

Comparative Study of Competency and Certification of Special Education Teachers in Various Countries

Asri Dwi Puspari, Herry Widyastono

Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia

Email: asridwip00@gmail.com

Abstract: Being a professional teacher must meet the competency standards set by the government. Special education teachers must also be professional because special education teachers must have specific competencies that teachers in public schools do not possess. This study aims to describe special education teachers' competence and certification in various countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and South Korea. Teacher certification is the process of giving educator certificates to teachers and has several competencies, namely: pedagogical competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence. In several countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and South Korea, the special education teacher certification program must have a Bachelor of Education academic qualification, have an educator certificate by following the available programs, and pass a field competency test.

Keywords: special education teachers; certifications; competencies; professionals

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are professions that have a central role in determining the nation's next generation. Teachers are required to have the skills to organize material and process it in learning and the formation of student competencies. The teaching profession must be prepared to recognize broader knowledge in order to have the ability and competence. Siswanto (2008) states that teacher competence is complex and is a unified whole that describes the basic knowledge, skills and values that are reflected through actions in carrying out their duties as educators.

The teacher certification program implemented by the Indonesian government is an effort to improve teacher welfare. Pramantik & Pardjono (2016) states that teacher certification is the fulfillment of the need to improve professional competence, the competency test process for prospective teachers or teachers who want to gain recognition and or improve competence according to their chosen profession. Teacher certification is the basis for ensuring the existence of professional teachers to realize national education goals. The implementation of teacher certification is expected to be able to be a solution related to the achievement of quality and professional teacher standards (Kurniawan, 2011).

Minister of National Education Regulation No. 18 of 2007 requires the certification process for in-service teachers, especially the portfolio track, must show a portfolio document shown by teachers which will be a measuring tool for competency testing. While the certification process for pre-service, Law Number 14 of 2007 concerning Teachers and Lecturers and

Government Regulation Number 74 of 2008 concerning Teachers have outlined that this is the authority of educational personnel education institutions. Educational personnel education institutions in question are universities assigned by the government to organize teacher procurement programs for early childhood education through formal, basic, and/or secondary education, as well as to organize and develop educational and non-educational sciences. The teacher in question must have an academic qualification of at least a Bachelor/Diploma IV and certified educator. To get an educator certificate, teachers must attend a teacher professional education program for 1 year and pass the selection of field competency tests.

The regulation also applies to special education teachers. Special education teachers are teachers who guide education for students with disabilities or students who have extraordinary intelligence. The teacher certification program so far has not succeeded in producing competent educators. Because in reality, teacher certification only has an impact on increasing teacher income, not on the ability of teachers. Teacher certification is carried out to obtain an educator certificate which is one of the requirements to become a professional teacher. Becoming a special education teacher must also be professional because special education teachers must have certain competencies that are not owned by teachers in public schools. Becoming a special education teacher must pass a test of eligibility and equality for teachers in certain fields. This also happened in other countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and South Korea. The results of this study are expected to be used as one of the

initial information in scientific development related to the competence and certification of special education teachers in various countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and South Korea.

DISCUSSION

In Indonesia, teachers who have passed the certification program and have four competencies, namely, pedagogic competence, personality competence, professional competence and social competence. One of the pedagogic competencies of a special education teacher can be seen by being able to manage student behavior. Personal competence of a professional special education teacher must have a good personality. These personalities can act and behave as role models. In addition, as a good person, special education teachers must of course give attention and affection to children with special needs regardless of the conditions and circumstances. In the professional competence of special education teachers, it is closely related to the form of professional development carried out by teachers. Teachers' professionalism can be shown by having creativity and innovation. The social competence shown by a special education teacher does not discriminate against students, assuming that all students are the same, including children with special needs.

Kunandar (2007) argues that teacher professional certification is a process to provide certification to teachers who have met the standards as evidence or recognition of their professional abilities as educators. This program is one of the government's efforts to improve the quality of teachers in Indonesia. This program also trains teachers to improve their basic competencies, namely, pedagogic competence, personality competence, social competence and professional competence. If the teacher has been able to master the required competencies, then this will have an impact on his increasing performance.

