Implementation of Primary School Teacher Certification Policy

Loso Judijanto1*, Melly Susanti2
1IPOSS Jakarta
2Universitas Bengkulu

Corresponding Author: Loso Judijanto losojudijantobumn@gmail.com

Abstract
A teaching certificate serves as proof of recognition of a teacher's status as a professional. This study aims to determine the implementation model of the primary school teacher certification policy in Seluma Regency, Bengkulu Province. This qualitative research method collects data through a qualitative approach and descriptive approach to explain and describe the implementation of the teacher certification policy. The results obtained show that the lack of socialization facilities and infrastructure, coupled with the absence of socialization of teacher certification since 2012 until now, has made the primary school teacher certification policy in Sukaraja Sub-district, Seluma Regency, difficult to implement. Relevant parties from the Seluma District Education Office have not been able to offer the most effective solutions to the problems faced by teachers, especially in responding to regulations that are almost never consistent in the implementation of teacher certification.

Keywords: Teacher Certification, Teacher Performance, Professional Teacher, Teacher Quality

Received: 24, February
Revised: 26, March
Accepted: 28, April
INTRODUCTION

Teachers in Indonesia are professionals in the field of education, as stated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. The main duties of teachers are to educate, teach, guide, direct, train, assess, and evaluate students in early childhood education in formal education, primary education, and secondary education (Supriyadi, 2022; Nurbaiti, 2023). In order to achieve the goals of national education, the foundation to ensure the creation of a skilled teaching force is teacher certification (Troyan et al., 2023; Taryana et al., 2023). Teacher certification is expected to fulfill the need for qualified and experienced teachers. The teacher certification program was launched in 2006 with the aim of certifying approximately 2.3 million primary and secondary education teachers by 2015 (Elvina et al., 2022; Svitlana shumayeva, 2023; Widiya Lestari, 2023). The goal of this comprehensive certification program is to qualify all teachers in Indonesia (Fachruddin, 2018). In terms of budget, the program is estimated to cost around US$460 million (Greenblatt, 2023). Given the size of this program, it is the largest teacher certification program in the developing world.

Education has undergone a significant transformation and is now regarded as the production of knowledge, competence and growth potential. In addition, students are required to be able to learn regardless of location and time constraints. Finding ways to provide opportunities for students to reflect as they solve problems, analyze information and synthesize it at every academic level is another important challenge in education. Teachers play an important role as people who devote their lives to the field of education to achieve educational goals. A teacher's contribution to his or her students' academic achievement is decisive in the entire educational process (Subekti, 2022; Subqi, 2023). Excellent quality of education is directly correlated with the professionalism of teachers and how well they teach students (Zaleha et al., 2022; Rani Rani et al., 2023).

A teaching certificate serves as evidence of recognition of a teacher's status as a professional (Semiring et al., 2022; Latiana, 2019). Educators are required to have academic credentials, proficiency, a teaching license, good physical and mental health, and the capacity to fulfill national learning objectives. Teachers who wish to pursue certification must fulfill three requirements related to their profession: educational competence, professional competence, and personality competence (Shatalova, 2022; Sorokina, 2022).

In accordance with Minister of National Education Regulation No. 5/2012 on Teacher Certification, teacher certification is implemented in stages to accommodate limited funding. The phases include funding additional educator income allowances and certification costs. When it was first implemented, between 2007 and 2017, there were a number of challenges faced, both related to inconsistent regulations and the implementation of the technology in the field, which involved several stakeholders, such as qualified instructors and local education offices (Pendidikan et al., 2012). By improving teacher professionalism and education quality, the development of idealistic teacher certification regulations can raise expectations for higher education standards (Oktavia Liza & Zudeta, 2023; Ikhwan & Rabbani, 2024).
This study aims to determine the model of implementation of the primary school teacher certification policy in Seluma Regency, Bengkulu Province. In particular, Sukaraja Sub-district, Seluma Regency, Bengkulu Province, will be the focus of this paper's in-depth study of the implementation of certification regulations in developing teacher professionalism.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Teacher

Teachers in Indonesia are professionals in the field of education, as stated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. The main duties of teachers are to educate, teach, guide, direct, train, assess, and evaluate students in early childhood education in formal education, primary education, and secondary education (Supriyadi, 2022; Nurbaiti, 2023). In order to achieve the goals of national education, the foundation to ensure the creation of a skilled teaching force is teacher certification (Troyan et al., 2023; Taryana et al., 2023). Teacher certification is expected to fulfill the need for qualified and experienced teachers. The teacher certification program was launched in 2006 with the aim of certifying approximately 2.3 million primary and secondary education teachers by 2015 (Elvina et al., 2022; Svitlana shumayeva, 2023; Widiya Lestari, 2023).

