

## Universitas Terbuka amongst the National Framework for Teachers' Professional Development Program Presented in the International Conference on Teacher Education

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### Abstract

Efforts to increase teacher professionalism has been obliged by Law of Teacher No. 14/2005 signifying necessities in continuous supports and strong commitment from all parties and communities. In addition to national routine programs, the Government has made several efforts to improve quality of education, including allocating foreign loan programs and coordinating international partnerships. In the meantime, Universitas Terbuka (UT) has long been committed to strengthening teacher competence and qualification through distance and online programs. As a nation-wide university, UT implements its programs through 38 Regional Offices (RO) and one RO to serving students domicile abroad. Since 1984, UT has promoted 1,315,009 professional teachers, serving over 45% of the total number of teachers in Indonesia. To corroborate with current governmental educational policy, UT was challenged to assure its programs to be aligned with current issues of national quality development. Likewise, UT promotes efficiency in leading educational quality development through open and online teacher training programs. These programs foster teachers' continuous professional development and expertise. Partnership and collaboration with other education-related institutions constitute apparently the key issues to succeed the programs. To conclude, it is obvious that all the programs are dully dedicated to strengthen the professionalism of teachers to be capable of meeting the national goals for nation and character building and development.

**Keywords:** Teacher, professionalism, quality, education, qualification, competences, distance and online systems, and government education policy

### Introduction to Professionalism of teacher as an educator

Law 20/2003 on National education system, article 42, paragraph 1, states that teachers must have a minimum qualification and certification authority in accordance with the level of teaching, physical and spiritual health, as well as having the ability to achieve national education goals. Its Article 43, paragraph 1 specifies that promotions and rewards for teachers are conducted based on educational background, experience, ability, and job performance in the field of education. Therefore, schools need to continuously strive to empower and enhance their competences and professionalism as educators qualified by the Law.

As for terminological definition, the terms of professionalism has the meaning of (1) intellectual abilities acquired through academic education, (2) owns specific knowledge, (3) has a practical knowledge that can be directly used by others, (4) owns teaching technique that can be communicated, (5) has capacity to organize the works independently, (6) altruism, and (7) ethics. A professional worker should be supported by specific knowledge and deep expertise gained from legitimate educational institutions as required by teaching profession, and therefore be accountable for wider communities (see PP No.74/2008, Article 5 and Permendikbud No.5/2012, chapter 3).

Furthermore, a number of professional experience has been specified by Permendikbud No.5/2012, such as gaining academic qualifications, education and training, teaching experience, planning and implementation of learning, assessment from superiors and supervisors, academic achievement, professional development work, participation in scientific forums, organizational experience in the field of educational and social tasks, and awards relevant to the field of education.

The professional experiences should be reflected in the ability to carry out the main task as an educator, including the ability to extensively mastery learning materials. To strengthen his professionalism, a teacher needs to own attitudes such as 1) love to learning, 2) knowing how to be effective learner, 3) confidences, 4) keen to pursue high achievement, 5) knowledgeable about a productive and creative ethical work, and 6) not easily satisfied with the success achieved, but willing to continue to improve (Pidarta , 1997).

In view of idealism, a professional educator has been confronted with current national issue about, for example, Golden Generation. The challenge has smartly been formulated hypothetically as a future situation based on the changes in the age structure of the population and declining dependency burden, thus meaning as positive opportunities so-called demographic dividend. The meaning is associated with the emergence of opportunities termed as the “window of opportunity”, which can be an opportunity to improve the welfare of society. The window of opportunity has been predicted to occur between the years of 2020-2030, where the dependency ratio reached the lowest point at the scale of 44 per 100, which means every 100 number of productive population will endure 44 non-productive. Such this condition occurs only once in the history of a population, as was happened in some countries like Brazil, Russia, India, and China. The analysis is illustrated in Figure 1.

