

## Identification of teachers' problems in Indonesia on facing global community

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ISSN: 2243-7703  
Online ISSN: 2243-7711

OPEN ACCESS

Received: 27 April 2016

Revised: 20 June 2016

Accepted: 12 July 2016

Available Online: 1 August 2016

DOI: 10.5861/ijrse.2016.1519

### **Abstract**

A quality teacher is one who has a positive effect on student learning and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogic skills, and communications/ interpersonal skills. The perception toward the teacher's vital role in the success of learning is reasonable as, in case there is an insufficient learning facility, we do still have a hope if the teacher has standard competence to do so. At least three problems of teachers faced by Indonesia, i.e. teacher quality, teacher welfare, and teacher politicization. This paper is a deductive and inductive descriptive analysis writing using secondary data from literature. A number of facts related to teachers are then analyzed qualitatively to gain comprehensive descriptive of teachers' condition in Indonesia. The teachers' quality as one of education problems is influenced by many factors. To deal with this, the authority needs to keep socializing all standards of regulations out teacher's qualification and competence, to build teachers' self-awareness to always develop their ability and skills through workshops, education qualification upgrade, and independent learning to enhance their quality of teaching. Teacher's welfare is one of motivation to boost teachers' quality and performance to improve and to better the quality of education development in Indonesia. To overcome this problem, the government should attempt to eliminate problems of big wealthy gap and injustice rights among the teachers with different wages, to increase stipend for honorary teachers who's under minimum regional payment, and to realize other teacher's allowances on time. Teacher politicization problem is unavoidable since it is realistic effect of regional autonomy practice and education decentralization policy. The teachers are used by the local ruler for their political interest. Or reversely the teachers take advantages of the political situation to get compensation or certain political benefits.

**Keywords:** economic community; education; globalization; teacher; welfare

## Identification of teachers' problems in Indonesia on facing global community

### 1. Introduction

Learning achievement is influenced by some factors, namely students, teachers, learning materials, learning facilities, classroom management and learning environment. These six aspects are inter-related to another one in giving their impact and contribution to raise the expected learning objectives (Regina, 2014). To gain optimal contribution, there should be sufficient treatment toward these factors adequately. (Gurney, 2007) suggested the interaction of the following five factors that provide a foundation for a good teaching: a) teacher knowledge, enthusiasm, and responsibility for learning; b) classroom activities that encourage learning; c) assessment activities that encourage learning through experience; d) effective feedback that establishes the learning processes in the classroom; and e) effective interaction between the teacher and the students creating an environment that respects, encourages and stimulates learning through experience.

One of vital factors and generally discussed in relation to the quality of education is teacher. A quality teacher is one who has a positive effect on student learning and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogic skills, and communications/ interpersonal skills (Hightower et al., 2011). It is commonly known when the learning objectives did not meet the targeted standard; teacher will be the one to blame mostly. Indeed it is not fair, because learning is a system or program influenced by many affecting factors mentioned earlier. Nevertheless, the perception toward the teacher's vital role in the success of learning is reasonable as, in case there is an insufficient learning facility, we do still have a hope if the teacher has standard competence to do so. Conversely, when the facility has been good, but the teacher's quality is low, it will not give significant effect toward the attainment of leaning objectives.

Therefore, all parties involved in education should pay attention more to the teachers' problems. In Indonesia, teachers' problems always become serious concern by educational experts. They list at least three problems of teachers faced by Indonesia, i.e. teacher quality, teacher welfare, and teacher politicization (Chang et al., 2014; Tobias et al., 2014). All products of legislation about teachers has given an understanding that government pays "enough" attention to teachers from regulation perspective. But the real problems actually come upon real field implementation at school, multi-interpretative regulations, and goodwill from people to support government's programs of teacher development.

