted in 2015. The Indonesian government keeps on trying to implement follow-up programs to improve teachers' competencies based on the results of the teachers' competency test. It is certainly not an easy task to improve the quality of about three million teachers, not only the huge number of teachers, but also because of the wide distribution of teachers assigned throughout Indonesia, which consists of so many islands, provinces, and regencies/cities. It takes a systematic program that is comprehensively designed to cater the needs for teachers' competency improvement in an integrated manner but locally-based, so that teachers do not need to go far away to another island or another province/regency/city. Teachers can still improve their competencies by staying close to their students and their families.

One of the teacher empowerment programs implemented in Indonesia is community-based teacher training. This training is development from the learning teacher program conducted in 2016, with several improvements. The training was a teacher competency improvement program as a follow-up on the national teacher competency test that was followed by 2,699,516 teachers. Based on the competency test results, it was found that teachers' quality in Indonesia had to be improved. Therefore, the government launched teacher training programs to improve the teacher quality in Indonesia.

This research aims to investigate the concept and implementation of community-based training as a form of teacher training transformation in Indonesia based on the results of teachers' competency test. More specifically, the research questions to be answered through this research are: 1) What is the community-based training? 2) Why is a community-based training needed? 3) Who are the targets of community-based teacher training? 4) What are the application modes of community-based training? 5) What are the results of the training that has been carried out? The results of this research are expected to provide information about best practices in community-based teacher training as an alternative to teachers' sustainable professional development program.

The remaining parts of this paper are organized as follows: Section 2 presents a review on the related literature. Section 3 describes the proposed method. Section 4 presents the obtained results and is followed by discussion in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 concludes the paper.

Related Works

Human assets are one of the most important resources available to any organization (Vathanophas, 2007). In the context of education, teachers are the spear point of the efforts to increase quality of education (Daryanto, 2013). Therefore, teacher empowerment needs to be performed in order to increase knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to support their noble responsibility as the main contributor to students' learning process (Kimwarey, Chirure, & Omondi, 2014). There are many studies which indicate various benefits that can be obtained from teacher empowerment at school (Balkar, 2015). Empowered teachers are professionals who own the power to prepare the curriculum, manage their own lessons, and, consequently, have the power to teach effectively (Stacy, 2013). This is essential considering that education execution always needs a professional teacher (Danim, 2016). Therefore, a teacher cannot just simply focus on the daily tasks of students' learning but must also give priorities to his/her own self-study program.

Teacher quality improvement is vital to guarantee quality education service (Panggabean & Himawan, 2016). Teachers' professional development is the key to students' learning development (Bubb & Earley, 2007). Aside from the students' interests, teachers' sustainable professional development is also central for the school success (Earley & Porritt, 2010). Every teacher must have a learning spirit, which can compel themselves to reach the optimal point of their performance. This is in line with the research on professional learning which showed that teachers needed to actively involve themselves in learning activities for themselves (Dail et al., 2018). Therefore, every teacher must keep on learning and conducting sustainable professional self-development in order to provide best services for the learners.

Currently, teaching position is an occupation, which receives full recognition as a profession (Leba & Padmomartono, 2014); therefore, every teacher must fully realize that the occupation they have demands scientific support and preparedness to keep on studying. Profession is a type of job which does not only rely on physical power, but also demands enough education from those entering it, strengthened by special knowledge and skills and having the recognition from others (Leba & Padmomartono, 2014). Profession can also be said as a skill and authority in a certain position, which requires special competencies obtained from an intensive academic education (Kunandar, 2007). The determining characteristic of members of a profession is commitment, which is shown in the form of self-improvement or development (Bubb & Earley, 2007). As a profession, teaching must be filled by those who have commitment and willingness to continuously develop themselves so that they can always face the constantly growing challenges in performing their duties.

As professionals, teachers are willing to continuously learn, develop relations with colleagues, be disciplined in performing their responsibilities, and improve their competencies (Leba & Padmomartono, 2014). A teacher who stops learning means that s/he denies his/her profession. Continuing professional development is a lifelong commitment for a teacher's self-improvement (Brine, 2005). In their survey on sustainable education for profession, Madden and Mitchell (1993) and Bubb & Earley (2007) stated that sustainable professional development fulfills three functions: 1) renewing and expanding professional knowledge and skills, 2) training for new responsibilities and for changing roles, and 3) developing personal and professional effectiveness and improving work satisfaction. Therefore, it is undeniable that teacher empowerment is one of the important knots of teachers' sustainable professional development to realize professional teachers who can offer best services for the students.