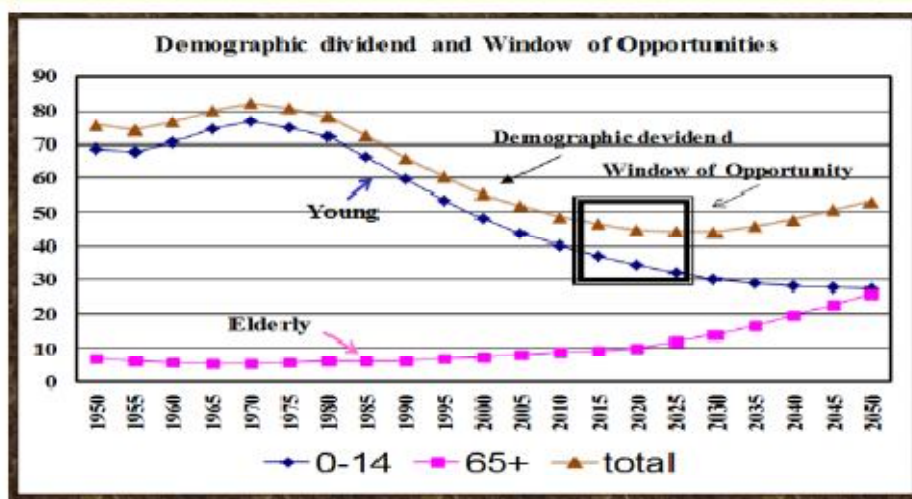


Figure 1. Demographic dividend

Minister of Education and Culture on His speech for the National Education Day on May 2, 2012 stated that theme of the National Day is "The Rise of Indonesian Golden Generation". This is because the period of 2010-2035 of our nation will be blessed by God Almighty with incredible potential productive human resources. If the opportunity for the first time since Indonesia's independence can be managed and we take advantage of the good, productive-age population whose numbers are incredible will become a demographic dividend. Here, the role of strategic development to realize that education is very important.

Preparing the Indonesia Golden Generation requires future educational development be clearly building and furnishing the people become high-quality, advanced, independent, and modern to elevate the dignity of the nation in the world. Success in building the education will grant a major contribution to the achievement of national development goals. The development of future education should include a four-dimensional development of social, cultural, economic, and political.

Social dimension of education development has an important role in the process of social change for community mobility. Education becomes a driving factor for community mobility efforts that lead to the formation of a new social formation. This new social formation consists of educated middle-class

society which is becoming an important element in achieving social cohesion, that is, as an adhesive in the community harmonize relationships within segments of society, including families, communities, community associations and other social organizations into a unified organization for a large state agency. Thus education can provide an important contribution to the efforts to strengthen social integration.

Cultural dimension of educational development is an effective medium for transmitting norms, socializing values and instill ethics in the society. Education can also be an instrument for fostering and strengthening national identity. Dimension of cultural education becomes more apparent when globalization is considered strongly, which influences the values and culture that are often at odds with the values and personality of the Nation. Therefore, education was organized as a process of lifelong acculturation and human empowerment. Education held in a democratic and fair and not discriminatory to uphold human rights, religious values, cultural values, and national diversity. Education organized by empowering all components of the society through participation in the implementation and quality control of education services. Education is an effort to empower the learner to become the Golden Generation; those who upholds and hold firmly norms and values (Ministry of National Education Strategic Plan 2010-2014).

Economic dimensions of educational development can produce reliably human-beings capable of driving local and national economic development. Thus, education must produce quality graduates who have knowledge, mastery information and communication technologies, and own adequate technical and life skills. Education should also be able to produce trained professionals who have the entrepreneurial capacities, which became one of the main pillars of the local economy and national activities. Moreover, education contributes to a very important and strategic factor for national competitiveness, and for building the nation's independence, which is an absolute prerequisite in entering the competition between nations in a global era.

In the political dimension of education development, education serves to develop the capacity of individuals as good citizens that balance their rights and responsibilities in the society, nation and state. Therefore, education should produce individual who has the vision and ideals to build cohesiveness amongst citizens of the society. Vision and ideals are to be referred to and rooted in understanding the national ideology, which is shared by all components. Thus, education is a critical effort to formulate a solid social foundation for the creation of a democratic society, which is depending on an educated middle-class people that are becoming a major pillar of the establishment of a civil society.

### **Competency Development for Teachers**

Some scholars often associate teacher performance with teacher competence. In general, performance is defined as ability to accomplish the work (work performance) that is demonstrated by employee in obtaining optimal results according to their competencies. Thus, the terms of performance is often understood as the existence of an action or activity performed by a person in carrying out a particular activity. Performance represents situation and working conditions. Activities carried out by a person indicate how he/she tries to pursue the goals already set. On the other hand, skills constitute prerequisite to performance because an activity that arises from one's competence is a result of the implementation process of knowledge, abilities, interpersonal skills, and technical skills. Efforts can be described as motivation to complete the job. The level of skills relates to what "can be done", while the "effort" relates to what "will be done". According to the Law No. 20/2003, a teacher is entitled to the rights of career coaching in accordance with the demands for quality development. Accordingly, teachers should be able to use the facilities and good infrastructure and educational facilities to maximize the implementation of their duties.