Malaysia

Becoming a teacher Special education in Malaysia can be achieved through various courses provided by the kingdom. According to Razhiyah (2005), the courses offered for those who are interested in engaging in special education are Pre-Service Course Malaysian Diploma in Teaching Course, Special Teaching Certificate Course (1 year), In-Service Course, Enhancement Course. The training offered is divided into 2 types, namely training for those who have become teachers, then training is given in services for 14 weeks, which includes KDP problems with vision, hearing, learning, special recovery, typical of dyslexia. For those who are taken within one year, it is called

the Special Teaching Certificate Course which includes KDPM Special Education with Vision, hearing and learning problems. Meanwhile, those who have never studied in the field of education can become special education teachers on condition that they go through a course or training called the Postgraduate Service Course (KPLI).

Bachelor with special education honors taken for 4 years in Malaysia all have educator certificates. The certificate is obtained from the university where the student is studying. The diploma obtained after taking education can be used as an educator certificate to be used for teaching. The certificate is a qualification that graduates of the typical education can teach children with special needs. Before a typical education graduate can teach as a teacher, they apply for an interview opened by the Malaysian government. After that, they will be placed in schools as permanent teachers/teachers who have permanent positions. In Malaysia the salary of a teacher who has a permanent position depends on the grade of the position obtained. The higher the grade, the higher the salary obtained.

Philippines

The Philippines is a country that offers a variety of teacher training programs to enhance the teaching skills of prospective teachers. According to the research, there are 2180 higher education institutions in total 607 of which are public and 1573 are private institutions. At the same time the country is made up of many private, international, preparatory schools, which provide various opportunities for teaching job seekers. Prospective teachers with certifications in pre- and primary school teacher training, nursery teacher training and teacher training can provide better teaching jobs in the Philippines than pre-primary teacher training job seekers without certification. Preschool educators play a very important role in children's lives as they are responsible for the overall development among children by providing valuable teaching and guidance. Various pre and primary teacher training programs, nurseries, Overuse of English as a global language of communication has made learning English very popular in the Philippines.

Running a teacher certificate upgrading program as opposed to requiring teachers can be very beneficial for those seeking to find teaching jobs in the Philippines. Those with a bachelor's degree in pre- and primary school teacher training are given preference by educational institutions in terms of salaries and other facilities offered. The remuneration paid to educators is quite good in the Philippines helping them live a fulfilling lifestyle there. The cost of living is quite low in the Philippines which acts as a benefit for those who are beginners in the teaching profession as the salary

may not be adequate in the early days. One of the requirements to become a professional teacher in the Philippines is to take the Teacher Licensing Examination (LET) for graduate education graduates, such as Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, Bachelor of Basic Education, Bachelor of Special Education and equivalent who have met the requirements.

Thailand

In Thailand, teacher quality improvement is carried out through various programs such as a 5-year teacher education program with scholarships to attract bright and potential teacher candidates. Minimum teacher qualifications must have a bachelor's degree with a length of education of 4 years. Teacher development is carried out in various forms ranging from training and further studies to masters and even doctors (Yunardi, 2014). Just like in other countries, the Faculty of Education in Thailand offers a 4-year undergraduate program. Since 2005, a number of faculties of education have been assigned to run a 5-year undergraduate program. This program recruits prospective students who are smart and virtuous to be prepared to become the teaching profession. Upon completion of the program, which consists of 3.5 years of study and 1.5 years of teaching practice, graduates are expected to receive higher salaries than ordinary undergraduates. Under the current education reforms, Thai teachers are encouraged and supported to receive training both at home and abroad. The following trainings are activities specifically prepared for teachers and school staff (Yunardi, 2014).

The training included the development of a five-year pre-assignment education program. This program requires prospective teachers to complete a five-year bachelor's degree before serving as a teacher or being accepted as a teacher, which consists of 3.5 (three point five) years of study and 1.5 (one point five) years of teaching training in a designated school. Graduates from outside the special education department who will become special education teachers must attend a 1 year certified program before being certified to become teachers. The next program is the completion of a bachelor's degree for permanent teachers. According to the National Education Law in Thailand 1999, teaching profession certification is required for a permanent teacher and school director where to obtain the certificate candidates must have a minimum qualification of a bachelor's degree in education. The last program is the Certificate and Postgraduate Education program. Teachers whose undergraduate qualifications are not from the field of education (linear) are encouraged to take part in a certified program or continue post-graduate education.