Continuous professional development includes all formal and informal learning, which enables an individual to improve his/her own practices (Bubb & Earley, 2007). Additionally, teachers' professional development aims to increase professional knowledge; improve professional skills; help clarify professional values; and enables students to be educated more effectively (Bolam, 1993; Bubb & Earley, 2007). Teachers' self-capacity improvement is an absolute prerequisite for teachers to gain professional skills according to the predetermined standards. A professional teacher must be able to master various strategies or techniques in the teaching-learning activities, and to master the basics of education as contained in teacher's competencies (Nabila, 2016). Without updating knowledge and competencies, a teacher would find difficulties to follow the rhythm of change in students' learning demands and needs, which continuously change along with the flow of time.

The teaching profession is not only unnatural but also complicated (Ball & Forzani, 2010). In the 21st century, education requires well-instructed teachers with teaching and communication abilities (Pontes-Pedrajas & Varo-Martínez, 2014). Teachers must learn to improve knowledge and skills they own to facilitate themselves in performing their duties. The education reform in the past 20 years demands a quality teacher training (Bubb & Earley, 2007). Aside from being of high quality, teacher training must also be accurate and have the right strategy. Training objective must be identified in a valid and measured way in order that suitability between training and target teachers can be well mapped. The appropriate strategy is needed to ensure that each teacher who joins the training can be facilitated in his/her competency improvement through training.

Method

This is a descriptive research to investigate a community-based training program in Indonesia. This research was conducted from October 2018 to January 2019. The research was performed on the basic concepts of community-based training program policy; its application and the results in improving teachers' competencies in Indonesia. The data for this research were collected through documentation study and interviews. The documents studied in this research were documents about Indonesian government's community-based training program policy, formulated by the Directorate of Teachers and Education Staff, Ministry of Education and Culture, Indonesia. Interviews were conducted with community-based training program national developers, national instructors, and teachers from various provinces in Indonesia who joined the training program. Interviews with program developers were aimed to search for information about the nature of community-based training and the way of its implementation, interviews with national instructors were aimed to search for information about training execution, and interviews with participating teachers were aimed to reveal information about responses towards process and results of the training. Data analysis was conducted in descriptive quantitative and qualitative manner, in which the quantitative analysis was carried out based on the data of document study results, whereas the qualitative analysis was performed on the basis of the interview result data.

Results

Based on the studies of several documents and interviews with training program developers conducted in this research, it has been found that community-based teacher training is an Indonesian government program to improve teachers' competencies as the follow-up of teachers' competency test performed by the government in 2015. In 2017, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture via the Directorate General of Teachers and Education Staff developed the Continuous Professional Development Program, which was the continuation of Learning Teachers' Competency Improvement Program in 2016, in which the main objective was to improve teachers' competencies.

In the training general guidance from the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, it is stated that the teacher community is a community that has been officially registered in the Management Information System (SIM). The teacher community consists of task force community and rayon community. The task force community is a community legitimized by the Provincial/Regency/City Education Service Office and owns a Community Establishment Decree. The task force community consists of cluster activity center, teachers' work group, content teachers' discussion groups, and guidance and counseling teachers' discussion groups. Rayon community is a content/skills package teachers' professional activity forum coordinated and formed by Teacher Development and Empowerment Technical Executor Unit from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Rayon community is established to accommodate certain content teachers with less than eight persons per province. Teachers who have not joined any of the communities above can join the existing communities or create a new one.

In the training guide book for national resource person and national training instructors (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017), it is stated that in 2016 the Directorate General of Teachers and Education Staff developed a program to facilitate teachers' competency improvement based on UKG 2015; it was called Learning Teacher's Compe-

tency Improvement Program with a target achievement of national average score 65. The number of teachers who joined the Learning Teacher's Competency Improvement Program in 2016 was 427,189 or 15.82 % of all teachers who joined the competency test (2,699,516 teachers). The percentage of teachers' participation in the Learning Teachers' Competency Improvement Program (15.82 %) did not really represent the whole population of teachers, but it gave a glimpse of the facilitation result offered for the teachers in the Learning Teacher's Competency Improvement Program. The teacher competency improvement program was continued in 2017 through a community-based training program with several improvements from the earlier program.

The community-based training renewal program compared with the earlier program is that the community-based training program was conducted in teacher profession communities at the regency/city level. In the previous program, the training materials were based solely on individual teacher competency profile, whereas in the community-based training program the material was determined based on the common condition of the teachers within a community, i.e., based on the lowest competency average among the teachers in the community. This was stated by one of the developers of community-based training program, as follows:

In the community-based teacher training, the materials to be learned are determined based on the general weakness condition of material mastery in each community. The weakness is based on the lowest average competency profile score owned by the teachers. This is different from the ways the materials were determined in the earlier program, in which the materials were determined based on individual teacher's competency mastery weakness (Supinah, Community-based Teacher Training Program National Developer, interview on 31 January 2018).