Teachers' promotions and awards are granted based on educational background, experience, ability and their achievement in the practices of education. Performance development for educators is also related to their competencies that must be accomplished, namely pedagogical, social competencies, and intellectual competencies. To realize the task, commitment and dedication of educators is necessary presented in the development of performance indicators. Indicators should include ideas, creative, innovative, tolerant, creative, disciplined, evaluative, cooperative.

An educator is subject to consistently and continuously developing their competences due to their role as: 1) educational managers or curriculum organizers, 2) education facilitators, 3) teaching and education practitioner, 4) student supervisor, 5) enforcer of discipline for students, 6) a model to be emulated by student behavior, 7) counselor, 8) evaluators, 9) classroom manager, 10) communicator with parents and the community, and 11) teacher that keenly improve their teaching professional.

Basically, there are three main activities required from teachers as educators to improve their professional qualifications to effect on increasing their level of professional. **First**, increasing the intensity and frequency of scientific brainstorming activities and their experiences in the development of learning materials is necessity, as well as teacher quality interaction with students.

Activities of information sharing and brainstorming about teaching experiences can be done variously, such as for example, active attending in KKG scientific forum and following online forums of UT Smart Online Student (GPO) at <http://gurupintar.ut.ac.id>. **Second**, improve the ability to conduct research including classroom action research to sharpen scientific sensibilities in order to improve the learning effectiveness of the teacher in the class, as a resource for teachers of scientific meetings. **Third**, increase creativity in writing the results of scientific work and research and publish them in a variety of both printed and online media in order to be widely accessible.

## Teacher Professional Enhancement Programs

Programs of improvement of professionalism for educators have been ranging from routine program and activities, accelerated training and education, and formal program of education (degree program) conducted by higher educational institutions. Routine program has been regularly conducted by the Government such as regular training programs for educators. Some initiatives constitute accelerated programs that were in general conducted through foreign loan programs, such as BERMUTU program (Better Education through Reformed Management and Universal Teacher Upgrading), and international partnership programs, such as AusAID SSQ (School System and Quality) and USAID PRIORITY (Prioritizing Reform, Innovation, Opportunities for Reaching Indonesia's Teachers, Administrators, and Students). Finally, formal program i.e. those conducted by higher education institutions that are in the forms of degree programs. All the programs are obviously dedicated to increasing the professionalism of teachers.

### *Bermutu*

The BERMUTU is a program of cooperation across units within the Ministry of Education and Culture, Directorate General of PMPTK, BALITBANG, and BKN. The program aims to improve the quality of education by improving the competence and performance of teachers. As shown in the Figure 2, the program is divided into four components, namely 1) Reform education for prospective teachers, 2) ongoing teacher professional development at the school level, 3) the development of a system of accountability and incentives improved performance and career teachers, and 4) monitoring and evaluation of teacher performance. Meanwhile, the expected impact of each component of the program are 1) the implementation of a quality teacher education programs and improved access for teachers in rural and remote areas to participate in the program KKG/MGMP, 2) active KKG/MGMP, PSC/MKKS, KKPS/MKPS, 3) increasing the teaching profession and attractive as a career alternative, and 4) a comprehensive database of teachers for ongoing teacher evaluation.



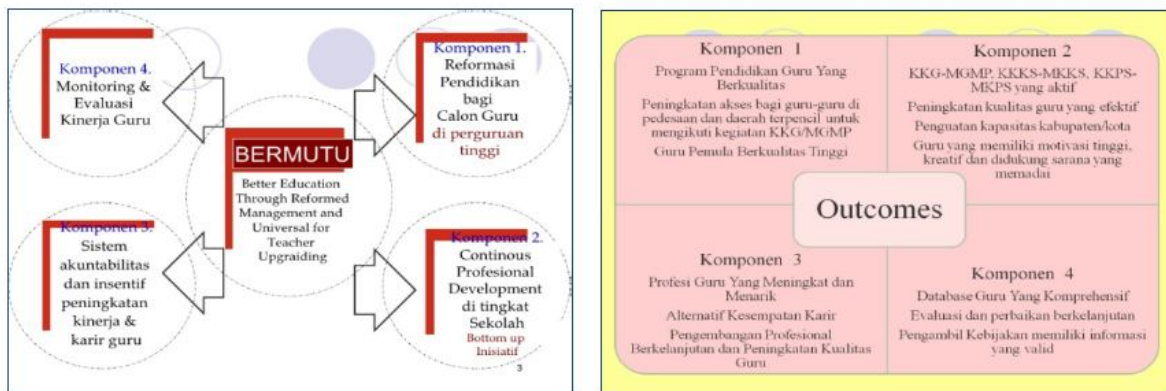


Figure 2. The BERMUTU 2008-2013, Sumarno, 2009  
<http://www.slideshare.net/NASuprawoto/program->

**Program of SSQ**

The program is a partnership activity between Indonesia and Australia. The SSQ program is to assist the government of Indonesia to develop and operationalize a system of professional development (PKB) nationwide. The program aims to assist the Government of Indonesia to reduce disparities in access to education, improve the quality of teaching and learning in Indonesian schools, and improve the management and accountability at all levels of the school administration. In 5 years since 2009, the Australian Government through the system works Government of Indonesia, offering assistance, capacity building and technical block grants targeted. Cooperation program aimed at developing a model of the Australia-Indonesia Basic Education and Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools.

