


THE CONTEXT OF PROFESSIONALISM AMONG EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHERS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: *A teacher can be said to be a professional teacher if he has basic competence as a teacher. The purpose of this research is to find out and analyze the context of the professionalism of early childhood education teachers in Indonesia. Data collection was carried out using qualitative research methods. Data collection is useful for obtaining the information needed to achieve research objectives. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to 34 PAUD teachers in Indonesia as respondents based on length of teaching. The results of the study show that the professional context of early childhood education teachers in Indonesia is teachers who 1) meet the professional teacher requirements; 2) have professional teacher competence; 3) have good ethics as a professional teacher; 4) meet the National Standards (Law No. 20 of 2003) and International Standards (National Association of Early Childhood), and; 5) have linearity in their field, in this case, is the field of early childhood education. With the existence of government standards and regulations related to the PAUD teaching profession, it is hoped that the quality of education can be improved and developed.*

Keywords: *Good Teacher, Early Childhood Education Teacher, Professional.*

A. Introduction

Teachers have a role that can never be separated from the world of education. A teacher is a person who is dedicated to imparting knowledge, guiding, teaching, and shaping students to understand the knowledge they provide. Teachers should master expertise, insight, and special intelligence, and be able to carry out their duties as professionals, where the teacher's role is not guiding and teaching, but also guiding (Safitri & Sos, 2019); (Perni, 2019). More clearly, the role of the teacher has been regulated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers (Article 1) is stated: "Teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing and evaluating students in formal education, at the level of basic education and secondary education".

Professional educators must improve professional competence. This is because, (Maghfiroh & Eliza, 2021); (Yasmin & Eliza, 2021) explains that teachers like unsung heroes should promote professionalism who master the qualifications of educators, physical and mental health and are competent enough to fulfill their professional responsibilities as teachers and educators. Becoming a professional teacher requires skills and competencies that teachers already have conceptually, as well as methods, strategies, and competencies. (Anhusadar & Islamiyah, 2020) emphasizes that the upgrading and service quality of teachers is determined by how far they get the opportunity to take part in training related to the field of education/teaching. This is because educators are called professionals if they have the authority to guide, teach, and develop students seriously so that they can understand learning as well as possible.

Improving the quality of teacher professionalism means one form of effort to develop the teaching profession (Dimiyati, 2019). Teacher professional development is a way to improve the quality of teacher competence. Therefore, it is necessary to make continuous efforts to develop the teaching profession to become an absolute requirement for the progress of a nation and improve the quality of educators which will lead to an increase in the quality of education both the process and the results (Putri & Imaniyati, 2017). In addition, the development of the teaching profession is not only at the elementary school, junior high school, senior high

school, and university levels. However, it needs to be considered and developed for teachers at the early childhood education level.

Educators in early childhood education institutions play an important role because of the professional strengths that play a role in educating children to optimize children's growth and development (Dewi & Suryana, 2020). The professionalism of early childhood education teachers is the foundation for implementing learning tools in class such as the learning process early childhood education teachers have the responsibility to encourage, guide and provide facilities and infrastructure for students to achieve goals (Wardani et al., 2021). Professional teachers will know the importance of realizing students' rights which must be protected for growth and development so that it runs optimally (Roza et al., 2019). Experience in successful professional development provides a real advantage to the teacher's work, both inside and outside the classroom, especially considering that many teachers around the world are still very unprepared for their profession (Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

This is in line with the facts in the field which explain that there are still many early childhood education teachers who are not yet professional. Even though a professional teacher is a necessity that refers to the quality of integrity and personality (Noor, 2020). However, (Iqbal, 2018) In the implementation of teacher professional development there are obstacles where schedules clash with other activities. Control is not optimal and systematic from the school, so it is not measured validly with data. Lack of opportunities for further career development. Many teachers are stuck in a routine. The faster technology advances, the more proactive teachers follow its development.

Furthermore, (Dimiyati, 2019) explains that the limitations that occur are explained by, namely 1) people's point of view states that everyone can become a teacher as long as they are knowledgeable; 2) a great opportunity to appoint someone who does not have the expertise to become a teacher in a remote area; 3) most teachers do not respect their profession and have not developed their profession; and 4) the teacher feels inferior for being a teacher, abuses the profession for satisfaction and personal gain so that the teachers authority is reduced.

