

# Professional Endorsement of Teachers and its Influence on the Improvement of Learning Achievement of Students: Perspectives of Teachers

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## ABSTRACT

Teacher endorsement (well-known as teacher certification in Indonesian basic and secondary education) is essentially aimed to improve the quality of Indonesian education. In this context, the government of Indonesia has paid special attention to three required qualities of teachers: competences, work motivation, and their well-beings (The Law No. 14, 2005). Since the role of teachers is central to the improvement of learning achievement of students, this study discusses the concept of teacher endorsement, the views of teachers regarding professional endorsement in relation to different tasks of teachers, and its influences on the improvement of students' learning achievement. The study uses qualitative approach where three types of data collections techniques are employed: document reviews, semi-structured interviews, and observations. The findings of the study show that professional teacher endorsement program had not yet fully supported the improvement of teachers' professionalism as required by the Law No 14, 2005. Besides, the understanding of teachers about requirements for being professional was still underprivileged leading to poor learning achievement of their students. Therefore, the study informs the needs for educational stakeholders to provide continuous counselling, motivation, and guidance for teachers in order for them to take this matter into serious accounts which in the end would help the government of Indonesia achieve its educational goal.

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## ARTICLE INFORMATION

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## 1. Introduction

Teacher endorsement is essentially aimed to improve the quality of national education. In the attempt to increase the quality of national education of Indonesia, the government has paid special attention to three qualities required for teachers to achieve as stated in the Law No 14 2005.<sup>1</sup> The qualities entails competences, work motivation, and well-being of teachers.<sup>2</sup> The fulfilment of these requirements is expected to develop learning achievement of students as the government believes that the role of teachers remains important in the classroom despite rapid advancement of communication and information technology.

The plan of the government of Indonesia to elevate social status of teachers and lecturers through professional certification project as ruled in the Law No 14 2005 finally takes place in 2006.<sup>3</sup> However, the project in general is partially anchored on the increase of financial well-being of teachers.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the achievement of the project in terms of learning achievement of students in general is relatively poor.<sup>5</sup> Despite the case, Fahmi et al found that, as

they observed quite a number of literatures regarding immediate influences of professional certification teachers on the improvement of students' learning achievement in developing countries, such literature is still quite limited.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the early claim that the national project for professional endorsement of teachers is unsuccessful needs to be reconsidered.

It is true that rapid growth of information and technology system undoubtedly enables almost every teacher to access internet connection. Simply with a gadget equipped with android operating system which is also offered through affordable *indihome* (an internet connection or a type of home internet facility), a teacher could see the world easily and swiftly. However, as Rohemi observed, very few teachers with professional certificates accessed information required to improve the quality of their profession. Rohemi, although a bit speculative, made mention that it is difficult to identify positive contribution of teacher professional certificates towards the

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<sup>1</sup> Presiden RI (2005) *Undang – Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Fahmi, M., Maulana, A.R., and Yusuf, A.A. (2011) *Teacher Certification in Indonesia: A Confusion of Means and Ends*. Center for Economics and Development Studies (CEDS) Padjadjaran University

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>5</sup> Kemenkokesra (2013) *Audit Tunggalan Tunjangan Profesi Guru Dalam Rangka Penyelesaian Tunggalan TP-PNSD*

<sup>6</sup> Fahmi et al (2011) *Teacher Certification in Indonesia: A Confusion of Means and Ends*. Center for Economics and Development Studies (CEDS) Padjadjaran University.

increase of their expertise.<sup>7</sup> In a similar tone, Fahmi et al remark that the teacher endorsement project apparently has no effect on the improvement of students' learning achievement so far.<sup>8</sup> This is obviously clear when it is related to the outcome the National Exam. Nevertheless, teachers do not necessarily worry a lot as a similar project implemented in the United States of America did not fully contribute to the development and the improvement of students' learning achievement.<sup>9/10</sup>

The Union of Teachers of the Republic of Indonesia or the so-called Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia – PGRI<sup>11</sup> declares that ethos of teachers after the implementation of teachers' professional endorsement has not yet shown a satisfactory result. The investigation was based on surveys on 16 provinces throughout the republic.<sup>12</sup> The data obtained by the Ministry of People's welfare of Indonesia – show that 40% of teachers with professional certificates achieved a very poor

competence standard which was below 5 in the ranges between 0 – 10. Similarly, Hujair made mention that very few teachers with professional certificates have paid full attention on how they should teach professionally to help students make use of their full potential. As Hujair believes, teachers' professionalism has a close relationship with mastery of various competences leading to professional teaching.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, Furqon perceives that the teacher endorsement project should not only contribute to a better well-being of teachers but it should go beyond this pragmatic view.<sup>14</sup> The project should result in the improvement of the learning achievement of students which is reflected in the accountable lesson plan of teachers and the ways they implement it in their classrooms. This is the actual goal of the Law No 14 2005.

In the view of Arifin<sup>15</sup> and Rivkin et al<sup>16</sup>, the role of professional teacher in the

<sup>7</sup> Rohemi (2013) *Sertifikasi dan Problematikanya*. Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Tahun 2013. Malang: Manajemen Pendidikan, Pascasarjana Universitas Negeri Malang.