The big question is how to solve those three main problems of teachers? From the teacher's quality aspect, teachers are demanded to fulfill all constitutional criteria designed by the government, e.g. to master 4 basic competences: competence of pedagogic, personality, social and professional. Additionally, teachers also required to fulfill academic qualification on the subject level, and to join all training and professional development programs organized by the government, private sectors, or by their own self-development programs. Under the issue of teacher's economy welfare, there is also jealousy among teachers between those who has been a government officer and private teachers, and also between those who get certification allowance and of not ones. In Indonesia, the number of unlucky teachers with bad economy is still high, especially those teaching in rural areas. It becomes one of government serious problems. To overcome with, the government released a policy of allocating School Operational Fund (*Bantuan Operasional Sekolah*; BOS) in which the 20% of total budget is specially allocated for teachers (Tobias et al., 2014).

The last problem is teacher politicization. This thing commonly happens to the local regions particularly at the political momentum such as legislative election, regional election and presidential election. The candidates usually make use of educational issues like teachers as their political commodity, because the number of teachers is by quantity significant enough to gain winning. Moreover, some teachers are also recruited as success team of a candidate. For getting their vote, they are given promise to be headmaster, head of education district or other

strategic position. We can say that this dirty political practice make someone become a high rank officer not because of his personal competence and meet standard qualification, but merely more on his contribution as success team of the candidate. On the other side, if a teacher takes part in the political competition and lose, as a punishment he will be mutated or removed to a certain remote area.

Those three problems of teachers in Indonesia will be very influential on teachers' performance and quality when they have to enter the era of global competition especially for the near future is ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) which will be effectively applied in the beginning of 2016. This joint agreement opens more access for open competition among teachers in ASEAN level. Surely our teachers will not win the competition if they do not have strong competence and other qualifications. Teachers from ASEAN countries will get into Indonesia and eventually take over the domestic teachers' positions. By contrast, Indonesian teachers will be likely hard to expand to other countries if they have low quality.

This article aims at describing and finding the solutions for problems of teachers in Indonesia. The result is expected to project teachers' readiness to compete in AEC.

### *1.1 Method of Writing*

This is a deductive and inductive descriptive analysis writing using secondary data from literature. A number of facts related to teachers are then analyzed qualitatively to gain comprehensive descriptive of teachers' condition in Indonesia. Furthermore, the teacher factor will be individually analyzed deeply to find alternative solutions as a reference for government to make a policy to develop teachers' professional quality.

## **2. Literature Review**

Learning process is a system consists of various components, such as (1) students, (2) teacher, (3) learning materials, (4) facilities, (5) school management, and (6) learning environment. These six factors work together creating a process that in the end will result in a learning outcome. From the scheme, teacher is one who becomes 'scapegoat' to be blame in the evaluation toward the learning outcomes. Therefore teacher becomes subject of this writing.

### *2.1 Teacher Quality*

There are many research discussing on the teacher competence (Vesanavibool, et al., 2015; Tran & Duong, 2015) as a key of education quality. Teacher is a professional educator whose main duties to educate, to teach, to guide, to direct, to train, to assess, and to evaluate students in early education though the level of formal education, basic education, and high education (Article 1 Verse 1 PP RI No. 74/ 2008). Law No. 14/ 2005 unit IV chapter 8-10 describe teacher as follow:

- Teacher must have academic qualification, competence, teacher certificates, healthy physically and mentally, and also have ability to realize national education goals.
- Academic qualification at least undergraduate degree (article 9)
- Competence including pedagogic, personality, social and professional through professional education (article 10)

Referring to the criteria, anyone who wants to be teacher must prepare himself best. Teachers also need to build their capacity building through various training and courses of human resource development updated to latest information enhancement (Lasley et al., 2006). Teacher quality is not fixed at the point of entry into the profession but can develop through experience and exposure to ongoing professional development opportunities, including in-service training workshops and school-based professional support including mentoring, and peer-learning such as teacher study groups (Naylor & Sayed, 2014). In fact the government has launched some

regulations to improve teachers' quality. But it will not work effectively without any supports from society and teaching students who are projected to be professional teachers. Sometime teacher development is inconsistent relationship to teacher productivity (Harris & Sass, 2011). There are many report documents of research about teacher's competence and quality. All of these showed the factors influencing the success of education and courses. The answers are their teaching profession solidity and their high self confidence in teaching competence. In doing so, the management always run teachers' training and workshop for administration staffs continuously (Goldharber & Walch, 2014; Paaso & Korento, 2010).