With the limitations that occur in the development of the

teaching profession, it is necessary to make efforts from both the government and teachers to increase professionalism as educators. It is intended that the context of professional teachers in early childhood education can be said to suit the needs of early childhood education.

B. Method

Qualitative research is used as this research method. The purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the professional context of early childhood teachers in Indonesia. Researchers used data collection using a questionnaire that was distributed to early childhood education teachers in various regions in Indonesia as respondents. Respondents were selected according to the characteristics that drew that they were early childhood education teachers and how long they had taught early childhood education through questionnaires using Google form and researchers in this study there were 34 responses.

Qualitative descriptive analysis was carried out on the data obtained to get an in-depth picture. This qualitative analysis method involves significant work such as formulating questions and procedures, collecting specific data from participants, analyzing data inductively from specific topics to general topics, and interpreting the meaning of data (Creswell, 2009). Researchers ask questions to informants, obtain collected data, then analyze it (with the stages of data analysis namely collecting data, reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions), and develop relevant supporting theories from various references.

No	Question	Ket
1	The figure of a professional early childhood education teacher	
2	Requirements must be prepared by a professional teacher	
3	The compulsory ability of professional teachers	
4	Mandatory ethics for professional teachers	
5	Early childhood teachers are said to be good teachers	
6	Professional teachers are teachers who meet national standards (Law Number 20 of 2003) and international standards (NAEYC)	
7	Teachers do not meet national and international standards regarding teacher competence	

8	Professional teachers are teachers who have undergraduate qualifications
9	Non-graduate early childhood education teachers can be said to be professional teachers
10	All early childhood teachers in institutions are professional teachers

C. Result and Discussion

This research was conducted by distributing questionnaires to early childhood education teachers in various regions of Indonesia as respondents in this study. Researchers chose respondents based on the length of teaching in early childhood education institutions and in this study, there were 34 responses. For more details, the researcher presents it in the form of a diagram below.

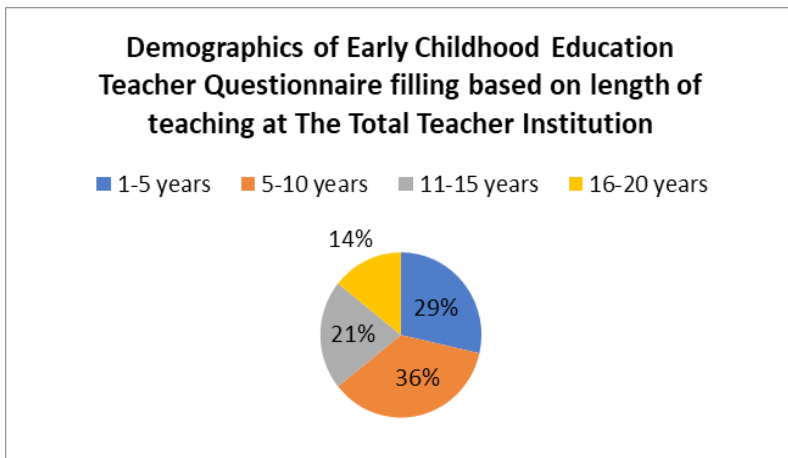


Figure 1. Demographics of filling out early childhood education teacher questionnaires based on length of teaching at early childhood education institutions

Based on Figure 1. It is explained that the filling out of the questionnaire for teachers 1-5 years is 29%, 5-10 years is 36%, 11-15 years is 21%, and 16-20 years is 14%. The results of data collection that have been found through distributing questionnaires to early childhood education teachers in various regions in Indonesia show that a professional early childhood education teacher is a teacher who can be a role model for

students. Has a linear qualification with the field he is involved in. And teachers can comply with the teacher's code of ethics by developing their competencies. Teachers need to have good professional qualities, especially teacher personality abilities because during the learning period at school, teachers are always modeled by students. (Felayati & Nurhafizah, 2019). Furthermore, (Mayar et al., 2019) Explain that professional teachers have a high awareness to carry out their obligations as well as possible. Therefore, the quality of professional teachers is very important, such as being able to teach and learn, having in-depth knowledge, and personality, and being able to integrate well in society.