From the interview with the program developer, we have learned that community-based teacher training program is conducted by empowering local potential, namely the community member teachers, to help fellow teachers with lower competency mastery. Results of teacher competency test in 2015 showed that many teachers were able to achieve good results and could be empowered to help other fellow teachers who scored lower. The pattern of empowering teachers with high competency scores to help other teachers with lower scores can be well facilitated through the community-based teacher training program.

In the training technical guidance published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, it is stated that community-based teacher training program is performed in three modes, namely (1) face-to-face (offline); (2) full online learning; and (3) blended learning (combination between online and face-to-face mode). The modes were selected by the provincial/regency/city Service Office or by the Technical Execution Unit of the Ministry of Education and Culture to form classes according to the participants' profile. The face-to-face mode is a training activity in which direct interaction takes place between trainer and the trainees, as depicted in Fig. 1.

The full online mode is a training activity in which interaction between participants and the mentor/trainer is conducted online by using website media which can be accessed via the internet, computer-based learning, virtual class, and/or digital class. There are two models of online training: Model 1 that only involves expert and teachers as participants (see Fig. 2), and Model 2 that involves expert, mentor/trainer, and teachers as participants (see Fig. 3).

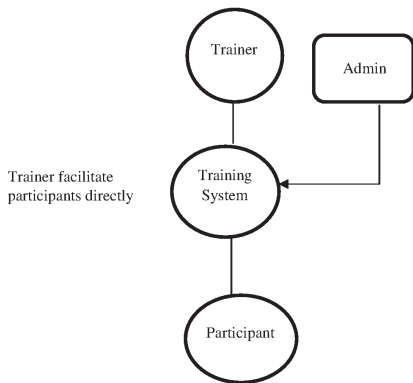


Figure 1. Face-to-face mode

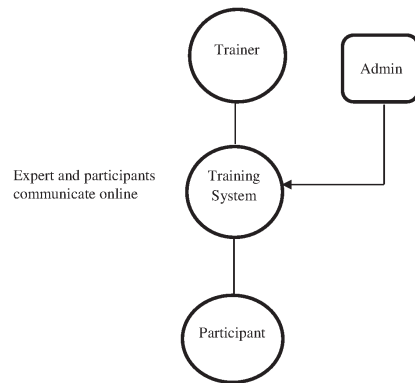


Figure 2. Full online mode 1

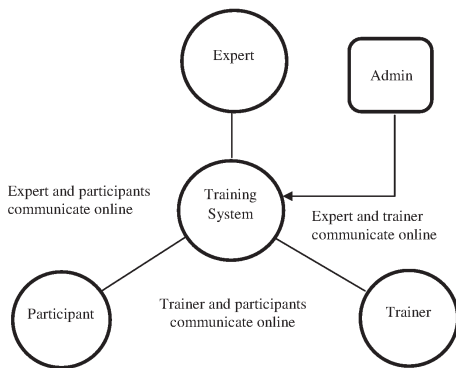


Figure 3. Full online mode 2

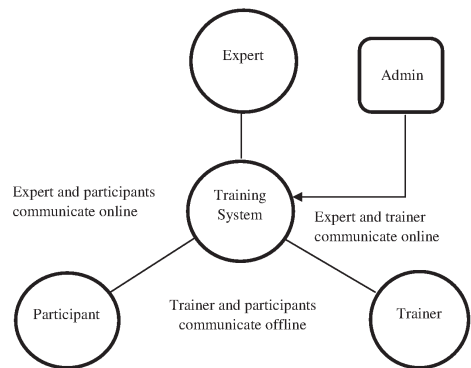


Figure 4. Combined-online mode

(Source: Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017)

Meanwhile in the third mode, the combination mode, participants will interact with expert online, whereas the interaction between participants and mentor is conducted either online or offline. Online learning interaction is performed independently by using information technology and electronically prepared teaching and can be conducted anytime and anywhere. Participants interact with expert either synchronously – learning interaction at the same time, such as using video call; telephone; or live chat, or asynchronously – learning interaction not at the same time via electronically-prepared learning activities by using forum or message. Face-to-face interaction is conducted according to a schedule that is agreed earlier between participants and mentor at the predetermined Learning Center and supported by class committee. In the combined mode, participants are facilitated by mentor online and offline. Participants perform learning interaction both online and face-to-face. The face-to-face interaction is performed at the Learning Center according to an agreed schedule and is facilitated by a mentor. Interaction in the combined online mode can be seen in Fig. 4.