<sup>8</sup> Fahmi et al (2011) *Ibid*

<sup>9</sup> Sanders, W.L., Ashton, J.J. and Right, S.P (2005) *Comparison of the Effects of NBPTS Certified Teachers with Other Teachers on the Rate of Student Academic progress*. Report of NBPTS. SAS Institute, Inc.

<sup>10</sup> Rice, J.K. (2010) *The Impact of Teacher Experience: Examining the Evidence and Policy Implications*.

<sup>11</sup> Kompas (2009) Sertifikasi Guru Tidak Tepat Sasaran Halaman. <https://edukasi.kompas.com>

Kompas.com > Edukasi downloaded on November 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Kemendiknas (2013) *Ibid*.

<sup>13</sup> Hujair (2005) *Setifikasi dan Profesionalisme Guru di Era Reformasi Pendidikan*. Islamic University of Indonesia.

<sup>14</sup> Furqon (2016) *Revitalisasi LPTK: Ristekdikti*. <https://ristekdikti.go.id/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/RAKERNAS-REFORMASI-LPTK.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Arifin, (2012), *Kompetensi Guru dan Strategi Pengembangannya*. Sleman Jogjakarta: Lilin

<sup>16</sup> Rivkin, S.G., Hanushek, E.A. & Kain, J.F. 2005. Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement. *Econometrica*, Vol. 73, No. 2, pp. 417–458

classroom is pivotal especially when it comes to the improvement of learning achievement of students. Unfortunately, we usually hear teachers saying apologetically “*yang penting sertifikasinya (dananya) cair*” which means more or less “*no worry, as long as the budget obtained, that’s it*”. The saying is basically a joke of many teachers. However, it could become a warning for educational stakeholders in Indonesia if the saying grows to be a common attitude of teachers. Moreover, this could be an irony for Indonesian education especially in the attempt of the government to improve the quality of education.

Since the influence of teacher endorsement towards the improvement of the national education quality as the project is meant for is substandard, the study investigates how teachers view their professional endorsement in relation to the improvement of students’ learning achievement. This study discusses the concept of teacher endorsement, the views of teachers regarding their professional certification in relation to their duties, and the contribution required of them on the improvement of students’ learning achievement and quality. The study uses qualitative approach where three types of data collections are employed: documents review, semi-structured interviews, and observations.

## 2. The Concept of Professional Endorsement of Teachers Based on the Law No. 14 2005

The definition of teacher endorsement is often misunderstood by many teachers both individually and collectively. Endorsement or certification is usually meant for having professional allowance (one month extra allowance added to basic salary of teachers). Therefore, teacher endorsement is often interpreted simply as an extra financial provision for teachers’ profession. This understanding has been widely spread throughout the country. It has been a common perspective of teachers and even widespread in the community and citizens in general. In fact, the Law No. 14 2005 defines endorsement of teachers and lecturers as follows:

1. Certification is the process of providing educator certificates for teachers and lecturers (Article 1 point 11)
2. Teachers must have academic qualifications, competencies, educator certificates, physically and mentally healthy and have the ability to apprehend the national education goals (Article 8)
3. Educator certificates as mentioned in the article 8 are given to teachers and lecturers who have fulfilled the requirements of the profession (Article 11 point 1)
4. Teachers who have an educator certificate receive extra professional allowance of 1 time basic salary, public and private

teachers that are paid by the government (Article 16)<sup>17</sup>

The definition of teacher professional certification should not be obscured by a narrow meaning as it has been pinned so far. Especially if the narrow meaning comes from teachers themselves. Subsequently, there is an impression in public that teaching professions seem deliberately to be spoiled because, in many accounts, teachers have been considered to have truly extraordinary political power, which approximately counts up to 2.7 million or more than half of the total civil servants of the republic (Aparatur Sipil Negara – ASN) (see Metro Morning per 15/16 October 2016). By design, the profession of teachers and lecturers is not an arbitrary profession considering that academic qualifications are the main requirement to become a teacher or a lecturer. Moreover, in order for a teacher to obtain a professional certificate, he or she at least has to be qualified as a bachelor degree holder. In article 8 presented above, the law firmly requires academic and health prerequisites for a very noble task *"to have the ability to apprehend the national education goals"*. Therefore, the goal of the national education should become a mindset for a teacher to

carry out his or her professional duties on a daily basis.

The Law No. 14 2005 further emphasizes that to guarantee progress and equal distribution of access, improvement in quality and relevance of education, professional teachers are in demands. Likewise, good governance and public accountability of education provided apart from the roles of professional teachers are the ways to respond challenges and changes both locally, nationally and globally. In addition, empowering teachers in a planned, directed and sustainable manner is absolutely obligatory for the republic. With these considerations, the government tries to empower teachers and lecturers through a mega project called teacher endorsement.<sup>18</sup> This is based on the principle that they (teachers and lecturers) have the most fundamental role in the improvement of the national education.<sup>19</sup>

Teacher endorsement in the perspective of the law is actually a by-design government effort to improve teacher quality at the

<sup>17</sup> Presiden RI (2005) *Undang – Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005*. <http://sumberdaya.ristekdikti.go.id/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/uu-nomor-14-tahun-2005-ttg-guru-dan-dosen.pdf> downloaded on 19 November 2019

<sup>18</sup> Alma, B. dkk. (2008) *Guru Profesional Menguasai Metode dan Terampil Mengajar*. Bandung: Alfabeta.