Education

Education has undergone a significant transformation and is now regarded as the production of knowledge, competence and growth potential. In addition, students are required to be able to learn regardless of location and time constraints. Finding ways to provide opportunities for students to reflect as they solve problems, analyze information and synthesize it at every academic level is another important challenge in education. Teachers play an important role as people who devote their lives to the field of education to achieve educational goals. A teacher's contribution to his or her students' academic achievement is decisive in the entire educational process (Subekti, 2022; Subqi, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

We will use information gathered through a qualitative approach and descriptive approach to explain and describe the implementation of the teacher certification policy in Sukaraja sub-district, Seluma district, Bengkulu province. As this area has teachers who have been certified from 2007 to 2018, it meets the criteria to be used as a data source. In addition, the author selected primary schools with the understanding that this institution is the foundation of the early education process, and it is primary school teachers who will assess students' readiness to enter higher levels of education. Teacher Certification Management Committee The informants for this study came from the Seluma District Education Office, namely two office staff, five certified primary school teachers and one school supervisor.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the case of teacher certification, communication occurs when policy makers provide information to policy implementers, who then convey it to
certification participants. Socialization is one of the ways policy implementers provide information to certification participants. Three aspects of communication are:

**Message Transmission**

Message transmission is the first step in communication. Socialization is used to convey material in the process of implementing teacher certification. The implementation process will go well if the socialization goes well, and vice versa. Based on the data obtained, the Seluma District Education Office has conducted socialization of teacher certification since 2007. From 2007 to 2011, socialization activities were conducted twice a year. The people who conducted the socialization activities had knowledge about the teacher certification program and were able to communicate their ideas clearly. As socialization has not been conducted since 2012, certification candidates had to take the initiative to find out about certification through friends, the internet and the Ministry of State. Education website.

**Implementing the Teacher Certification Policy**

Implementation of a teacher certification policy is when legislative actions, executive orders, delivery of assessments or outcomes to subordinates (Taengetan et al., 2023), or the announcement of regulations and policy impacts to affected parties are all included in the policy setting process (Gras & Kitson, 2021; Diamond & Bulfin, 2023). According to Nurbaiti (2023) there are five variables that affect how a policy is implemented: communication, resources, disposition (attitude) of implementers, and bureaucratic structure.

**Consistency**

For a policy to be defined or enacted, the order in which it is implemented must be explicit and consistent. Implementers may become confused if the order presented is inconsistent or changes frequently (Schlick, 2021; Cramer et al., 2023). Therefore, communication must also pay attention to consistency. The implementation of the regulations in this study shows its consistency. Based on the statistics above, it can be concluded that the regulations themselves keep changing every year and the teacher certification policy has not been implemented consistently in Sukaraja sub-district, Seluma district, Bengkulu province. Policy implementers and certified teachers find the changes confusing and produce conflicting policies. The inconsistency of the certification policy is caused by several issues, including changes to the regulations and their implementation every year, making it increasingly difficult for teachers to follow as they age. Another issue is the high standard of competency test scores and the challenges associated with using computer-based tests, as many teachers still do not have the necessary skills to use the technology. In an interview, a certified teacher stated specifically, "Certification regulations often change without being socialized to us every year, causing confusion and the regulations are getting more complicated, where test scores must be high and exams use computers, where there are still teachers who are confused about using computers during
exams." is helpful in assisting the implementation of a policy. The execution of a policy will be hampered due to lack of funds.

**Staff**

Resources are one of the components that must be present in the implementation of a policy, if the personnel implementing the policy are deficient, the effectiveness of the program will be disrupted. Likewise, the policy will not run effectively if the personnel do not have the necessary abilities. Personnel who manage the teacher certification program are resources for implementing the policy (Keary et al., 2023; Pamuji & Limei, 2023). The personnel referred to in this paper are those employed by the Seluma district education office. The teacher certification program in Sukaraja sub-district was successfully implemented thanks to the efforts of employees of the Seluma district education office. The number of employees in this area may be too small, which sometimes results in long waiting times for the submission of teacher certification files. Although the available resources provide excellent service if all the work is done correctly, certification committee employees at the education office still embezzle money and take bribes when collecting certification files.