In the process, the community-based training can be followed effectively by the teachers compared with the application of earlier training program. Training performed at communities, with participating teachers from the same community, can run more

constructively because participants are familiar with one another, and they experience relatively similar teaching problems. This was expressed by Estina, one of the national experts and program developers, as follow:

The trainers are taken from teachers, members of the community, who have the best competency. Therefore, the execution of community-based training, aside from targeting on teachers' competency improvement, also aims at empowering the teachers to support one another in competency improvement. Training participants come from the same community as the mentor, this helps ensure that the training can run more constructively because participants know each other, which means that there is no communication barrier among them (Estina, community-based teacher training expert and program developer, interview on 31 January 2018).

At the end of the training, every participant must join a post test to determine the learning achievement during the training. Generally, the results were quite pleasing, there has been a significant increase in competency mastery by the teachers. Nationally, the average results of the teacher competency test 2015, 2016, and 2017 for each level of education can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Teacher Competency Test Result (Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018)

Level	Participants			Person/ Module	Average Score			↑↓	%
	2015	2016	2017		2015	2016	2017		
Kindergarten	89	72	89	181	43.74	65.82	68.23	↑	24.49
Elementary School	185	219	185	372	40.14	63.80	62.22	↑	22.08
Junior High School	65	85	65	131	44.16	65.33	67.76	↑	23.61
Senior High School	25	28	25	50	45.38	66.66	69.55	↑	24.17
Vocational School	12	19	12	20	44.31	70.30	68.53	↑	24.22
Special School	7	3	7	14	46.45	66.79	71.70	↑	25.26

* in thousand

Table 1 shows that the teacher competency improvement program, which was conducted in the form of Learning Teacher Competency Improvement Program in 2016 and continued by community-based training in 2017, had a significant impact as shown by the final test in 2017. There has been an average increase in teacher competencies by 23.97 (scale of 100). These results were in line with the qualitative findings from interviews with various stakeholders who stated that the program was able to improve teacher quality seen from the improvement of their pedagogical and professional competencies. The training is also successful in motivating the teachers to engage themselves in continuous learning efforts through building strong teacher network and working collaboratively with colleagues.

This success has encouraged the government to keep improving its training program in order to give an optimal result. The training program renewal, performed in 2018, was a reinforcement of community-based training program application. The focus of the program renewal implemented during the 2018 training program was optimization of face-to-face mode. The reinforcement of face-to-face mode training was conducted with the background of the vast and scattered geographical condition of Indonesia,

consisting of separate islands, so that a community-based training program was considered more efficient in terms of organization and funding, and could further help develop synergy among teachers within one region or community. The face-to-face mode can be conducted in two alternatives, namely: 1) full face-to-face; and 2) face-to-face and independent learning.

1. Full Face-to-Face

The teacher training program with full face-to-face pattern is a training activity in which all allocated learning time is conducted in a face-to-face manner between participants and the trainers. In the full face-to-face pattern, participants join the training for 60 lesson hours (@ 45 minutes) for content teachers, kindergarten teachers, special education teachers, elementary school teachers, and guidance and counseling teachers; they must cover 2 competency groups (two pedagogical modules and two professional modules). In turn, vocational school teachers must join for 150 lesson hours (@ 45 minutes) for intensive pedagogical material comprehension, intensive professional material comprehension, and Skills Competency Test (UKK) at two specific clusters according to Level IV of the Indonesian National Qualification Framework Scheme (KKNI).

2. Face-to-Face and Independent Learning

The teacher training program with face-to-face and independent learning pattern is a training activity, in which learning is conducted partly through face-to-face and partly carried out by learning independently. The face-to-face activity in the beginning is called 'In Service Learning 1' or In-1, whereas the face-to-face activity in the end is called 'In Service Learning 2' or In-2. The 'On the Job Learning (On)' is the independent learning activity, which is the continuation of In-1 activity process.

- a) The face-to-face and independent learning pattern for kindergarten teachers, special education teachers, elementary school teachers, and guidance and counseling teachers consists of In-1; On; and In-2 activities, with a pattern of 20lh-20lh-20lh (20-20-20) or 20lh-30lh-10lh (20-30-10) (where lh is a learning hour).

- b) The face-to-face and independent learning pattern for vocational school teacher's organization follows the pattern shown in Fig. 5.

