



## **Investigating Teacher Professional Development: English Teachers' Learning Activities as Learners**

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### **Abstract**

Teachers' task is not solely related to teaching, such as planning, implementing, and evaluating teaching-learning activities. Teachers also have a responsibility to grow professionally by upgrading their instructional knowledge and skills so that they can manage better teaching practices aligned with current educational demand and advancement in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). In this case, teachers are learners who do continuous learning about themselves, their students, and their profession as teachers. This study using survey design aims to explore learning activities that the English teachers participate in as their professional development conduct in the Indonesian context. This study further investigates the teachers' perception of the learning activities and the obstacles that hinder them from participating in the learning activities. The participants of this study were 30 English teachers from junior and senior high schools in South Kalimantan Province attending PPG (Education for Teacher Profession). The data of this study was collected using the teacher questionnaire based on the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). The analysis of the findings on practices of teacher professional

development regarding real professional development activities that English teachers participate in showed that they experienced some obstacles in participating in the program. The obstacles consisted of the schedule, high payment of some TPD activities, family's responsibilities, employer support, unsuitability of the offered professional development program, and lack of information about the availability of professional development activities. Despite facing those obstacles, English teachers in this particular context are committed to growing through continuous professional learning.

**Keywords:** English teachers, Teacher Professional Development, Teachers as Learners

## **Introduction**

Teacher Professional Development (TPD) is an integral part of teachers' life-long learning. Through professional development endeavors, teachers continue to learn to develop their competencies and skills as their effort to cope with increasing demands in educational enterprises. The goal of continuous teacher learning is reflected and observed in the notion of TPD. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009) uses the term Teacher professional development to refer to "activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher." In addition to being as activities for quality development, Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) also defined teacher professional development as "structured professional learning" that help teachers to make positive changes in their teaching practices and to improve student learning outcome. Thus, teacher, like other professions, is not supposed to stagnate regarding quality. Instead, they need to develop professionally through ongoing learning.

The sustainable teacher professional development matters since teachers cannot merely rely on the knowledge and experience they obtain from college. The condition of teaching is involved, and after teacher apprentices graduate from college and achieve their teacher certification, they will face the complexity of education and should learn from real teaching experiences (Mizell, 2010). The complexity of

education involves the diverse learning needs of students, advancement of technology, innovation of teaching methods, as well as changes in subject content, laws, and procedures. It is necessary for teachers to conduct sustainable, effective professional development both to empower them to survive for their career as teaching professionals as well as help students to master required skills and competencies in the current competitive era to confront and comply with these challenges. Research has revealed that effective teacher professional development contributes significant improvement to teacher knowledge, skill, and teaching practice (Parise & Spillane, 2010; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007) as well as improve student achievement (Tienken, 2003; McCutchen et al., 2002). The benefits of effective teacher professional development on teacher and student are interconnected. Teachers who engage in sustainable teacher professional development attain better knowledge and skills and should use these to improve their teaching practice if they attempt to affect student learning and achievement positively (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarlos, & Shapley, 2007).

In the Indonesian context, teacher professional development has been mandated institutionally and emphasized in educational policy documents stipulated by the Indonesian government. The 2003 Law on National Education clearly stated the teachers' right to obtain professional development conducts, and the 2005 Law on Teachers and Lecturers mentioned the teachers' right to develop their competences. The Indonesian government further discusses the importance of improving teacher competencies in the 2008 Government Regulation on teachers wherein the four teacher competencies are obliged to have, namely pedagogical, social, personal and professional competencies. The government even enacted the Handbook of Continuous Professional Development for stakeholders, educational administrators, and teachers as a guidebook which describes the rationales of continuous professional development, concepts, and its implementation. Wulyani (2017) in her review on the policy above documents found that the records reflect the need for teachers to sustain and improve their subject matter knowledge and ICT skills to encounter the rapid development of technology related to teaching practices.