The teacher is said to be professional if the teacher can fulfill the requirements that must be possessed. According to (Hatta, 2018) The requirements for a professional teacher are, 1) having a minimum academic qualification of a bachelor's degree or diploma four (S-1 or D-IV); 2) having pedagogic, personality, social, and professional competence; 3) have an educator certificate; 4) physically and mentally healthy, and; 5) can realize national education goals. Teachers who are said to be professional must emphasize teacher competencies that must be possessed by Ministerial Regulation Number 58 of 2009 concerning early childhood education standards including, 1) pedagogic competence is the teacher's ability to manage to learn; 2) personality competence is the teacher's ability to include noble character, ethics and morals, and self-development; 3) social competence is the ability of teachers as part of society, and; (Suryana, 2013).

Teacher competence is important to be owned by the teacher. However, the more important thing is the ethics of a teacher. Respondents' answers in this study indicate that a good teacher is a teacher who can be a mentor for his students. In this case, a teacher must have a good attitude where the teacher can accept and provide children's rights as students well. Teacher ethics means that the teaching profession is related to ethics, norms, and honor. Therefore, teachers are required to have the main attitude needed as educators, mentors, and teachers (Wandi & Nurhafizah, 2019). A good teacher has a supportive, proactive, and reflective attitude toward his inner character in developing students' character. Preparation is carried out in a good and supportive environment will produce good teachers because teachers are role models who have characteristics such as honesty, integrity,

humility, and compassion (Jameel et al., 2021).

In addition, according to (Cruickshank & Haeefe, 2001) good teachers have variations, namely 1) ideal teachers, meeting the standards set by school principals, supervisors, and education professors; 2) analytic teachers, using observational techniques to record student achievements; 3) effective teachers, produce higher students; 4) the teacher is responsible, carrying out the assigned teaching duties properly; 4) competent teachers, passing tests showing that they have the required competencies; 5) expert teachers, have extensive knowledge and can be used; 6) reflective teacher, has practical knowledge in teaching; 7) satisfying teachers, in which learning can be fun for students, parents, colleagues, supervisors, and administrators; 8) responsive diversity, the teacher is sensitive to all students, and; 9) Dear teacher.

Ethical reflection in the teaching profession needs to pay attention to the ethics of teachers towards themselves and ethics towards their students (Maghfiroh & Eliza, 2021). Teachers who have good ethics in supporting a teacher can be said to be good teachers. Good teachers are teachers who have succeeded in carrying out a good educational process by preparing plans for the evaluation of learning. (Qolbi et al., 2023) explained that ethics and morals in learning need to be scrutinized and strived to be able to be practiced in every learning process, both by educators and students.

Research findings (Jameel et al., 2021) explained that the teacher recognizes, understands, and respects the ethics of a teacher means that he can understand himself which plays an important role in developing the character of students. In addition, the teacher also assesses the character strengthening of students in learning by emphasizing the performance and strength of intellectual character. The focus on the ethics of the teaching profession encourages professional teachers. In addition, research findings (Putri & Maslahah, 2022) show that the professional ethics of an educator can reflect how children in early childhood education are cared for by instilling good principles, ethics, morals, and character so they can mingle in society according to prevailing norms.

In this case, the teacher is not only successful in giving lessons academically but the teacher is also able to develop good character in students. (Hasan, 2023) explaining piety, independence, and intelligence, both individually and collectively, polite, disciplined,

and respecting differences, is one form of effort to show exemplary attitudes and behavior based on ethics and profession which also includes intelligence and cooperation. Professional teachers with character can carry out learning that produces quality and character students.

The results of research related to professional teachers are teachers who meet the National Teacher Competency Standards (Law Number 20 of 2003) and the International Teacher Competency Standards (National Association for Young Children). refers to national standards and international standards so that teachers can develop learning according to the stage of objectives in early childhood education institutions. However, in the field, there are still many teachers who do not meet national and international teacher competency standards. This will cause gaps so that teachers cannot be said to be professional. And there are still teachers who do not know about the competence of teachers that must be possessed. Even though the professional competence of teachers has a positive and significant impact on the quality of learning (Nofriyanti & Nurhafizah, 2019).

Teachers who work professionally must be able to understand science as a distribution to students as a whole, both from the way of thinking, social development, and moral development. So teachers are required to be able to work professionally by having special expertise or competence in their field (Noor, 2020). Teacher qualification and professional standards issued by the government have their problems in early childhood education institutions because some institutions can follow up on these regulations. Some other institutions are unable to meet the standards set by the government for various reasons, including economic limitations, and there is no source of funds to continue their education to the S1 early childhood education level (Zulkarnain et al., 2020).