<sup>19</sup> Asmani, J. M. (2011). *Tips Sukses PLPG Pendidikan dan Latihan Profesi Guru*. Yogyakarta: Diva Press.

national level.<sup>20 21</sup> In this context, there are four aspects needed by a teacher to be able to carry out their professional requirements. First, teachers must have adequate pedagogical competence. The Law No. 14 2005 states that competence is a set of knowledge, skills and behaviors that must be owned, mastered and lived by a teacher and a lecturer in carrying out his or her professional duties. Accordingly, it should be a combination of mastery, knowledge, skills, values as well as attitudes reflected in the habit of thinking and acting of a teacher or a lecturer in carrying out his or her teaching duties.<sup>22</sup> In the views of Balqis et al, pedagogic competence is concerned with the ability of a teacher to manage learning process and progress of students.<sup>23</sup> These competencies include the ways of teachers understand students, plan learning processes, assess learning outcomes and develop varieties potential of students they engage with. Mulyasa (2009) describes that there are at least eight pedagogical aspects that must be possessed by a teacher in order to be able to

carry out his or her profession well: understanding educational setting, understanding of students, developing curriculum or syllabus, designing learning activities, implementing those learning activities that is educational and dialogic, utilizing learning technology, assessing learning outcomes, and developing varieties of students potential.<sup>24</sup>

In regards to pedagogical content, Darling-Hammond and Barratz-Snowden, suggest that as manifestation of pedagogical knowledge of teachers, they have to plan their lessons on the basis of prior knowledge of their students, their learning style, information retrieval style, cognitive needs, learning motivation, and their social interactions. In the context of teacher endorsement, Darling-Hammond and Barratz-Snowden explain that the manifestation of teachers' pedagogic aptitude is a lesson plan developed on the basis of different characteristics required for an effective learning.<sup>25</sup> For example, students' initial knowledge, learning style, ability to

<sup>20</sup> Taufiqurrahman, M. (2011) Analisis Yuridis terhadap Sertifikasi Guru Berbasis Portofolio. *Journal Darma Agung*, Hal 1 – 8

<sup>21</sup> Dikti (2011) *Kerangka Acuan Program Sertifikasi Guru dalam Jabatan Melalui Portofolio*. Jakarta: Kemendiknas

<sup>22</sup> Sagala, S. (2009) *Kemampuan Professional Guru Dan Tenaga Kependidikan*. Bandung: Alfabeta.

<sup>23</sup> Balqis, P., Usman, N., & Ibrahim, S. (2014). Kompetensi pedagogik guru dalam meningkatkan belajar siswa pada SMPN 3 Ingin Jaya Kabupaten

Aceh Besar. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan Pascasarjana Universitas Syiah Kuala* 14, 2(1), 25--38. Retrieved from <https://www.jurnal.unsyiah.ac.id/JAP/article/view/2497>

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) *A Good Teacher in Every Classroom: Preparing the Highly Qualified Teachers Our Children Deserve*. [https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/3965412.Joan\\_Baratz\\_Snowd](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/3965412.Joan_Baratz_Snowd).

manage information, cognitive needs, learning motivation, and style of social interaction are needed to be taken into a serious account.

Second, teachers are required to be professional at all times when representing their teaching projects. Balqis et al, made mention that professional teachers are those who have the ability and expertise in the field of teacher training. Hence, professional teachers should have been educated and trained in the fields they are capable of. The Law No. 14 2005 emphasizes that teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing learning progress of students and evaluating their progress on a regular basis. The property of *'professional'* in teachers' lives is a form of appreciation for their works and noble duties. This is due to the profession of teachers requires expertise, knowledge, and skills that meet certain quality standards or norms and requires professional education (see the Law No. 14 2005: 2). Suryana explains that professional competence is a signal of teachers' mastery on learning materials of their field of study

widely and deeply which enables him or her to guide, help, and support students to meet competency standards set out in the national education system.<sup>26</sup>

Quoting Raka Joni,<sup>27</sup> Suryana<sup>28</sup> outlines the intact figure of teacher professional competence. That a professional teacher should have deep knowledge and understanding of students he/she serves. A teacher should master the field of study within which he/she teaches both content (disciplinary content) and education (pedagogical content). Besides a teacher must be able to develop professionalism on an ongoing basis. In this context, a teacher should continuously reflect on what he/she has done and will do in the classroom in order to improve the quality of learning of his/her students.<sup>29</sup> In the view of Priatna and Sukamto,<sup>30</sup> a professional teacher should be able to actualize his ideas and thoughts in a written form and this is one type of a sustainable professional development.

Third, a teacher should be able to carry out an educational type of learning. That is, a teacher does not only carry out a classroom learning as usual, but he/she must also be able

<sup>26</sup> Suryana (2007) *Akreditasi, Sertifikasi Dan Upaya Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan*. Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan.

<sup>27</sup> Raka Joni, T. (2008). Model Pendidikan Guru dan Pendidikan Dosen, PraJabatan. Makalah disampaikan pada KONASPI tanggal 5 – 7 November 2008 di Denpasar.