Teacher professional development is more challenging for those who teach English in the Indonesian context where English is a compulsory foreign language taught at schools than those who teach English as a Second Language. First, Indonesian EFL teachers as non-native speakers are generally expected to have a high level of spoken and written English language proficiency as well as excellent teaching competencies to be considered as professional English teachers (Yuwono & Harbon, 2010). The maintenance or improvement of English proficiency will not probably be managed well if EFL teachers do not do a real action to achieve it. The support or improvement is what has been revealed by Wulyani (2017) who investigated English proficiency of high school English language teachers at Malang District, East Java, Indonesia through teacher meeting in the Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (MGMP), an Indonesian term for School-Cluster Subject Teacher Working Group. Wulyani's (2017) study showed that the majority of the teachers had good writing ability, while in general, they had low vocabulary knowledge on the low-frequency word level, including academic words and low reading proficiency compared to 5.5 IELTS band-scale as the expected standard used in the study. Wulyani (2017), considering the somewhat restricted selection process of research participants, further revealed that the teachers' length of service was negatively correlated with their vocabulary knowledge, reading proficiency and writing proficiency. This finding suggests that instead of achieving increased English proficiency, long-serving teachers encounter decline on their English ability over time. Wulyani (2017) explained that this problem might be due to lack of English exposure and lack of English maintenance effort through teacher professional development. Thus, EFL teachers in the Indonesian context crucially need to do continuous learning to sustain and improve their English proficiency as one of the cores to be professional English teachers.

Second, teaching English as a foreign language in secondary schools is usually characterized with large class size, a wide range of students' ability and the high possibility that students have a low commitment for English learning since the reasons for learning it are not self-evident (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill & Pincas, 2003). To encounter these characteristics, teachers should do classroom

management with the three important features, namely appropriation regarding materials and teaching techniques, an organization of English instruction and practices, and excitement (Broughton et al., 2003). The best practices of classroom management with these three essential features are usually available with some useful innovations presented by ELT scholars, researchers, and practitioners through ELT books, courses, seminars, conferences, and other academic enterprises. Accordingly, teachers should upgrade their pedagogical and professional knowledge through continuous teacher professional development to keep up with ELT current trends so that they can face the changing situation in real classrooms. Also, regarding ICT rapid development, EFL teachers also need to enrich their knowledge regarding the innovative teaching practices integrated with ICT to increase participation and engagement of students who generally have low motivation to learn English as a foreign language.

Yuwono and Harbon (2010) revealed the perception of professionalism among English teachers in the Indonesian context. In their research, the motive for entering the English teaching profession was one of the areas revealed from English teacher professionalism. The reasons found were passion on teaching, financial burden, family influence, religious calling, the love of the English language and the perceived women' roles in the society. Although some of the motives for entering the English teaching profession seem quite relevant to the notion of English teaching itself, they might not be a facilitative factor in the engagement of continuous learning as teachers. The relevant motives insufficiently guarantee that teachers will have a strong commitment and participation in constant teacher learning. This idea is supported by Yuwono and Harbon (2010) in their research findings that teachers who work to provide English private tutor in private educational agency as their take second job and those who teach at several schools while seeking permanent appointment find it challenging to participate in professional development programs due to their limited time. Furthermore, teachers who have high teaching burden and top administrative work might also be reluctant and unwilling to commit in professional development (Yuwono, 2005).

Regarding the importance of teacher professional development, a study on practices of teacher professional development regarding real professional development activities that English teachers participate in is crucial to provide a comprehensive picture indicating whether or not English teachers are committed to growing through continuous professional learning. The significance of investigation on teachers' learning activities is confirmed by Rahman (2016) in his research that teachers' learning activities for professional development resulted in their improved instructional knowledge and skills as well as their perception and action on their professional learning. Thus, this study attempted to examine the English learning activities for professional development of English teachers who teach at senior high schools in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan Province. This study also further examined the teacher's perception of their learning activities and the obstacles that hinder them in participating in the learning activities for their professional development. As teacher professional development is highly contextual in which what and how teachers learn to depend on the context where they live or work (Kelchtermans, 2004; Rahman, 2016), this results of this study would enrich the evidence on English teachers' professional development practices in Indonesia as they rooted from South Kalimantan context.

## **Literature Review**

### *Teachers as Learners*

Tasks of a teacher are not confined to educating students, helping students to master specific skills, preparing and conducting well-organized instruction, and other classroom-based tasks. Learning as part of professional growth is also the teacher's crucial task. It can be considered that teachers, as adult learners, are supposed to learn through professional development based on their needs and the context of their teaching (King & Lawler, 2003). Several areas of professional development can be identified as the goals of teacher learning from teacher's individual perspective, namely subject-matter knowledge, such as knowledge of disciplinary basis of

TESOL/TEFL; pedagogical expertise; self-awareness; understanding of learners; understanding of curriculum and materials; and career advancement (Richards & Farrel, 2005).