In line with the facts in the field, there are still many teachers who are not competent in their fields because they are not yet linear with the fields they teach. With the development of the 4.0 era, teachers should be able to adjust if the teacher cannot be linear in their field. The government must also pay attention to this, that there are still many teachers who are professionals in providing teaching to students, but because they are still not linear in their field, it is an obstacle in increasing professional teachers. But in

research (Ratnawati, 2020), not all teachers who are not yet linear cannot teach well, because each teacher works hand in hand to close the empty gaps and strives to make learning run well, interesting, and fun so that optimal educational results are achieved.

Even though various efforts can be made by teachers in increasing professional competence, namely by continuing education, participating in various training activities, reasoning, workshops, and seminars (Rochyadi, 2014). More clearly, (Sakti, 2020) said that the government's efforts to improve professional teachers were carried out by giving UKG (Teacher Competency Test), institutionalized institutional activities such as PKG (Teacher Activity Center), and KKG (Teacher Working Group), as well as carried out by zoning system activities. The breakthrough made by the government is implementing competency standards and teacher certification in increasing mastery of competencies aimed at improving the quality of education, developing national and local curricula, increasing teacher competence through training, procuring books and study tools, procuring and repairing educational facilities and infrastructure, and guaranteeing the quality of school management (Lailatussaadah, 2015).

Other things that are done to increase the quality of educators cannot be separated from the role of educational institutions in it. Important aspects in increasing the quality of educators, they have, 1) decent standard of pay and well-being for life, 2) qualification standards, 3) competency standards and efforts to increase them, 4) teacher and education staff certification systems and professional transfers do not meet competency standards, 5) career development standards, 6) preparation of prospective educators and educational staff who are aligned with competency standards, and emphasizes strong practice and theory, 7) training system in in-service training and professional education institutions, and 8) empowerment professional development organization (Choiro & Prasetyo, 2019).

The survey results prove that not all early childhood education teachers are professionals. Of the total number of teachers in early childhood institutions, only 80% of teachers are said to be professionals in their field. In line with the research that has been conducted (ZYURO & Komalasari, 2020) entitled "Analysis of the problem of pedagogic competence of certified early childhood

education teachers in Lamongan District” that the problem is the pedagogic expertise of certified early childhood education teachers in preparing curricula using learning technology. This problem can arise due to various causes, namely teachers with educational and non-educational backgrounds, as well as curriculum development groups as a guide in its preparation. In addition, it is difficult to detect the characteristics of a good teacher as an alternative consideration, so currently, a good teacher is judged by the competence of the teacher (Harris & Sass, 2009).

Study (Febrina, 2022) entitled “Problematics of Professionalism and Fulfillment of Teacher Academic Qualifications in early childhood education Institutions” that the problems that occur in teacher professionalism are not by national education standards. Because educators do not have the academic qualifications of early childhood education educators. Issues in early childhood education institutions are generally caused by low human resources teachers in early childhood education institutions. To overcome this problem, the institution implements policies to increase the quality of education through improving competence.



Figure 2. Research Results of Respondents on The Context of Professionalism Among Early Childhood Education Teachers in Indonesia

The results of the Professional Good Teacher research respondents in the context of early childhood education teachers in Indonesia

show that a teacher is said to be a good teacher if he meets the requirements, including 1) the requirements as a professional teacher; 2) have professional teacher competence; 3) have good ethics as a professional teacher; 4) teachers who meet National Standards (Law Number 20 of 2003) and International Standards (National Association for Early Young Children), and; 5) teachers who are linear in their field, for example, early childhood education teachers, the linear study is early childhood education.

D. Conclusion

The professionalism among early childhood education teachers in Indonesia must be developed because it has an important role in educators. Teacher professional development is carried out to improve the quality of education. In the professional development of early childhood education teachers, there are limitations in its implementation. Even though there are limitations, various efforts need to be made so that the professionalism of early childhood education teachers can be improved and developed.

From the research and the analysis supported by related theories, the context of professionalism among early childhood education teachers in Indonesia can be concluded that a professional good teacher is a teacher who, 1) fulfills the requirements of a professional teacher; 2) has professional teacher competence; 3) has good ethics as a professional teacher; 4) meets National Standards (Law Number 20 of 2003) and International Standards (National Association for Early Young Children), and; 5) has linearity in his/her field, for example, early childhood education teachers, the linear study is early childhood education. With the existence of government standards and regulations related to early childhood education professional teachers, it can be improved and developed to achieve quality education.

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