<sup>28</sup> Suryana (2007) *Ibid*.

<sup>29</sup> Priatna, N. dan Sukamto, T. (2013) *Pengembangan Profesi Guru*. Bandung: Rosdakarya

<sup>30</sup> Priatna, N. dan Sukamto, T. (2013) *Ibid*

to position himself/herself as an example to students. In this context, Priatna and Sukanto suggest that there were six criteria used as guidelines to assess a teacher's ability in this matter. First, a teacher must provide opportunities for students to master learning materials he/she delivers in a classroom. Here, the ability of a teacher to design various learning activities is an indicator usually used to measure his or her ability in this matter. Second, a teacher should always ensure that the level of understanding of students towards certain learning materials are not always the same and thereby he /she needs to adjust the next learning activities based on the level of understanding of students he/she works with. Third, a teacher should be able to explain reasons for implementing learning activities he/she develop both in accordance with his/her plan and success required in learning. Fourth, it is a must for a teacher to use various techniques to motivate and stimulate students' learning enthusiasm. Fifth, a teacher should plan learning activities that are interrelated with each other by always paying attention to the learning objectives and learning processes of students. Sixth, a teacher should pay attention to responses of students who have not yet grasped learning

materials taught and use their level of comprehension to improve next learning designs.<sup>31</sup>

Balqis et al further elaborates that teachers should have four main abilities. First, teachers should have the ability to plan a well-devised learning in a classroom. In this context, a teacher should be able to design and plan a learning that is able to accommodate diverse potential of students. Second, a teacher is absolutely required to be capable of carrying out or managing a better teaching and learning process. Third, a teacher should also be able to assess progress of teaching and learning process that is being carried out. Finally, a professional teacher must be able to master learning materials that will be taught. In other words, a teacher needs to master his/her field of study.

Whereas Rivkin et al place teachers as the main agents that influence the quality of learning of students even though they presume that other factors could also contribute to it. Astuti also explained the main roles of teachers in this matter.<sup>32</sup> Uno in Yamin et al even argue that teaching profession should not be carried out by anybody.<sup>33</sup> Likewise, Alma and Asmani place

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid* (p.40)

<sup>32</sup> Astuti, A. (2015). *Pengembangan Model Pelatihan "IVCT" Untuk Meningkatkan Kompetensi Profesional*. Jurnal Penelitian Tindakan Sekolah Dan

Kepengawasan Vol. 2, No. 1, Juni 2011. Semarang : Program Pascasarjana Universitas Negeri Semarang.

<sup>33</sup> Yamin, Martinis dan Maisah (2010). *Standarisasi Kinerja Guru*. Jakarta: Persada Press.



teachers as key actors in the success of educational institutions.<sup>34</sup> However, a teacher's ability and potential do not always develop naturally as expected because of several factors, among others, from within a teacher or from outside of him/her. Purbo (in Hujair, 2005) for example, suggests that recognition and appreciation of teachers' success may come from a community more than from institutions where they work or other government institutions both organizational and functional. Awards and recognitions are given as a mode of appreciation for the academic aptitude and professionalism of a teacher. Thus, certification allowances provided by the government should be welcomed by teachers by continuous improvement in their academic abilities and professionalism when performing their duties. Accordingly, an appreciation and a recognition as stated by Purbo (2002) can be obtained by teachers without any request.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, see Balqis et al, a teacher must have qualified personal characters to better carry out his/her teaching duties. Hujair considers that teachers must have values and competencies that are shown in the ways they behave. This competency includes personality of teachers that is interesting and

impressive both to students and teachers in school and even to a wider community. In addition, a teacher must have a sociable character so that every student is longed for his/her appearance in the classroom. A teacher, according to Hujair, must be able to become a role model for his/her students and a role model for the wider community.

Balqis et al further explained that as a part of social community, a teacher must have the ability to communicate well in his or her community, both within the classroom (school) and a wider community where he or she lives. Hujair made mention that social competence is the ability possessed by a professional teacher in regards to his or her profession, services, and community in general. In relation to these social competencies, Hujair describes that teachers must develop a work ethic or a work culture that promotes high-quality services to his or her students. That is, a professional teacher as a stakeholder (stakeholder authority) should provide the best services to his or her students and parents and other communities in general. Public accountability must be absolutely considered by a teacher when carrying out his or her duties because their duties are fully funded and controlled by public.

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>35</sup> Purbo, O. W. (2002) *E-Learnig berbasis PHP dan MySQL*.

### 3. Method of the Study

The study uses descriptive qualitative approach. It employs three types of data collection techniques. First, the study employs document review to obtain information provided in any form of document relating to the topic of the study. Second, this study also uses semi-structured interview to elicit in-depth information from the participants of the study. In addition, the study employs direct observations on the teaching activities of certified teachers at the setting (SMK1G).