As learners, teachers might learn through various learning activities underpinned by different views of teacher learning. Richards and Farrel (2005) listed four aspects of teacher learning, namely teacher learning as skill learning, cognitive process, personal construction, and reflective practice. In teacher learning as skill learning, the focus is on developing skills and competencies which are necessary to create effective teaching. In teacher learning as a cognitive process, teachers will have experiences to review their beliefs and thoughts about teaching and learning and examine how these influence their instructional decisions in their every classroom practice. Based on the next view, teacher learning as personal construction, teachers are directed to learn through activities which make use of self-awareness and personal interpretation to create a solution for their classroom challenges. Learning activities drawn from the last view of teacher learning encourage teachers to examine their teaching experiences as a critical reflection so that teachers can develop a better understanding of the strength and weakness sides of their teaching practices. Taking active participation in these learning activities and applying the lessons received from the activities into the classroom can be beneficial to make positive changes in day-to-day teaching practices.

Some different learning activities have been in use for teacher professional development. They can range from “formal, structured topic-specific seminars given on in-service days, to everyday, informal ‘hallway’ discussion with other teachers about instruction techniques, embedded in teachers’ everyday work lives” (Desimone, 2009). Richards and Farrel (2005) state that teachers can learn from workshops, self-monitoring, teacher support group, writing and keeping a teaching journal, peer observation, teaching portfolios, analyzing critical incidents in the classroom, case analysis, peer coaching, team teaching, and action research. Furthermore, Villegas-Reimers (2003) made two categories for learning activities about professional



development, namely organizational partnership models and small group or individual models. The organizational partnership models include professional development schools, university-school partnerships, schools' networks, teachers' network, distance education, and other inter-institutional collaborations. The small group or individual models include supervision, students' performance assessment, workshops, seminars, courses, case-based study, self-directed development, co-operative/collegial development, observation of excellent practice, teachers' participation in new roles, skills-development model, reflective model, project-based model, portfolios, action research, teachers' narratives, generational/cascade model and coaching/mentoring.

Dunne (2002) provides learning activities for professional development, or 'strategies' as a term that she uses, aligned to purposes of professional development. According to Dunne (2002), there are four purposes categories of professional development, namely to construct knowledge, to translate knowledge into practice, to practice teaching, and to promote reflection. The strategies of professional development aligned to the purposes are as in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Professional Development Strategies Aligned to Purposes of Professional Development (Dunne, 2002)

Strategies Aligned to Purposes of Professional Development	Purposes of Professional Development			
	to construct knowledge	to translate knowledge into practice	to practice teaching	to promote reflection
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops, institutes, courses, and seminars</li> <li>• Immersion in the world of business,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum Implementation</li> <li>• Replacement units</li> <li>• Coaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study groups</li> <li>• Case discussion</li> <li>• Action research</li> <li>• Examining</li> </ul>

	science, mathematics, and/or other academic content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immersion  in inquiry in  science,  mathematics,  and/or other  academic  content</li> </ul>			student work
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The types of learning activities for teacher professional development are indeed varied and continue to evolve. Schools or teachers themselves can choose which of these types are suitable and appropriate for their needs and circumstances. Richards and Farrel (2005) provide a guideline in implementing professional development from teachers' initiatives. The instructions are (1) teacher decides what he/she would like to learn about his/her teaching and the field; (2) teacher identifies a strategy to explore the topic he/she is interested in; (3) teacher talks to people who have taken part in a professional development activity; (4) teacher decides types of support he/she will need; (5) the teacher selects a colleague or colleagues to work with; (6) the teacher sets realistic goals and establish a time frame; (6) teacher evaluates his/her learning results and share them with others.

While teacher plays an essential role in initiating professional development and join as well as participate in professional development endeavors, there are some factors from the teacher as an individual which can support or hinder their intention to grow through professional development. Smith and Gillespie (2007) reviewed research on factors affecting teacher learning and change and found the six major individual

factors, namely teacher motivation for professional development, teacher concerns, teacher self-efficacy, teacher cognitive styles, teacher reflectiveness, and formal teacher education as well as years of experience.