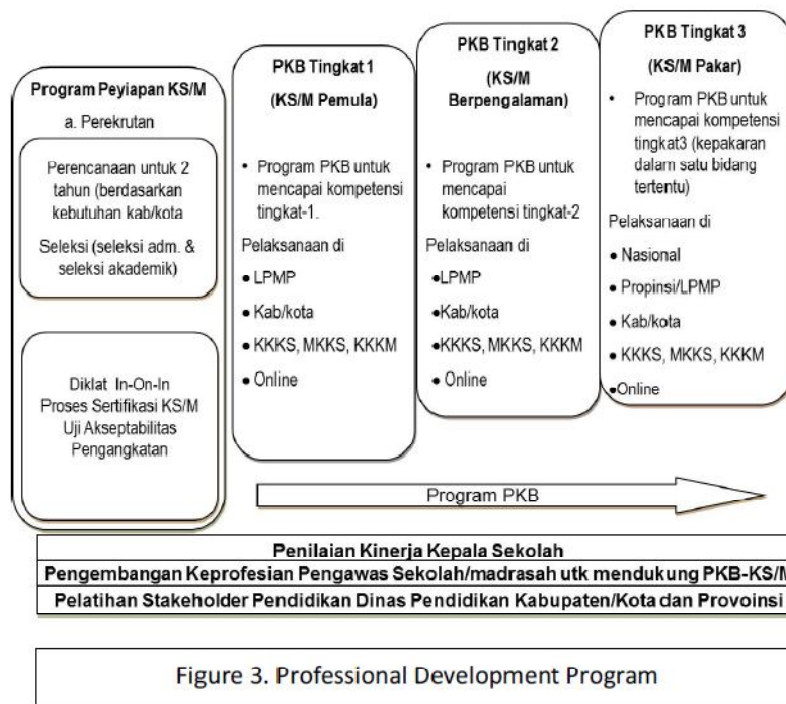


Figure 3. Professional Development Program

Both excellent programs achieve positive results enough. In addition, through a joint program between Australia and America, was organizing school reconstruction program in West Java and West Sumatra to provide education to accelerate recovery after the events of the earthquake in 2009. The SSQ also

helped improve school based management programs, improving teaching standards and approaches, as well as improving the relevance of education. In particular to elementary education, the program was developed through the Principal Candidate Preparation Program, Sustainable professional development for principals and Madrasah, Principal Mentoring Program by Supervisor, Government Education Capacity area, and the new School Induction Program. One example is the CLA program as illustrated in Figure 3.

**Program of PRIORITAS**

USAID PRIORITY 5-year program that was developed by USAID and the Government of Indonesia from the DBE program to increase access to quality basic education. Reform Priorities prioritizing stands for Innovation and Opportunities for Reaching Indonesian Teachers, Administrators and Students (Prioritize renewal, innovation, and opportunities for teachers, staff, and students). The program was developed in three program components, namely 1) Increasing the Quality of Learning in Pre-School through Teacher Training and In Position, 2) Increasing Governance and Management Education, and 3) Increasing coordination between Education Institutions at National, Provincial, District, and School . PRIORITY framework as illustrated in Figure 4. PRIORITY is the flagship program of the School-Based Management Program (MBS), Community Participation (CP), and active learning programs, creative, effective, and fun (AJEL).

**Open and Online Teacher Training by Universitas Terbuka**

Universitas Terbuka (UT) has recognized that learning support is imperative for open and distance learning (ODL) system. As for its nature, ODL requires learners to develop their self-learning initiatives to manage their learning effectively. In addition, ODL system requires the learners to enhance independent learning approach to have their learning efficiently enriched by resources available surroundings. These ways will lead to receive the best achievement. In general, learning support services can be any kinds of services given to the learners to strengthen their learning. Belawati (2000) implied that learning support services are those facilitated by ODL institutions to their learners during completing their course materials or when the learning process actually takes place. This is called tutorial. UT groups tutorial into face-to-face tutorial, programmed tutorial consisting of radio and television tutorials, online tutorial, and academic and/or pedagogic activities consisting of laboratory activities, online library services, and practical work. In 2004, UT had developed correspondence tutorial.