#### Document Reviews

The use of document reviews in the study is based on the premise that it potentially reveals authentic and meaningful information needed for the study.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, Yin considers that a review of a document in the study is expected to support and strengthen evidences gathered from other data resources.<sup>37</sup> In the context of the study, collected documents are tailored to examine problems being investigated. For example, the results of the National Examinations

(Ujian Nasional – UN) in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 are needed because these could be used as one of many indicators to assess success of teachers in their teaching activities. In addition, the lesson plans of teachers requested to participate in the study are also reviewed. This is to confirm or disconfirm the activities the teachers have claimed to have performed in their classrooms. From these documents, it is expected to strengthen or weaken information obtained in the interviews and observations. In addition, data derived from those documents were used for further triangulation.

#### Semi-structured Interview

This study uses semi-structured interviews as the main resource of information. The technique is used for two reasons. First, this type of interview allows the subjects of the study to express their views or ideas in a relatively open type of discussion.<sup>38 39 40 41</sup> Second, since it is more open in its nature, even though thematic frameworks used in the study are adequately clear, the interview allows the interviewer to use varied questions, provoking the subjects

<sup>36</sup> Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Study Methods*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

<sup>37</sup> Yin. R.K. (2001) *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*. London: Guilford Press.

<sup>38</sup> Flick, U. (2006) *An Introduction to Qualitative Study*. (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

<sup>39</sup> Kvale, S. (1996) *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Study Interviewing*. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>40</sup> Drever, E. (2003) *Using Semi-structured Interviews in Small-Scale Study: A Teacher's Guide*. Glasgow: the SCRE Centre, University of Glasgow.

<sup>41</sup> Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. (2007) *Study Methods in Education*. London: Routledge.

of the study in different ways. Moreover, other sources are made use to fully enter the topic of discussion (Anne, 2013: 45). In other words, this technique allows the interviewer to ask questions that provoke and dig up information from the subjects of the study in a far more open way than that of in a structured one. Before the interview, the subject of the study was asked for a consent and therefore there was no a pressure of a kind when providing information for the study needs (the consent form was attached).

Analysis of the interviews of 5 teachers (with various managerial roles such as head of study program and the deputy of the headmaster and senior teachers) was based on themes and trends that emerged from the interviews. This is important, because not all the interview data derived from the average duration of 12-27 minutes interviews could equally contribute to answer the problems addressed in the study. The results of the interview directly quoted were presented in an indented margin typed with *Times New Roman number 10* with an anonym to maintain the privacy of the subjects of the study. Interpretations were presented in the form of descriptions which were fully based on the understanding of the researcher about the transcripts quoted while triangulations

with other sources of information (observations and document reviews) were fully taken into account. In addition, in order for robust findings to be established in the study, references in regards to previous studies about teachers' endorsement were carefully used for cross checks.

## Observation

### Perspective of Teachers about their Professional Endorsement and Teaching Practices

Undeniably, teacher endorsement in the perspective of the Law No 14, 2005 was a government effort to improve teachers' quality.<sup>42 43</sup> The ultimate goal of the teacher professional certification program based on the law is to improve the quality of national education of Indonesia. However, a number of teachers provide different definitions of professional endorsement program. A teacher of a vocational subject who has served for approximately 12 years and teachers subjects other than the fields of his expertise acquired at the university and trained for suggests the following ideas:

"If, in my opinion, teacher endorsement is an allowance given by the government to teachers who have participated in a teacher

<sup>42</sup> Taufiqurrahman, M. (2011) Analisis Yuridis terhadap Sertifikasi Guru Berbasis Portofolio. *Journal Darma Agung*, Hal 1 – 8

<sup>43</sup> Idrus, I.A. (2014) *Analisis Implementasi Kebijakan Tunjangan Profesi Guru di SMA Negeri 1 Palu*. JIPSINDO, No. 1, Volume 1: Pp. 59 – 77

endorsement program or PLPG" (GP1 / November 20, 2016)<sup>44</sup>

This view could not necessarily be judged to be wrong. However, this opinion in the view of Fahmi et al is a form of an incomplete understanding of the essence of teacher professional endorsement/certification. The understanding shows that certification is an end in itself. Whereas according to the Law No. 14, 2005 which was agreed by Fahmi et al, professional endorsement/certification and consequences of professional allowance as an immediate consequence of it (1 time basic salary) is a means rather than an objective. In other words, teachers who passed the endorsement/certification program through either those measured with portfolio documents or two-week training program (PLPG) must make their certification allowances a means to improve the quality of their teaching in their classroom not those who make their professional allowances as the ultimate goal of their teaching careers. Lacking in understanding of the teachers in regards to the essence of professional certification could be understood as Astuti explains that the relationship of competency and work motivation of teachers tends to be unstable.<sup>45</sup> Thus, guidance from a headmaster

or other stakeholders in education is continuously needed.