### *Effective Teacher Professional Development*

Teacher professional development which provides activities to improve teachers'

Competencies, skills, and attitude should be carefully planned to reach its goal optimally. The generic planning model for professional development programs developed by scholars requires consideration on three major factors, namely knowledge and beliefs, context, and critical issues, after the goals of the programs are established (Dunne, 2002). Dunne (2002) states that "the foundation of effective professional development design should reflect knowledge and beliefs about learners and learning, teachers and teaching; standards within the different subject areas; principles and standards of professional development; and the change process." As teacher professional development is contextual-based, the contextual factor should also be considered, such as student factor, the knowledge, and experiences of teachers, current practices, curriculum, current policies, and history of professional development in the setting. Finally, professional development programs should also consider how to build a professional culture, develop leadership, and handle other critical issues through the programs.

Darling-hammond et al. (2017) conducted a meticulous review of 35 studies on teacher

professional development and its link with teaching practices and student outcomes and found seven shared common features which characterize effective professional development. Darling-hammond et al. (2017) state that effective professional development "(1) is content focused; (2) incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory; (3) supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts; (4) uses models, and modeling of effective practice; (5) provides coaching and expert support; (6) offers opportunities for feedback and reflection; and (7) is of sustained duration."

Regarding EFL teacher professional development in the field of English language teaching (ELT), the first feature requires professional development to focus on relevant teaching strategies related to curriculum content of ELT. Since effective professional development should focus on teaching strategies, the second feature requires active learning from teachers in which they actively participate in hands-on experience in designing and practicing the procedures. Teachers should also have opportunities to collaborate with their peers/colleagues in developing and practicing the new teaching strategies which fit their students' need and classroom condition which can build teacher community who actively do innovation on their teaching practices. As the fourth feature suggests, effective professional development should provide models of effective ELT practice, so teachers can observe the models, learn from them, and adapt them for their real teaching practice. Teachers need knowledgeable others to support their learning in the professional development program, so ELT experts and scholars can be involved in professional development to share ideas, monitor teachers' learning, and give feedback sustainably. The next feature requires professional development to provide teachers with the opportunity to rethink about their day-to-day teaching practices, associate and compare them with the models of effective teaching practice, and finally to make positive changes to their practice through reflection and by using feedback from the experts. Eventually, professional development programs should be conducted in a sustained duration or adequate time, not in short time programs such as one-day workshops. Sustained duration feature also requires appropriate follow-up toward teacher learning as the integrated part of the professional development programs.

#### *Practices of Teacher Professional Development for EFL Teachers in Indonesia*

Some teacher professional programs or practices have existed in Indonesia to facilitate teachers to improve their quality. Several important practices are the discussion of this section.

Teachers in Indonesia must take in-service teacher certification program as the

requirement to obtain formal and legal acknowledgment as professional teachers. In-service teacher certification as one of the Indonesian government's effort is expected to improve education quality at official school level continuously. In-service teachers who have fulfilled the qualification to take teacher certification can join the program through the Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Profesi Guru (PLPG, Education and Training for Teaching Profession) or the Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG, Education for Teacher Profession).

The PLPG is a teacher professional development program which consists of a 100-learning hour-in-service training program with the materials designed by referring to four teacher competencies (pedagogic, personal, social and personal). The training is conducted in the form of lectures and workshops with several groups of peer teaching/peer guidance and counseling facilitated by one instructor for each group. The learning process is oriented to the achievement of competences (competence-based), not content-based. At the end of the PLPG, teachers will take competence appraisal which includes a written test, and performance test is focusing on the implementation of the currently applied curriculum.

As has been stated earlier, teacher certification can be followed through the Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG, Education for Teacher Profession). The PPG is divided into two categories, namely in-service PPG and pre-service PPG. In-service PPG is a teacher professional development program for in-service teachers, while pre-service PPG is a teacher professional development program for the graduates of a bachelor degree in education and non-education field. The PPG is conducted for two semesters (one year study), and the curriculum consists of workshops on instructional device development including presentation and peer teaching, deepening of subject matter knowledge, professional and pedagogical materials, teaching practice, and classroom action research. The participants can successfully pass through the program if they achieve the minimum passing grade at the article deepening, workshops, classroom action research, teaching practice, and written test, and they will obtain teacher certification.