## 2.2 *Teacher's Welfare*

Beside the curriculum reform, considering the teacher's welfare is very important for education quality improvement (Jalal et al., 2009; Regina, 2014; Reyes & Navarto, 2016). Constitution 1945 article 31 verse 4 says that the government prioritize budget for education at least 20% from national budgeting and expenses and also from provincial income and expense budgeting to fulfill the necessity of national education. The mandate from the constitution brings "fresh air" to fund all education costs in Indonesia. However, the problems come up in the implementation level, particularly in the provinces/regions in which they just implement the constitution mandate and allocate from the national budget 20% only, without allocating from their own regional budget.

According to World Education Indicators 2007, teachers in Indonesia are significantly underpaid compared to their international counterparts. The salary levels shown are based on purchasing power parity, which takes into account the cost of living in each respective country. Low teachers' salaries have been caused by a combination of the oversupply of teachers and limited government funding. According to MONE (2008) statistics, of the 2.78 million teachers in Indonesia, more than 50 percent of teachers (approximately 1.5 million) are civil servants. Expenditure on salaries has put heavy pressure on the government's annual budget. In 2008, of a total educational budget of 154.2 trillion IDR, almost 62 trillion IDR (40 percent) was spent on such expenditure. This expenditure is expected to increase to IDR 83 trillion in the 2009 State Budget, with the 2009 Education Budget set to reach 207 trillion IDR in order to reach the level of 20 percent of the total State Budget target mandated by the Constitution (Jalal et al., 2009).

The World Bank reported that the allocation of national budget has been realized 20%, at least from 2001-2009 as instructed by constitution. The data shows that year by year the education budget provided by the government is increasing, so that actually nomenclature for teachers' wage should normally increases, too (Cerdan-Infantes et al., 2013). The problem is it clashes with the increasing number of teachers annually. It is the reason why the government has to calculate the real situation based on the valid data to meet fairness in classifying the education budget. The potential solution is that the local government or regions are expected to also commit to the constitution mandate by providing 20% of regional budget for education which can be used to finance teachers' salary.

Although welfare or prosperity is not merely about wage (salary/ stipend/ allowance), still one often that problematic is about the salary/ honor. When talking about teacher's welfare aspect, this matter includes in teacher's right. After fulfilling qualifications as regulated by the government and show good dedication and performance in their profession in teaching, the teachers are deserved to ask for their rights. Teachers' rights have been accommodated in law No. 14/ 2005 Article 14-19, they are to get: income above minimum living cost and to get social welfare insurance, to get promotion and reward based on their performance, protection and rights toward intellectual properties, opportunity to improve their competence, access to use facilities and infrastructures to support teaching and learning process, to make assessment and to decide students' graduation, reward, and/ or sanction to students as the running ethics rules and constitution, to get secure feeling, comfort and safety assurance on duty, a freedom to follow profession organization, an opportunity to take role to take educational policy, an opportunity to develop academic qualification and competence, and also an opportunity to gain workshop and professional development in their areas.