Other teachers view teachers endorsement is a means for improving teaching quality and upgrading competences. Teachers in this group understand that teacher professional certification had given many things especially the opportunities to upgrade the ways they teach their students. The PLPG training has made a major contribution in the ways teachers carry out their duties. For example, GA1 admitted that the PLPG training was very useful for him as he was not trained for teaching (*GAI / November 19, 2016*). He revealed that the teacher endorsement program was very helpful for improving his pedagogical insight as one of the most required competencies in teaching profession.<sup>46</sup>

A senior teacher who was also given an additional duty apart from teaching as the deputy of the headmaster revealed the same thing. In his view, certification or teachers endorsement has provided a kind of motivation and awareness about his professional duties (*GNI / November 21, 2016*).<sup>47</sup> This empirical evidence reinforces the findings of Lestari and Murwati show that

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Vocational Subject Teacher – 20 November 2016

<sup>45</sup> Astuti, A. (2015) *Ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Adaptive Subject Teacher, 19 November 2016

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Normative Subject Teacher, 21 November 2016

there is a relative increase in teachers' performance as they have been given certification allowances.<sup>48 49</sup> However, this view cannot be proven with measurable parameters. This is especially true when it is associated with the poor results of the 2014 and 2015 National Examinations (UN) of SMK1G one way of measuring learning success of students, although it has not been always accurate. Moreover, considering merely three subjects out of many in vocational education and training may look trivial. Thereby, teachers' claims regarding the value added of the endorsement program are in need of further review.

The result of the National Examination at SMK1G as of 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 are presented as follows:

#### Summary of the Results of the National Exam of SMK1G in 2013/2014<sup>50</sup>

Categories	Subjects				Total
	IND	ENG	MATH	VOC	
Classification	C	E	E	A	D
Average	55.67	34.99	24.10	78.03	192.79
Lowest	22.0	16.0	0.75	65.7	104.45
Highest	94.0	68.0	47.5	88.5	281.6
Deviation Standard	15.42	9.36	8.09	4.60	28.17

<sup>48</sup> Lestari (2010) *Pengaruh Sertifikasi Guru Terhadap Kinerja Guru MTsN Mlinjon Filial Trucuk, Klaten*. Skripsi: Program Studi Kependidikan Islam UIN Sunan Kalijaga

<sup>49</sup> Murwati, H. (2013) *Pengaruh Sertifikasi Profesi Guru Terhadap Motivasi Kerja dan Kinerja Guru di SMK Negeri se Surakarta. Jurnal Pendidikan Bisnis dan Ekonomi (BISE)*. Vol.1 No.1. Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta.

#### Summary of the Results of the National Exam of SMK1G in 2014/2015<sup>51</sup>

Categories	Subjects				Total
	IND	ENG	MATH	VOC	
Classification	C	E	E	A	D
Average	53.6	39.0	28.1	78.1	198.8
Lowest	28.0	22.0	17.5	64.1	145.0
Highest	94.0	68.0	82.5	89.7	301.2
Deviation Standard	14.2	08.6	08.2	06.9	18.1

Teacher endorsement in the perspective of the Law No. 14 2005 when it is carefully scrutinized appeared as a kind of a *hiccup* at the government level to improve teachers' quality nationally.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the main objective of teacher professional certification is to ensure feasibility of teachers when carrying out their duties as professional educators. Moreover, it has been designed to improve learning processes and its outcomes, improve teachers' welfare, and guarantee self-esteem of teachers which in the end to improve the quality of education.<sup>53</sup> The same thing was expressed by the SMK1G teacher as follows:

"Improving the quality of education and the welfare of teachers. And the aim of the government is that no more teachers are lazy to carry out their duties "(GP1 / November 20, 2016)<sup>54</sup>

"Ee ... teachers must be professional in carrying out their duties, like doctors. So, a teacher is given one month extra allowance for his or her professional endorsement.

<sup>50</sup> *The Summary of the National Exam for the SMK1G 2013/2014*

<sup>51</sup> *The Summary of the National Exam for the SMK1G 2014/2015*

<sup>52</sup> Taufiqurrahman, M. (2011) *Ibid*.

<sup>53</sup> Dikti (2011) *Ibid*.

<sup>54</sup> *Interview with Vocational Subject Teacher – GP1, 20 November 2019*

That's it. The aim is to improve competence and professionalism of a teacher. If he or she is professional, he or she must be prosperous that extra allowance" (GP2 / November 21, 2016)<sup>55</sup>

The argument shows that the goal of the government for the allowance provision is for a teacher to be aware of his/her duties and responsibilities and therefore he or she must act professionally. In other words, there should be no more teachers who act sluggish when carrying out their duties<sup>56</sup> due to lack of income. The reason is that the allowance given to professional teachers should change their mindsets in regards to their duties. Hence, there should no longer professional teachers (teachers with professional endorsement) seek additional remuneration outside of their teaching duties.

This view is in line with the essence of the provision of allowances contained in the article 16, the Law No. 14 2005.

Despite the case, this view seems contradictory to realities in the grass roots (the researcher' observation). In most cases, teachers with professional endorsement in the SMK1G are still busy looking for extra remuneration outside of the intended allowance. However, it is unfortunate in the eyes of many observers of education, since those teachers frequently neglect their basic

tasks. In fact, as consequences of the allowances they receive, they have to perform their duties in the best possible manner.