The next forms of teacher professional development in Indonesia are the *Kelompok Kerja Guru* (KKG, Primary School Teacher Working Group) and *Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran* (MGMP, Subject Teacher Working Group for Secondary School Teachers). These are professional forums for expanding teacher knowledge on critical educational issues, such as the implementation of new/current curriculum, syllabus development, lesson plan development, and ICT-integrated instruction; sharing teaching experiences and giving/getting feedback, develop professional teaching culture, develop mentoring activities, and increase teachers' awareness on classroom problems and to find solutions for the problems. These forums can also facilitate teachers to work together to develop curriculum and instructional material, design test item, conduct lesson study and collaborate through classroom action research. In addition to these forums which are mandated institutionally, there are also other important teacher associations as professional teachers' forums for EFL teachers, namely TEFLIN (Teachers of English as a Foreign Language) Association and APSPBI (Asosiasi Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Se-Indonesia, or English Language Education Study Program Association).

EFL teachers can also join ELT conferences and workshops as their professional development conducts. Some of the conferences conducted in Indonesia are continuous conferences held annually, such as TEFLIN conference and BICOLE (the Bandung International Conference on Language and Education). Also, free online learning is also available for EFL teachers who are eager to improve their knowledge and skills in ELT.

The research problems are as follows:

- 1) What are learning activities that the English teachers participate in as their professional development conduct?
- 2) What are the teachers' perceptions of their learning activities for their professional development?
- 3) What are the teachers' obstacles in participating in the learning activities

for teacher professional development?

## **Research Method**

### *The Design of the Study*

The design of this study was survey research aiming to explore and describe the learning activities for professional development of English teachers who teach at senior high schools in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan Province, the teacher's perception on their learning activities and the obstacles that hinder them in participating in the learning activities for their professional development. The survey design would enable the researchers to provide insights into English teachers' professional development effort through their participation in various learning activities and how learning activities affect their learning and quality as teachers (Neuman, 2014:316-317).

### *Research Site and Participants*

The research site was South Kalimantan Province, focusing on Banjarmasin as the host of the teacher's professional development program. Generally, the participants of this research were the junior and senior high school teachers in South Kalimantan. However, the number has decreased since the LPMP of South Kalimantan selected the participants of the teacher's professional development program. Thirty teachers have been selected to attend the teacher's professional development program this year. These 30 teachers are the participants who became the population of this research.

### *Research Instruments*

The instrument used to collect the research data was a teacher questionnaire. The questionnaire was utilized to collect both quantitative data and qualitative data on the English teachers' learning activities, perceptions on the learning activities, and the obstacles in participating in the learning activities. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The researchers adopted the first part of the questionnaire from the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) administered by the Organization for

Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009). The researchers adapted the survey for the questionnaire in this study since it is an international survey which used in 24 countries due to its high validity and reliability. At the first part of the questionnaire, the questionnaire items aimed to identify the participants' backgrounds and personal details such as gender, status, qualifications, number of schools they had taught in, qualifications, number of hours of instructional activities in a week and length of service. Furthermore, this part also examines the teachers' formal and informal learning activities, their perception on the impacts of the activities, and obstacles they encounter which hinder their participation in the learning activities and the items for these aspects use Likert-scale. The second part of the questionnaire consists of open-ended questions to further explore the teachers' learning activities for teacher professional development.

### *Data Analysis*

The data from the first part of the questionnaire data are coded and analyzed using the descriptive statistics in data analysis program 'SPSS 18' to generate a summary of the descriptive data of the questionnaire. The data from the first questionnaire was also grouped into the predetermined categories/themes relevant to the study, namely gender, status, qualifications, number of schools the teachers had taught in, qualifications, number of hours of instructional activities in a week and length of service: the teachers' formal and informal learning activities, their perception of the impacts of the activities, and the obstacles they encounter which hinder their participation in the learning activities.