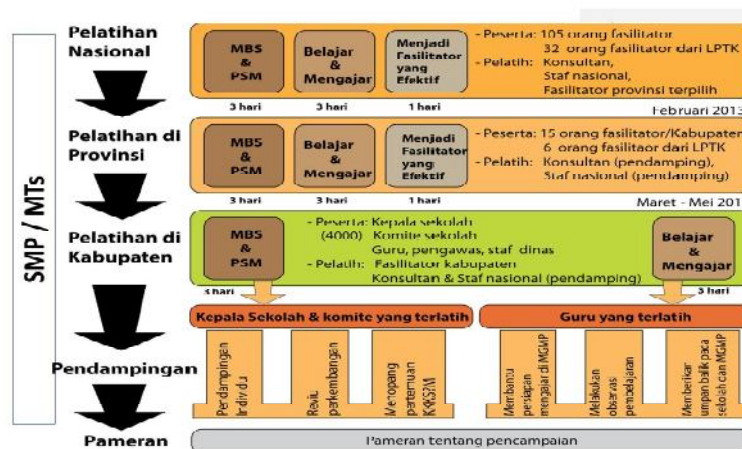


Figure 4. Managerial skills Improvement Program

Through this tutorial, written materials are mailed to the learners. UT expects to receive responses from the intended learners. In 2005, UT has decided to terminate this tutorial due to the various

concerns arisen, specially those who have questioned about the originality of the responses that have been submitted by the learners.

Among the four approaches to learning, online tutorial constitutes the recent approach provided by UT. In meeting the future challenges, UT continuously develops the use of internet networks to facilitate the advancement of learner support services. Some experts argues that the use of Internet technology in ODL is necessary when the following conditions are achieved, namely ICT infrastructure is accessible for intended learners, economy of learners can meet the demand for accessing the available technology, and finally learner learning habit corresponds with the language of intended virtual technology (Suparman, 2009).

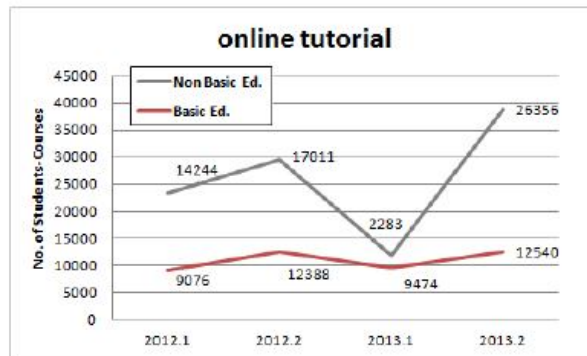


Figure 5. Online Tutorial

In the previous two years, UT has steadily improved a number of online courses. The number of students participating in the online tutorial has been fluctuative through the years. In 2013, as shown in Figure 5, total number of teachers participating in online tutorial is 38,896 (students-courses in number), where 32% of the number are elementary teachers. Economic condition has seemed to influence to the affordability of students to access online support learning system provided by UT, in addition to infrastructor supports provided by Local Government.

Over all, continuous efforts in giving better services to teachers are UT's commitment to educate people across the country. One of the online programs that is dedicated to teacher improvement program is Guru Pintar Online (GPO – an *online portal for upgrading teachers and other education practitioners*). Figure 6 shows this program. Basically, due to the future, GPO is not only open and dedicated for UT students but also we built it for all teachers and education practitioners without exception. The feature consists of four parts, namely news and events, general information including informationon rules and regulations issued by UT and the government, communication forums, and links to other websites that are related to educational matters.

Communication forum of GPO facilitates the readers with online media for discusion and brainstorming concerning teaching practices, mainly taking place in the classroom. Video straming is the main mode of media for delivering contents of knowledge and information regarding classroom teaching strategies and approaches. Teachers may submit comments or suggestion regarding the video through the forum. Some other may also submit their responses to comments submitted into the Forum. Discussion is under moderation by UT lecturers. This way is necessary in regard to ethical and scientific responses submitted by participants. As a result, open and continuous discussions takes place through the Forum.



Figure 6. Guru Pintar Online

## Conclusion

A variety of quality improvement programs has been a routine, accelerated and partnership programs. All the programs are obviously dedicated to strengthen the professionalism of teachers in order be capable of meeting the national goals for nation and character building and development. As part of the government, UT has committed to strengthen teacher competences and professional through distance and online systems.

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