Figure 5 provides an analysis of training needs and participation selection to obtain the related information: a) skills competency which becomes priority; b) number of teachers who will sit for initial Skills Competency Test and the cluster to be tested; and c) number of teachers who previously had taken skills competency test, in which the skills certificate received will be recognized, if: 1) the skills certificate is still valid; and 2) the competency unit stated as competent in the certificate is equivalent with the competency unit to be tested according to Level IV which has been determined. Additionally, within the training needs analysis activity, vocational school teacher participants are expected to gain information about: a) the coaching pattern that will be conducted by the Center for Teacher and Teaching Staff Development and Empowerment at schools; b) the schedule of training and skills competency test; c) technical information regarding structured independent activities regarding the skills competency that must be learned and completed by the teachers as participants of the training program.

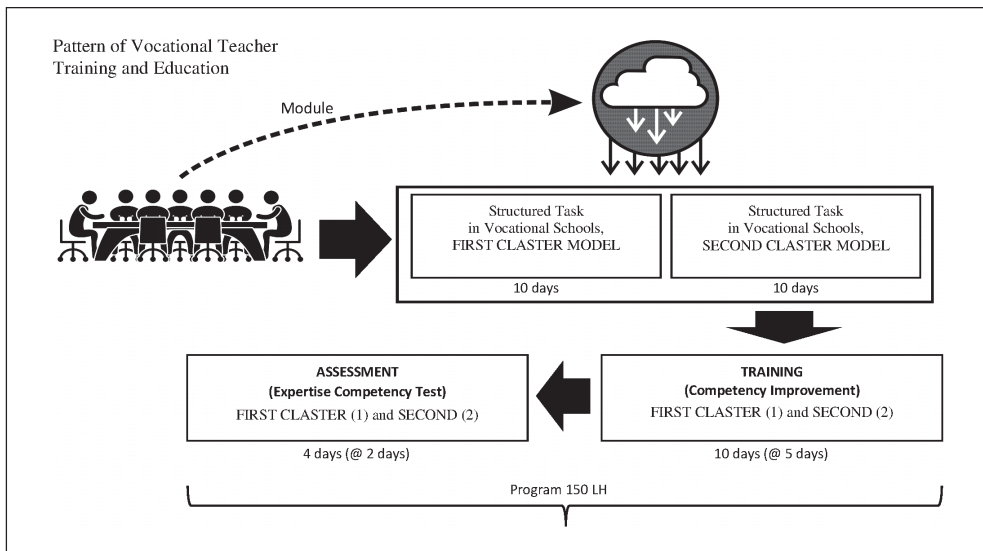


Figure 5. Organization of vocational school teachers' training program (Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018)

In Figure 5, the structured independent activity in vocational schools is on-the-job learning (On), in which teacher participants from vocational schools learn about competency unit's material in the first and second clusters, which have been determined independently at the school, each for ten days (minimum 2 lesson hours a day) each cluster. In turn, the training and skills competency test are activities conducted face-to-face between participants and the instructor at the training site for ten days and followed by skills competency test for two clusters. The total time allocated for training activity is 150 lesson hours. The skills competency test for vocational school teachers is conducted at the end of the pedagogical and professional material reinforcement with a feasibility recommendation from the trainer.

Compared with the organization of training the year before, in which some was conducted online, community-based teacher training with the face-to-face mode offered several benefits. This was expressed by Yuliana (one of the participants), as follows:

The training that is performed face-to-face facilitates the participants in joining the training and comprehending the materials provided. When a participant finds a difficulty in comprehending the material, he or she can directly ask the trainer who is physically present at the classroom during the training. The community-based face-to-face training can also reach all areas in Indonesia, including those which are still having hindrances with the internet connection. The training that is performed face-to-face community-based can also reach all areas throughout Indonesia, including those which still have limited internet connection. If the training was conducted online, like the previous year, many teachers would experience obstacles due to limited internet connection. Additionally, community-based face-to-face training can create synergy among participants in joining the training, due to the fact that they belong to the same community, they know each other already, and because they face problems

with the same materials, the collaboration they develop with one another will be better established. Participants are also more open during the training because other than the fact that other participants are their own colleagues, in the face-to-face community-based training, the instructors are also members of the community, therefore, they know each other (Yuliana, participant – teacher from Lampung Province, interview on 31 January 2018).

Community-based teacher training program implementation serves as an inspiration for the Indonesian government to continue performing service upgrading for teacher competency improvement. In 2019, the Indonesian government is preparing continuation training programs for teachers as a follow-up for the previous training with a target of achieving teachers' average competency achievement of 80. These programs are expected to help realize the availability of quality teachers, who have professional skills that can help them carry out their profession successfully.