In the UNESCO Report as quoted by Tanya Khan pointed out that un-transparent implementation of promises from the authority, teacher politicization, bad management, lack of transportation and security are several serious problems experienced by the teachers. Decision makers and the authority have been aware with the motivation crisis in teaching, but up to now have not taken an effective action to recover teachers' motivation and needs incentives. Teachers' motivation is determined by two main factors, namely cash money and non-cash. Paying for level and benefits of other necessities should be sufficient to fulfill human basic needs (food, housing, clothes, transportation, health, education, and training). However, teacher's satisfaction is also highly established by the higher emotional and social needs, such as professional self-pride, job safety, interpersonal relations in the work field, career opportunity, working environment, workloads, and productivity of learning outcome. Other critical issues are related to teachers' accountability level for their school manager, students, parents and public (Khan, 2012).

### 2.3 Teacher politicization

Some research in Indonesia showed that teacher development is influenced by political dynamic. For instant, the teachers' autonomy promotion efforts to be professional worker get much influence from political dynamics ("Delapan Modus Politisasi Guru di Pilkada", 2015). There is dominance politics by the regional leader toward the teachers' autonomy or called "teachers politicization" either implicitly or explicitly to win 'political interests'. This practice is the reflection of political relation metamorphosing to political transaction which ends to power sharing ("Awasi Politisasi Guru Jelang Pilkada", 2015). And also teacher politicization is manipulated sophisticatedly by the local leader in the 'disguised practices' in order to gain supports and votes from society through teacher issues. In return, the local ruler gives the teachers power as "political ethic" in the form of structural position. There are two types of teacher politicization, namely cooptation politicization or through teachers' federation organization, and through "politics of getting teachers' heart". Fourth, the teacher's politicization conducted by the local ruler brings either positive or negative impact to teachers. Its negative implication is the decline power of teachers' criticisms either individually, collective, or institutional toward the implementation of educational development by the ruling local leader.

Meanwhile, in the positive side the teachers' politicization gives more quotas for teachers to pursue their continuous study, the increasing numbers of teachers who get reward and pass on certification test, and also the increase of teachers' welfare level (Rohman, 2013). The findings above give clear empirical description that there is strong relation between teachers' dynamic interaction autonomy with the local power dominance. It is clearly seen when there is political momentum like general election. For example, teachers who work or support the winning candidate will get a better position in return.

The new winning election of certain major of district sometimes decides to send all officers with teaching background back to school to teaching. Those officers identified working as teachers were the head of some bureaus of nonacademic position. Responding to the policy, The policy of the structural position should not be exclusively applied to structural teachers, but should be fairly implemented to all political positions in the local government as the realization of principle "the right man on the right place ". Furthermore, to give room for teachers' expression the teachers may participate in any professional organization of teachers such as Teacher Union of specific subject (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran* or MGMP), National Teacher Union (*Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia* or PGRI), and also cluster groups of schools established by the government in every region. The authority also should open rooms for teacher development in the forms of training and courses, for example to continue their further study.

Those two different facts above illustrates that teachers' politicization is real phenomena in the dynamics of education development in Indonesia. It is not impossible to happen to other regions throughout Indonesia.

### 3. Discussion

As mentioned earlier, several severe faced by teachers nowadays are teacher's quality, teacher's welfare, and teacher politicization. Teachers' quality has been anticipated by the central government by issuing some regulations in the effort to improve teachers' quality in various levels and school units. These regulations seems put relatively high standards, therefore there should be adjacent empowerment policies from local government to support the central government policies, such as regional regulation (*Peraturan Daerah*), Governor regulation (*Peraturan gubernur*), Regent regulation (*Peraturan bupati*), and Mayor regulation (*Peraturan walikota*).

Besides, there should be mutual synergy among state apparatus involved in education, starting from The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Religion, Provincial Bureau of Education, the Board of Education Quality Assurance (*Lembaga Penjamin Mutu Pendidikan* or LPMP), regent bureau of education until school units to hand-in-hand together support to enhance teachers' quality through various different positive activities, such as training, seminars, further study, and many others. Moreover, teachers also must have strong awareness and commitment internally to learn from those scientific academic-teaching forums so they can enhance their competence and to fulfill administrative requirements to deserve as a professional teacher.