The results of the interviews further show that there are a number of common obstacles experienced by certified teachers in carrying out their teaching duties. First, additional tasks assigned to a professional teacher (vice of headmaster) often interfere with teaching assignments in his or her classroom. For example, the teacher being questioned is often invited to attend meetings held in the local education office even though at the same time he or she has to attend his or her classroom.<sup>57</sup>

Nevertheless, there are also those teachers who think that additional tasks (being vice headmaster, head of study program) do not necessarily become obstacles for completing their teaching duties. This opinion is quite reasonable because teachers with such additional assignments are only charged with twelve hour-lessons unless there is a shortage of teachers in that school. Second, school management is a factor that greatly influences the quality of professional teachers' performance. In general, teachers recognize that the assertiveness of headmasters / principals in terms teaching duties of teachers including the completion of

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<sup>55</sup> *Interview with Vocational Subject Teacher – GP2, 20 November 2019*

<sup>56</sup> Hujair (2005) *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Interview with GP1, Ibid.*

their learning administrations (for example, lesson plans, students' attendance lists, and assessments) are needed if teacher professionalism is the primary goal of the school. This view corroborates Astuti's findings that continuous guidance from school headmasters/principals is much needed by teachers in order to achieve professionalism.<sup>58</sup>

Third, in addition to the two obstacles above, the teachers of the SMK1G acknowledge that learning facilities are needed to support their planning and implementation of enjoyable types of learning. However there are those who reveal that there is an impression that management at the school level is rather discriminatory in the provision of learning facilities (e.g. procurement of textbooks). In vocational subjects, for example, said a senior teacher, learning material is still considered adequate even though learning equipment needed for practical learning are not proportional. Fourth, the teachers agreed that individual awareness of professional teachers is a very decisive factor in carrying out their professional duties. Teachers who have deep awareness of their main tasks and consequences of their professional allowances, always strive to improve their teaching competences. On the contrary, field

observations revealed that there are still many professional certified teachers who have not carried out their duties according to the demands of their profession set out in the Law No. 14 2005.

Fifth, a number of teachers recognize that the ability to use information technology (IT) is one of the inhibiting factors for teachers (especially adaptive and normative subject teachers) in planning and implementing a fun type of learning. This is closely related to the use of learning equipment or media like laptops or LCD projectors and other communication media. Though the current needs, professional teachers are required to always get the latest information related to their teaching assignments.

Furthermore, the results of the interview indicate that the teachers acknowledged experience as a determining factor for them in carrying out their professional duties. This view reinforces Rice's findings.<sup>59</sup> The findings suggest that almost all the teachers acknowledged that long experiences have made many positive contributions in carrying out teaching and educating assignments. But they do not specifically specify what positive contributions from their long experiences

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<sup>58</sup> Astuti (2015) *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Rice (2010) *Ibid.*

contributed to the task of educating and teaching.

On the other hand, a teacher revealed that age factors have influenced the ability to design innovative learning. This confirms Rice's view that the experience of employees, including teachers, is only very influential when in the beginning of a career of teachers and it tends to decrease along their careers. GP2 revealed that as the age of teachers increases, their agility in planning and implementing their lessons decreases (GP2 / November 21, 2016). Rice found that, although the experience of teachers is important in their profession, their long experiences do not always connote that they would work better.<sup>60</sup>

### **The Effect of Teacher Professional Endorsement on the Learning Achievement of Students**

Based on the Law No. 14 2005, the ultimate goal of endorsing professional certificates to teachers is to improve their teaching performances which in the end is required to improve the process and achievement of learning outcomes of students.<sup>61</sup> There are a number of studies for example, Lestari and Murwati acknowledging that giving professional

certificates has a positive impact on the improvement of teachers' performances. These include that professional certified teachers are able to improve their teaching methods by finding new learning methods or strategies in the classroom (see Lestari, 2010). However, the effect of teacher professional certifications on the process and learning achievement of students is still relatively limited as described by Fahmi et al.<sup>62</sup>

A senior teacher of adaptive subjects revealed the existence of a correlation between the professional certificates he obtained with the improvement of his teaching performance. He explained that:

"Actually the certification aims to improve competences of teachers and students as well because what is learned in the training venue is what is used to teach students. For example, using *lecture* method. If such a lecture method could help students even though it is said to be reduced, what we could do. However, now the method is still in use "(GA / November 19, 2016)<sup>63</sup>

The above quotation shows that the teacher concerned has a great desire and motivation to help students improve the process and learning outcomes. However, the experience and knowledge gained in the educational training for teachers (PLPG) about how to effectively teach and educate

<sup>60</sup> Rice (2010) *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Dikti (2011) *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> Fahmi et al (2011) *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Adaptive Subject Teacher, 19 November 2016



students, after eight years (the results of the interviews with GA / November 19, 2016) are likely to have stagnated. Moreover, it decreased alongside the teachers' teaching career. In fact, as outlined by Priatna and Sukamto, the increasing teachers' competencies on an ongoing basis is absolutely necessary to improve the learning of students.<sup>64</sup> Darling-Hammond and Baarratz-Snowden describe that the ability of teachers to plan and implement their learning and teaching which take into serious account of students' initial abilities, learning styles and interactions is a precondition to the improvement of the learning achievement of students.<sup>65</sup> Thus, improving teachers' performance is in the context of SMK1G has not been encouraging (see the UN results in the table) although the majority of the teachers in the school claim its effectiveness.