South Korea

To better serve children with special needs, several measures have been adopted by the South Korean government since 1988 through training programs in special education for regular teachers, and compulsory special education courses at teacher colleges. The revision of the Special Education Promotion Act in 1994 guaranteed early childhood education for people with disabilities in regular kindergartens. The National Institute of Special Education, founded in 1994 in South Korea, is responsible for research and development in special education, supply of teaching and learning materials, and teacher training for students with special needs. Special education teachers, deemed eligible either by passing special education examinations or through additional training in services for special teachers, are assigned to kindergarten, elementary, junior high and high school. There are 20 graduate schools, 4 national colleges, 10 private colleges, and 3 special graduate schools in South Korea that train special education teachers.

Prospective special educators obtain a teaching certificate in one of two ways: they are entitled to a teaching certificate after completing a 4-year university-based special education program, or regular teachers with 2 years of teaching experience can obtain a certificate by passing a qualification examination administered by the Ministry of Education. South Korea. (Republic of Korea Ministry of Education, 1999 in <https://education.stateuniversity.com/>). According to Enforcement and Ordinance No. 21 Under the Primary and Secondary Education Act in South Korea, special education teachers must major in special education in Higher Education for four years or take further training to the Postgraduate level of education. This applies to early childhood special education teachers. Around 150 early childhood education teachers are trained annually in the Department of Special Education at five universities in South Korea (Na & Moon, 2003).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion on the competence and certification of special education teachers in various countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and South Korea, it can be concluded that being a professional education teacher must have the competence and meet the requirements determined by each country. In Indonesia, the special education teacher certification program must have an academic qualification of a Bachelor of Education, have an educator certificate by participating in a teacher professional education program and pass a field competency test. Likewise in other countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and South Korea also have the same requirements, namely to

have a bachelor's degree in special education in higher education. In Thailand there is an undergraduate completion program for permanent teachers who have not met the requirements. Prospective special educators in South Korea obtain a teaching certificate in one of two ways: they are entitled to a teaching certificate after completing a 4-year university-based special education program, or an ordinary teacher with 2 years of teaching experience can obtain a certificate by passing a administered examination qualification. by the South Korean Ministry of Education.

REFERENCES

- Kunandar. (2007). Guru Profesional: Implementasi Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) dan Sukses dalam Sertifikasi Guru [Professional Teachers: Implementation of the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) and Success in Teacher Certification]. *Jakarta: Rajagrafindo Persada.*
- Kurniawan, B. D. (2011). Implementasi kebijakan sertifikasi guru dalam rangka meningkatkan profesionalitas guru di Kota Yogyakarta [Implementation of teacher certification policies in order to improve teacher professionalism in the city of Yogyakarta]. *Jurnal Studi Pemerintahan, 2(2).*
- Na, J. & Moon, M. (2003). *Early Childhood Education and Care Policies in the Republic of Korea.* Seoul: Korean Educational Development Institute, Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development.
- Pramantik, I. A. D., & Pardjono, P. (2016). Profesionalisme guru pendidikan khusus di Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta [The professionalism of special education teachers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta]. *Jurnal Akuntabilitas Manajemen Pendidikan, 4(1), 88-100.*
- Razhiyah, K. A. (2005). *Menjadi guru pendidikan khas [Become a special education teacher].* PTS Professional.
- Siswanto, S. (2013). PROGRAM SERTIFIKASI GURU (Antara Tuntutan Kesejahteraan dan Kualitas) [TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (Between Welfare and Quality Demands)]. *Jurnal TADRIS, 3(2), 211-221.*
- Yunardi, M. (2014). Sistem Pendidikan di Thailand [Education System in Thailand]. *Kantor Atase Pendidikan, Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia (KBRI) Bangkok, 1-45.*