Discussion

Community-based teacher program is one of the breakthroughs in empowering the teachers to support competency improvement by optimizing teachers' synergy within a region. Through the community, teachers can develop themselves through training organized close to their workplace working with fellow teachers. In this way, teachers do not have to go far away from home to join training, and teachers can meet their colleagues who become their learning partners. This pattern of teacher empowerment is suitable for teacher development strategy in countries with many teachers located in a vast area, not to mention different separated islands. Inviting teachers to training in an area is very costly, it is also a very demanding task to manage. On the teachers' side, training in a faraway place means that they must leave their students and families for an extended time. Training conducted at the community, within one particular area, can be organized more effectively in terms of organization, teachers and their family, students and the school.

Through community-based teacher training, teachers from the community in the same area would interact and share knowledge and experience so that they learn from one another. This interactivity can encourage the spirit to develop and innovate in the classroom teaching practice, there would be improvements in teaching methods based on the findings from another teachers' experience. Innovation in classroom teaching practice would prove to be difficult if teachers do not open themselves to new ideas. This is consistent with Saud (2017) who states that innovation in education also affects the need for sustainable teacher development. Only teachers who continue learning can offer renewal in the classroom teaching practice. In fact, not only renewal in the classroom teaching practice can be offered, but teachers who keep improving their self-competencies are teachers who can realize education for sustainable development. This is in line with the ideas of Alkhawaldeh (2017), who stated that teacher education for sustainable development was an education paradigm which considered lifetime teachers' professional development as the focus of teaching practice.

Community-based training is one of the means that can give the answer to the need of such an achievement. With a training system and content prepared to match the teachers' needs, community-based training can offer enlightenment and fulfillment of teachers' scientific and skills needs. This is in line with the objective of a sustainable

professional development activity, namely to: 1) increase teachers' competencies to achieve the determined standard of competency, 2) update teachers' competencies to fulfill their needs in developing knowledge, technology, and art to facilitate students' learning process, 3) increase teachers' commitment in performing their main duties and function as professionals, 4) develop the love and pride as someone holding a teacher's profession, 5) elevate the image, dignity and worth of teaching profession in the society, and 6) uphold teachers' career development (Daryanto, 2013). Teachers who join community-based training get a learning service which matches with their needs, so that they can increase and update their competencies, have more commitment and love towards the profession, and eventually will elevate their dignity and self-worth as professional teachers, those who can respond positively to educational service needs, which is their main responsibility.

Community-based teacher training is also one of the ways to help keep the teacher work group "alive". Through the work carried out, community-based teacher training has accommodated members' common activities through productive activities to improve their competencies. This is consistent with the opinion of Neil and Morgan (2005) who stated that network activities could positively contribute to teachers' sustainable professional development. A similar opinion was expressed by Mulyasa (2013) who said that teachers' work group as a teacher forum had an essential role in teachers' sustainable professional development, to develop various beneficial activities towards teachers' competency improvement and professional development. Therefore, a partnership network among teachers within a community in an area needs to be continuously encouraged to grow and to actively organize joint activities followed by members of the community.

Community-based teacher training can be a program, which bring teachers together from various schools to meet and study together. Community-based teacher training encourages teachers to be professionally bound with fellow teachers, so that they can offer support to one another in terms of self-development. This is in accordance with Brine's opinion (2005) who stated that a network is one of the strongest methods to ensure that an individual develops professionally and maintains strong relations with the professional community. In tune with the opinion above, Darmin (2016) stated that a teacher's membership in teachers' work group was needed to increase professional ability in the effort to improve education quality. This means that involvement in teachers' work group is a teacher's active participation based on his/her willingness to join professional academic coaching activities through a collective association in order to improve his/her professional competencies.

Involving local community member teacher as a mentor in the community-based training has a double benefit. Community member teachers who own good competency are empowered to help other community members. This is in harmony with the opinion from Wen & Wu (2015) which stated that continuous professional development could help teachers become responsible mentors for sustainable education. Teachers who perform sustainable self-development will transform into better ones and will master enough competency to be shared with colleagues and fellow teachers. Teachers with high competency are not supposed to keep the competency for themselves, because as professionals, there is a responsibility to work together with other members of the profession towards a collective capacity improvement in providing a service. This is consistent with Gerretson et al. (2003) who stated that an effective teacher should make the time to communicate with colleagues so that they would function better as mentors and models for others.

Therefore, a community-based training does not only enable community members to improve competencies, it also encourages synergy among community members so that they can collectively move towards betterment.

Empowering local potentials as training mentors needs not be suspected to downgrade training quality because a colleague mentor can positively develop a collaborative culture among community members in order to help one another. This is consistent with Alkhalwaldeh (2017), who stated that there was a proof which supported collaborative sustainable professional development which aimed to fulfill the need for teachers' professional development, similar proof supported that teachers needed to have an ownership of their professional development.