**Clarity**

The objectives of any policy made by policymakers must be clear. It is important to effectively communicate policy objectives to those who will implement them (Pramono, 2020). All staff members must agree to implement the policy and understand its precise and comprehensive objectives and intentions. The purpose of Seluma district's certification program is to evaluate teachers' professionalism by passing a test with a set score to obtain a professional educator certificate. However, a certified teacher disputed this claim and stated that there are still many eligible teachers who have not received certification and that if the purpose of the policy is only to evaluate teachers' professionalism based on how well they perform in competency tests, then head office officials should personally visit the classrooms of certification candidates to check their work (Limbong & Lumbantoruan, 2022; Svitlana shumayeva, 2023). The experiences of certified teacher informants formed the basis of the information obtained, which reads as follows: "The socialization materials were very clear, but we were not given a certification guidebook, even though the main purpose of certification is to assess teacher professionalism (Poudel, 2023; Oktariantoi et al., 2021). I believe it would be better if authorized officials visit schools and observe teachers' actions to assess their performance and level of knowledge, although this is not necessarily through competency tests or PLPG tests.
**Information Details**

Teachers should contact the local education office to get all information about the certification program (Nurbaiti, 2023; Agustina et al., 2021). As the Seluma district education office is the board and regulator of teachers and the subject of the certification policy, it is important for the education office to play an active role in equipping teachers with knowledge. This element shows that although they had to get the information through the school principal, the teachers received it quite well. The operator/principal assisted the education office in carrying out its information delivery procedures.

**Authority**

Authority is an important element in implementing policies (Ashford-Hanserd et al., 2022). The authority to implement the enacted policy is given to the organization responsible for implementing the teacher certification program. The powers of other implementing agencies cannot be infringed upon by the implementing agency. Those implementing the teacher certification policy must give up their ambition to exploit people or groups. Education office employees have been exercising their authority in various roles.

**Incentives**

Rewards are given to increase an individual's drive to complete activities. Teachers who complete the teacher certification program are given incentives in the form of teaching certificates. Professional allowance is money given to participants in the teacher certification program as an incentive (Indriati & Perrodin, 2022; Farezhena & Wijayaningsih, 2022). Teachers who have obtained a teaching certificate are entitled to receive a professional allowance. The allowance is given to educators who have obtained an education certificate to improve their welfare. The purpose of this allowance is to encourage educators to become more professional. Official staff receive incentives directly from APBD funds, based on the findings of interviews conducted regarding these incentives. Certification allowances are received by certified teachers every period; however, sometimes the funds are disbursed and then the incentive is given at the base salary every three months.

**Establishment**

In terms of policy implementation, facilities are very important. The implementation of an organization that has sufficient and skilled personnel will be hampered if it is not supported by adequate infrastructure. A computer room with air conditioning, a socialization room for certification participants, is one of the facilities needed in implementing teacher certification. In addition, PLPG (Teacher Professional Education and Training) training at the head office is also a means of competency testing for certification participants, this needs to be considered so that the policy can be implemented effectively. Due to the unavailability of air conditioning facilities and the large number of participants, the socialization facilities provided by the Seluma District Education Office are still inadequate. The Teacher Professional Education and Training Program (PLPG) is implemented with adequate learning space facilities, modules
provided by the organizers, and funds provided by certification organizers for accommodation, consumption, and transportation. However, over time, certification organizers no longer covered the transportation costs of PLPG participating teachers in 2015. In 2018, the facilities available to certification participants were drastically reduced. Teachers were required to pay for lodging during the three-month training program, as well as transportation. As a result, some teachers decided to withdraw from the program due to inadequate facilities.

**Way of Implementation**

The way a policy is implemented determines many things, including its success or failure. A person's disposition refers to their mindset or personality. The way the problem is handled will determine how well the policy is implemented. Policy implementers may be able to manage policies effectively if they have an optimistic outlook. The ability to complete tasks, responsibility, and a positive attitude all indicate a positive mindset and integrity in doing their work. In addition, policy implementation will be hampered if the people who implement it have a negative attitude and are unable to implement it properly. This unfavorable attitude usually comes in the form of laziness, unmotivation, and ignorance of their obligations. It is divided into three parts: incentives, personnel placement, and dispositional effects.

**Dispositional Effects**

In this paper, dispositional effects center on commitment. How implementers carry out a policy, its objectives or modifications, and the modifications they have made to the teacher certification program policy demonstrate their commitment. Implementers must know what needs to be done and their capacity to do it for implementation to be successful. Staff dedication to their work enables the teacher certification policy to be implemented well. In addition, staff support policies that enable teachers to live better and energize them at work. Educators argue that there are still some people in the community who oppose the duties and guidelines set by the legislators. This mindset prevents teachers from giving their best. As stated by one of the qualified educators below: "I strongly support this policy. As a licensed teacher, I am obliged to fulfill certain requirements, such as teaching a minimum of 24 hours per week, completing a syllabus, and making lesson plans. Undoubtedly, many instructors are now enjoying a higher standard of living as a result of their certification; however, this certification also brings with it many obligations and demands, meaning that the workload increases, which is the same for other educators." This complaint is echoed by other educators.
Staffing

Executives are required to select and organize their employees carefully and wisely. Effective policy implementation will be ensured through staffing. Staff members involved in policy implementation must be organized according to their areas of competence so that policies can be implemented as effectively as possible. The staffing of the Seluma District Education Office in implementing the teacher certification program is questionable. Staff in Seluma district have been appropriately placed according to their respective areas of expertise and specialization. Instead of being selected, leaders appointed staff members who were placed in the certification program and gave them letters of assignment to complete the teacher certification program. Staff are provided with the necessary training.