From aspect of teacher welfare, the most problematic issue is about wage, especially for honorary teachers (non-civil servants) whose low salary and unable to sufficient minimum living cost. Teacher constitution (UU Guru) article 15 mentions that teacher's wage covers main salary, additional allowance, and other incomes, such as professional subsidy, functional subsidy, special allowance and extra profit valued based on performance and achievement principle. Generally, teachers recruited by central government and local government will receive salary according to the operating law, while teachers recruited by private institution (foundation) will be given salary based on the signed agreement between two sides both. In comparison to other countries in ASEAN such as Brunei, Thailand and Singapore, the government teachers are still having low average salary although from Indonesian standard; they are stated living in a wealthy life. Certainly the comparisons with non-government teachers are much smaller.

Recently, PGRI as official national teacher professional organization strives for all honorary teachers-Non PNS (Government Officers) over Indonesia to gain minimum payment to enjoy minimum decent living. It is because there is conspicuous disparity of wages between one school to another, between private and state school, and among the private schools themselves depending on the financial power of those schools. Actually teacher's welfare cannot be measured from wages only, but also from other aspects, such as comfort, protection, career opportunity, professional development opportunities, further study, and simple bureaucracy to manage functional teacher degree as regulated by law.

The last problem is about education politicization, particularly teacher politicization. What is actually real meaning of teacher politicization? Since the national policy of local autonomy applied, every region is given authority to manage its own domestic business including education where the execution in the society is run under the command of head of education bureau. Consequently, teachers' affairs are handled by the local ruler, too, so that the ruler may take advantages of this situation for their interest.

The most conspicuous situation was seen where there is political momentum in regional democracy fiesta either legislative election, local election, presidential election, and also governor election become arena for the candidates to offer promises. Education is one of sexy issue to attract public sympathy. Even the number of teacher is quantitatively potential to be operation target for those candidates and their success team. The teachers are offered sweet promises without any implementation guarantee, teachers are also invited to join in practical politics as member of succeeding team to get material profit and promotion in return if the candidate wins. When the teacher has been involved in the practical politics, there will be several fuzzy effects to education as follows:

- If the promising candidate wins, the teacher is projected to be headmaster, supervisor, and head of education bureau, even to be promoted as assistant of regional leader in non-education sector. Surely it

will break the government system because the principle "the right man on the right place" does not apply anymore. As a result, there will be unqualified persons and incompetent people sitting in strategic positions that may make negative policies and impacts toward education development.

- When the candidate defeated, the political teacher will get bad effects like to get mutation to rural counties, suspended his rank and salary, and even find hard to manage all administration stuffs related to his job. This will also make bad impact to education development for sure.
- The decision to become involved in practical politics as succeeding team overtly or secretly will become a model for other teachers, even when his candidate win and he gets strategic position. It will inspire other teacher to start thinking to do so.

Those three description of teachers' problems above is influential and interfering each other. Teachers' quality can influence their welfare and get trapped into whirlpool of practical politics (Lim & Apple, 2016). Conversely, teachers' welfare and teacher politicization may also impact on teacher's quality. As government of Indonesia has agreed to join with other ASEAN countries in ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) ('Asean economic community blueprint', 2008), Indonesia has to prepare the teachers best and solve the internal problems of teachers in order to be able to compete with teachers from other countries in ASEAN area. It should be taken into consideration because they will compete overtly and directly to get job access anywhere with the equal right. This market system will be competitive in which a country which has good teacher's quality will be employed and hired quickly, while those under-qualified will be left behind and lose. The teachers' quality here refers to academic competencies, mastery of international language and ASEAN national languages, social competence, and ability to access information and technology. Eventhough some countries got significant improvement on their education reform, they still face some teacher problems (Lalli, 2015).