The teacher partnership network developed and reinforced through community-based training can stimulate teachers to build a wider network. Various other benefits of a learning community in a network were expressed by Lieberman (1999) and Bubb & Earley (2007); they said that a network could provide the following: opportunities for staff to obtain and produce knowledge; various collaborative structures; flexibility and informality; discussion over problems that do not have agreed solutions; ideas that challenge the staff and not only prescribe generic solution; organization structure than can be independent yet attached to the school or university; opportunity to work across schools and regency/city authorities; a reform vision that is exciting and encouraging towards risk taking in a supportive environment; and a community which respects teachers' knowledge as well as knowledge from research and reforms. These various benefits are essential for every teacher in the framework of encouraging themselves to develop not only in the knowledge aspect, but also in improving the capacity as professionals.

Community development through teachers' network can be expanded not only among teachers within one area, but also with various components which have teachers' professional relations. Neil & Morgan (2005) stated that a network could be seen at two different levels (face-to-face and online), as shown in Fig. 6.

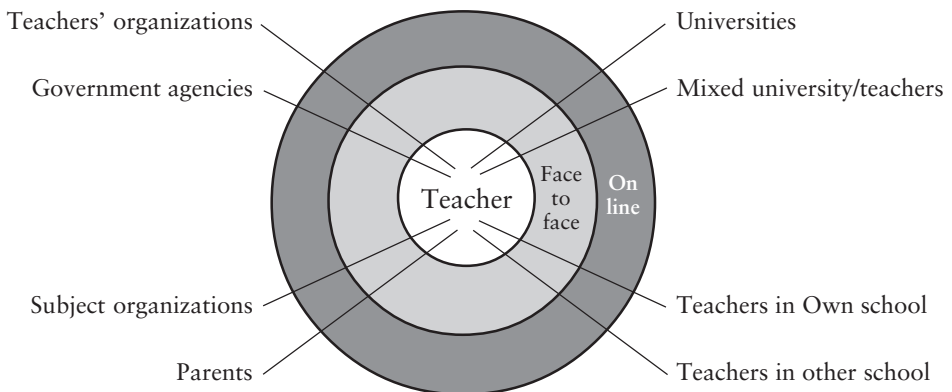


Figure 6. Seven main directions of teachers' network (Neil & Morgan, 2005)

Figure 6 shows that the network which can be developed by teachers is very vast: not only with teacher organizations but also with universities; mixed university/teachers; teachers from the same school; teachers from other schools; parents; materials organizations; and also, the government. Synergy from various parties is very good to support

teachers' self-development and performance. Neil & Morgan (2005: 56) also stated that fellow teacher partnership support could be seen as covering the four main elements and could vary along the continuum from loose/informal contact to structured/formal interaction, as shown in Figs. 7 and 8.

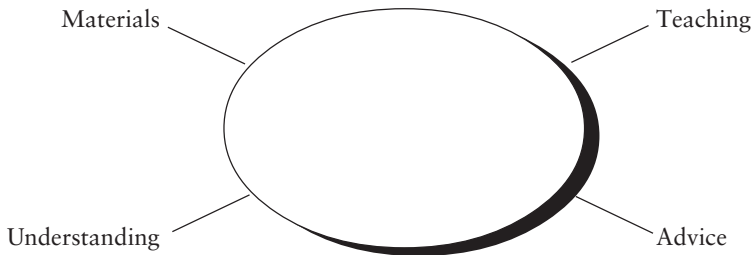


Figure 7. Teacher partnership continuum (Neil & Morgan, 2005)

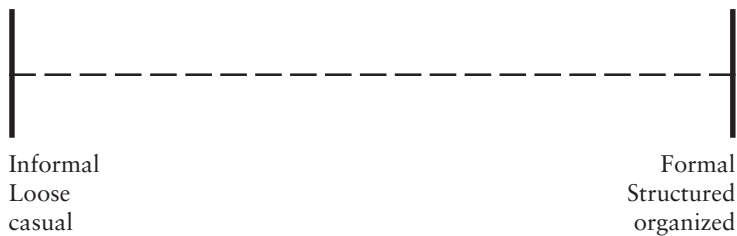


Figure 8. Types of contact 9 (Neil & Morgan, 2005)

Figures 7 and 8 show how big the potential of benefits that can be obtained by teachers from partnership with colleagues and fellow teachers. Therefore, the community-based teacher training can give positive multi-effects not only in improving teachers' competencies from the materials studied during the training, but also the bonus synergy between parties that can encourage acceleration of teachers' professionalism improvement.