Despite the case, even in developed countries like America, the achievements of professionally certified teachers have not been fully encouraging. Study by Sanders et al that applied a hierarchical model shows that student achievement taught by certified teachers is not yet significant compared to students' outcomes taught by teachers who

have not been professionally certified.<sup>66</sup> In fact, the study suggests that the influence caused by the existence of certified teachers in relation to the achievement of students is relatively insignificant. In the end, students who are taught either by certified teachers or those who have not been certified do not have a significant difference, claimed Sanders et al.<sup>67</sup>

Regarding strategies implemented to improve the quality of learning in the classroom, according to senior teachers at SMK1G, there are various ways they are used in the classroom. A teacher of Vocational subject revealed that:

"We often divide practice groups. They made a report. It is in accordance with the subjects. And the report is entered by each group. And we put this in a lesson plan "(GP2 / November 21, 2016)<sup>68</sup>

Unlike GP2, a senior teacher of normative subject has another way of designing fun type of learning. He revealed his experience as follows:

"After taking care of students, do not immediately start the lesson. For example singing national songs. Given some times for [students] to read a book for example 10 minutes. Yesterday's lesson, for example, after reading a book, ask how the lesson was. When students do understand, only

<sup>64</sup> Priatna and Sukamto (2013) *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Sanders, W.L., Ashton, J.J. and Right, S.P (2005) *Comparison of the Effects of NBPTS Certified Teachers with Other Teachers on the Rate of Student*

*Academic progress.* Report of NBPTS. SAS Institute, Inc.

<sup>67</sup> Sanders et al (2005) *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Interview with GP2. *Ibid.*

then we will begin a new lesson”(GN / November 21, 2016)<sup>69</sup>

When asked whether it was stated in the lesson plan, the teacher revealed:

"For example, asking students to sing a national song, only in the new curriculum so called (K 13) is there. There is no longer competence-based curriculum (KTSP) yet. Not written in a lesson plan". (GN / November 21, 2016).<sup>70</sup>

The type of a fun learning design in the classroom as quoted above is basically not fully measurable even though it has been claimed to have been measured. This is especially the case with normative subject. Although it was acknowledged that singing one of national songs prior to learning activities could increase students' enthusiasm for learning, this was difficult to measure because it was intangible especially if important things like that were not included in the learning design of a teacher.

The results of the observation further show that some teachers who have both professional certificates and those who have not yet have a tendency to continue using the same lesson plan from time to time. Whereas according to Priatna and Sukamto, Hammond and Snowden, and see also Balqis et al, pedagogical competence of teachers must guide them to find effective ways or strategies to improve the process and achievement of

students.<sup>71</sup> However, if the same lesson plan continues to be used by a professional teacher in carrying out their learning and teaching activities, the improvement of process and achievement of students might not be achieved.

As for the assessment of students' learning progress, the teachers of SMK1G have different assessment strategies and techniques. Nonetheless, all the teachers admit to carry out two types of assessments, namely the assessment of a process and achievement / learning outcomes. In addition they have a common vision that a process assessment is more accountable because this type of assessment can be far more accurately representing the ability of students. In other words, what they can do and show to teachers (performance if in vocational skills), that is actually their actual abilities in that subject. The following is the teacher's experience in providing process assessments and student learning outcomes:

“For me sir, what I've done so far is to get students to write down the assignments that have been examined on a separate paper. I intend to make their portfolios. Initially it was difficult. But after I repeatedly explained, they finally understood it. Even if there are tasks which have been examined, they immediately ask, what they should transfer onto paper for a portfolio. I see, sir. And I put forward the assessment of this model because this is more accurate. In the test as usual they have every

<sup>69</sup> Interview with GN. *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Interview with GN. *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

opportunity to cheat or cooperate with each other (GA / November 19, 2016).<sup>72</sup>

"We use practical groups and they make reports. In [group] discussions we record students who actively ask questions. There are students who ask and respond to that we note. We have rubric ratings. If you don't join the practices, we will give no grades. And if there is a problem encountered in the midterm test results, there should be fulfilled in a daily test "(GP2 / November 21, 2016)<sup>73</sup>

"If in my opinion, I focus more on everyday evaluation. Because a daily test usually or a semester test sometimes depends on the supervisor, there are those who are disciplined and some students who don't. When we teach, that's the time when we could see the actual competences of students. For example, asking questions related to the topic of discussion "(GN / November 21, 2016)<sup>74</sup>

These varied experiences of the interviewed teachers when conducting assessments show positive attitude of professional teachers to the improvement of the process of learning and students' learning achievement. The use of portfolios and assessment rubrics are physical evidences that the teachers of SMK1G have high concern for the learning progress of their students. Despite the case, the assessment of the learning process of students has led to a better result of learning. Hence, both teachers and students understand that the learning process and its results have the same urgency.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that teacher professional endorsement program has not been able to increase their professionalism in its true essence as expected by the Law No. 14 2005. Moreover, teachers' understanding of the demands of their profession is still very inadequate. Therefore, regular and continuous counselling and guidance from stakeholders in the secondary education sector is urgently needed. In summary, to acquire more accountable study findings in this matter, survey investigations and case studies involving many stakeholders and more holistic observations are urgently required.

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<sup>72</sup> Interview with GA, *Ibid*.

<sup>73</sup> Interview with GP2, *Ibid*.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with GN, *Ibid*.

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