From the five fundamental freedoms in AEC (Kalloe, 2014), teacher profession can be classified as point 5. It means the freedom of getting job among the member of ASEAN countries constitute a fundamental freedom needs to be respected by all ASEAN countries. Workmanship becomes special independent focus and very fundamental in the agreement of AEC. This matter gives a signal for government of Indonesia to prepare high quality human resources in education, especially the teachers so that they can compete and employ in all ASEAN countries. The followings are criteria of qualified teacher:

- Has formal education at least undergraduate degree
- Competent in pedagogical, personality, social and professional
- Able to communicate in international/ foreign language and official language or local language of the targeted country
- Good in technology and information
- Possess good knowledge of teaching methods
- Implementing ethic codes of teaching
- Well-informed to law of education, philosophy of education, theories of education preferable, educational policies, educational management, curriculum and local culture/ wisdom.

The seven criteria above could be good modal for Indonesian teachers to prepare themselves to work as professional teachers in ASEAN countries. Teachers have essential role in promoting quality education. The competent teachers such as technology literate, high motivation, dedication are very important. In some countries, they face the same problem on salary to support competent teachers. The important thing in improving the quality of education is not only having enough number of teachers, but enough number of good quality teachers. Competence affected positively and insignificantly teacher job satisfaction since pedagogical competence, social,

personality, and professional had not been applied well (Arifin, 2015). Almost ASEAN countries have a shortage of teachers both in number and quality; and still teaching is not an attractive profession financially. Under the issue of teacher's welfare, the government needs to synergize the teacher's salary and other non-salary welfare to avoid increasing gap with other countries. It also displays a pride of nation among the ASEAN countries. Apart from it, there is another factor influencing teachers' welfare in the salary issue, such as the level of living cost inter-nations that positively correlate to teachers' purchase ability to sufficient their living needs. Furthermore, teacher's politicization in Indonesia can change dramatically when massive migration of teachers from outside to inside really happen, and *vice versa*. However, the phenomena will not be easily diminished or minimized because it has been a kind of tradition.

#### 4. Summary

Teacher is one of key factors to raise a successful learning outcomes and a crucial factor determining the quality of education. Therefore, a problem of teacher automatically means problems of education. By regulation, as matter of fact many operating positive laws and value in Indonesia such as Pancasila, UUD 1945, regulations and its sub-regulation products have allowed chances and attention to improvement of the national education quality, especially to improvement and empowerment of teachers as the effort to promote the quality of national human resources in education sector.

Generally someone who choose teacher as profession experiences two problematic motivation opposing each other. First, spiritual calling to serve for society and humanity is one dominant aspect in this case. Second as the opposite, the motivation as teacher is to get income as realistic needs of life to continue his existence and to take care of his family. It is the obligation of government to accommodate these different orientation so they can run altogether to reach the goal, namely to contribute to improve national education. In the end, the discussion can be summarized as follows:

- The teachers' quality as one of education problems is influenced by many factors. To deal with this, the authority needs to keep socializing all standards of regulations out teacher's qualification and competence, to build teachers' self-awareness to always develop their ability and skills through workshops, education qualification upgrade, and independent learning to enhance their quality of teaching.
- Teacher's welfare is one of motivation to boost teachers' quality and performance to improve and to better the quality of education development in Indonesia. To overcome this problem, the government should attempt to eliminate problems of big wealthy gap and injustice rights among the teachers with different wages, to increase stipend for honorary teachers who's under UMR payment, and to realize other teacher's allowances on time. PGRI as official central organization for teachers and other teacher' organization should build good synergy with government to find the way out of these problems and to make them real.

Teacher politicization problem is unavoidable since it is realistic effect of regional autonomy practice and education decentralization policy. The teachers are used by the local ruler for their political interest. Or reversely the teachers take advantages of the political situation to get compensation or certain political benefits. The relations between teachers and the ruling leaders in pragmatically politic should be prevented because it can impact to teacher's professionalism at work. The teachers' awareness and government policy should be synchronized to keep the teachers away from practical politics and if necessary sanction can be given to teachers so they will think twice to get into it.

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