Professionalism refers to the degree of performance as a professional or performing a job as profession. Professionalism also refers to attitude and commitment of members of a profession to work based on a high standard and profession code of ethics (Saud, 2017). Moreover, professionalism also refers to attitude of members of a profession towards the profession and the degree of knowledge and skills they have in performing their jobs (Saud, 2017). In line with the opinion above, what is meant by professional teacher at least has the following characteristics: 1) having commitment to students' learning process, 2) having deep mastery of the subject and how to teach it, 3) thinking systematically about what s/he is doing and learning from experience, and 4) being a part of the learning society in his/her professional environment, which enables him/her to always improve professionalism (Saud, 2017).

Teacher development is meant to stimulate, maintain, and increase the quality of staff in solving organizational problems. Furthermore, it is also stated that teacher development based on the need of the institution is important, but it is more important to conduct training based on teachers' individual needs to perform the professionalization process (Saud, 2017). The need for teachers' professionalism development does not stop when a teacher completes his/her pre-service education. Sustainability education is a continuum of practices that begins when college students start work in the field and con-

tinues throughout a teacher's career (Merritt, Archambault, & Hale, 2018, p. 30). The teacher's competency development needs to be carried out throughout his/her service term (Saud, 2017). Executing a sustainable professional development activity is expected to produce professional teachers, not just having a vast knowledge, but also being able to nurture students' interest and talents according to his/her share in mastering science, technology and art.

Competency-based training is one of the many correct strategies to realize a professional teacher. A professional is always open and responsive to change, especially in relation to his/her field of profession (Payong, 2011). As a professional who has a strong scientific basis and a solid practice, a teacher must always follow the paradigm changes because they bring considerable influence on his/her teaching practices. In order that teachers can catch up with those changes, one of the demands of professionalism is sustainable professional development (Payong, 2011). The community-based training is one of the great means to support teachers to develop their self-competencies, which later can be further developed by each teacher, by collaborating with other teachers, so that teachers can perform their profession well amid various changes in the situation and system of life.

In a competitive world today, the idea of competency has drawn significant interest, and it is believed that teaching competency can be used as a clue in determining personal quality and characteristics of a teacher (Alqiawi & Ezzeldin, 2015). One of the most significant objectives of education in the post-industrial society is the transition from teaching paradigm (information sharing) to educating paradigm (competency sharing – stimulation towards action) (Abykanova et al., 2016). This surely demands teachers' paradigm change in viewing their daily tasks in the classroom, no longer simply transferring knowledge, but also capable of encouraging and inspiring the students. Here, the need for professional teachers who keep developing themselves is very important.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that community-based teacher training is a program from the Indonesian government to improve teachers' competency as a follow-up to the Learning Teachers' Competency Improvement Program in 2016. This training program is needed as the follow-up on the results of teachers' competency test that was conducted in 2015, that is, to improve the competency of teachers who, based on the competency test, still have low competency mastery. The target of community-based teacher training program are teachers whose competency profile (based on the results of teachers' competency test) shows three to ten competency groups that have lower than minimum score (65). Through the community-based teacher training program, it is expected that the teachers could reach the minimum average competency score of 70 in 2017, reach the score of 75 in 2018, and reach minimum score of 80 in 2019. The community-based teacher training is organized in three modes, namely 1) face-to-face, 2) full online learning, and (3) blended learning. The modes are selected by Provincial/Regency/City Service Office or the Technical Execution Unit to organize classes according to the participants' profiles. The community-based teacher training succeeded in increasing the professionalism of teachers in Indonesia, especially related to the improvement of pedagogical and professional competencies. The training is also successful in motivating the teachers to keep learning in order to improve sustainable self-competency through the teacher network collaboratively with colleagues. Quan-

tatively, training was proven to increase the average of teacher competency by 23.97 (on a scale of 100). In the process, the community-based teacher training program is positively welcomed by the teachers, and those who have joined the program generally succeeded in improving the competency according to the target that has been set. Other than competency improvement, community-based teacher training is proven to have given another benefit, that is, the development of synergy among teachers in the community, so that a collaborative learning culture develops among them.

Other than the empirical findings above, this research also gives an inspired finding about the potential of community-based teacher training as part of teachers' sustainable professional development program. The community-based teacher training can give motivating stimuli to the teachers to continue studying to improve self-competency collaboratively through a network with colleagues. Involving teachers as mentors for other teachers also gives another dimension about chosen local teachers who can become the learning partner for other teachers. The problems that the teacher community has in finding training resource persons from outside can be minimized by empowering colleagues who have better competency mastery. The learning synergy in one area can encourage the emergence of a teacher community with the passion and willingness to keep on improving competencies. 'Teachers as lifelong learners' is no longer a mere slogan, but a reality jointly presented by individual teachers who are in synergy to one another.

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