Standard Operational Procedures

SOPs are a list of guidelines for handling specific situations that include rules and guidelines for the organization. Policy implementers are required to run their operations consistently, effectively and efficiently by complying with the applicable SOPs. Technical guidelines replace SOPs to implement the teacher certification policy. SOPs governing the implementation of the teacher certification process can be likened to technical guidelines. The local education office has previously provided clear regulations regarding the main responsibilities of each staff member, including their authority and responsibilities in implementing the teacher certification program. Power sharing and accountability are closely related to the cooperation of each party.

The Importance of Certification for the Professionalism of Primary School Teachers in Sukaraja Sub-District

It can be assumed that great effort is needed to become a highly competent teacher in order to improve student learning outcomes and national education. Teachers must obtain certification to become professionals because certification is an indication that they have met professional, pedagogic and personality competency standards. Educators who have certification are considered professional teachers because they have knowledge in certain fields of education. These qualified teachers are required to carry out their duties professionally. One way certified teachers demonstrate their commitment to continuously improving their quality is through the various tasks they perform. The expectations and goals of national education can be used to measure performance improvement over time as evidence of this commitment. Society will consider an educator to be a professional educator if they have a certificate. Passing the competency test is one of the signs. However, passing the competency test does not guarantee that an educator will become a professional educator.
The term "professionalism" is obtained through certain means. The purpose of teacher certification, according to Law No 14 of 2005, is to assess the professionalism of educators. However, the data shows that the professionalism of primary school teachers in Kecamatan Sukaraja is not influenced by certification. This can be seen from the low level of teachers' professional competencies, such as their ability to develop lesson plans, which are very important for teachers in teaching in the classroom. In fact, a large number of certified teachers hire outside contractors to complete their lesson plans. Teachers struggled to create lesson plans after the KTSP curriculum was replaced with Curriculum 13. In addition, the lack of mastery of technology among teachers also led to a lack of professionalism in lesson planning and mastery of subject matter. Information found shows that, despite being accredited, some teachers still lack a thorough understanding of their subjects. This is because teachers only use what they already know and do not seek new information or knowledge from other media. In addition, the data shows that many teachers prefer to turn on their gadgets during free teaching hours rather than continuing their education or learning new things.

In the area of personality competence, certification also did not have a major impact on teacher professionalism. Lack of discipline is one of the reasons that inhibits teachers from having professional personality competence; even without supervision from supervisors, some teachers are still often late and negligent in carrying out their duties. Quite a number of educators have completed certification procedures to date. However, not all of them meet the standards of education personnel in their respective fields, namely Pedagogical, Professional and Personality competencies according to predetermined competencies. In addition, no matter how good the policy implemented by the government, if the educators hired are not qualified, then the goal of the policy itself will not be achieved, and no matter how good the suggested curriculum is, it will be a wasted effort if teachers cannot implement it properly. Teachers must not only have strong teaching abilities, but also have extensive information, a thoughtful mindset, and strong social skills. Therefore, certification does not guarantee that an educator will become a professional educator.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The lack of socialization facilities and infrastructure, coupled with the fact that there has been no socialization of teacher certification since 2012 until now, has made the certification policy for primary school teachers in Sukaraja sub-district, Seluma district, difficult to implement. Relevant parties from the Seluma District Education Office have not been able to offer the most effective solutions to the problems faced by teachers, especially in addressing regulations that are almost never consistent in the implementation of teacher certification. One of the difficulties is that teachers are not allowed to use the internet to research topics. In addition, the proliferation of websites and other online media has increased the importance of information delivery and acquisition, replacing face-to-face interaction. During the socialization of teacher certification, it was found that not all teachers had equal access to the guidebook. The socialization of the guidebook
is one of the tasks of the Seluma district education office in terms of information exchange. Teachers also experienced difficulties participating in teacher certification due to inconsistent and changing laws. These limitations lead to the conclusion that the professionalism of qualified instructors is not much influenced by the certification they have.

FURTHER STUDY
Still conducting further research to find out more about the Implementation of Primary School Teacher Certification Policy

REFERENCES