The data from the second part of the questionnaire with open-ended items are analyzed using qualitative data analysis, namely compiling the data, disassembling the data by coding process, reorganizing the initial codes into themes/categories (reassembling), interpreting the results of disassembling and reassembling phase using the themes/classes, and finally drawing conclusions from the entire qualitative analysis. Finally, the results of the data analysis from the first part of the questionnaire and those from the second part of the questionnaire are discussed and



reported using a thematic approach based on the categories/themes of the data from the questionnaire.

## **Results**

### *Learning Activities as Parts of Teachers' Professional Development*

Based on the results of the questionnaires, the researchers found that all of the teachers have already joined some formal professional development activities. Twenty-seven (90%) teachers mentioned that they have experienced attending the courses or workshops related to subject matter, methods and/or other education-related topics. Some of them suggested the materials learned such as 2013 Curriculum, test development, national examination, classroom management, syllabus development, and instructional media. Most of them agreed that the kind of activity gives a tremendous impact on their professionalism. Only a few teachers (10%) stated that courses or workshop only provides a little benefit for their development as teachers.

Additionally, participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for the professional development of teachers, known as *Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran* (MGMP), also plays a significant role in their professional development (PD). The data proved that 83% of teachers actively join that forum since it is an ideal place for them to share some matters or problems related to teaching English although four of them do not take many advantages from it. Furthermore, some teachers (40%) have joined education conferences or seminars where teachers either present their research results or only participate in the discussions of educational problems. Even though a few of them consider it is not supporting their PD, most of them get the beneficial impacts from joining those activities.

Moreover, teachers do observations visits to other schools and mentoring and/ or peer observation and coaching, as part of a formal school arrangement (33% and 30% respectively). Few of teachers did and followed the individual or collaborative research and qualification programs a (6% and 4% respectively) while they think that

those activities do not sufficiently improve their professionalism in teaching. Also, there is one teacher who mentioned another learning activity besides the list given in the questionnaire which is having a university-schools partnership. The teacher states that it provides a great impact on him or her.

Based on their experiences joining the PD learning activities, there are some activities which they considered giving a significant impact for their competences as teachers. Teacher Professional Education, known as *PPG* in Indonesia has given significant impact since the experts properly planned and guided it. *PPG* is a program designed by the government to equip teachers or pre-service teachers competencies related to their profession so that they become the professional teachers. It helps teachers to improve their professionalism especially related to pedagogic. Besides discussing materials pertaining to teachers' professional development with the experts, the teacher also finds it attractive that she can consult and share about problems or related matters about teaching and learning process with other teachers in *PPG*. Also, the schedule of *PPG* is organized well. It is also considered to be prestigious because only some teachers are allowed to join since there is a preliminary test for the teachers before the program runs. It means that not all teachers have chances to enter this activity.

Regarding the less formal professional development, most of the teachers have already participated in during the last 18 months. The majority of teachers preferred to engage in informal dialogues with their colleagues talking about how to improve their teaching. By doing an activity, it gives a significant impact on their PD even though very few of them consider it unnecessary to conduct. Furthermore, 67% of teachers also like to read professional literature such as journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers, etc. related to teaching and learning. Although they did reading as an attempt to develop their professionalism in teaching, they consider reading gives merely a small impact on their professional development.

For all the learning activities of TPD that the teachers have attended during last 18 months, based on the results of the questionnaire, more than half of them paid for

themselves to sign up for joining those activities. Whereas 13 teachers stated that they did not pay for the registration fee since the institution or government which held the learning activity already provided it. It is only one teacher mentioned that he/she needed to pay for himself or herself whenever he or she intended to attend the activities. Additionally, 18 teachers (60%) stated that they received scheduled time for undertaking the professional development that took place during regular hours. Otherwise, the rest of the teachers (40%) did not have any scheduled time spent for attending the professional development learning activities. Besides, when attending the activities, most of the teachers (97%) did not receive any salary supplement for undertaking the professional development activities that took place outside regular work hours. Only one teacher admitted that he or she got additional salary for joining activities of PD outside regular work hours.

#### *Teachers' Perceptions on Their Learning Activities for Their Professional Development*

Regarding professional development needs, there are some conventional materials that teachers need to improve their professionalism as teachers. 70% of the teachers choose ICT skills for teaching considered it as the most necessary lesson that they want to learn in PD activities, followed by the need of knowing how to manage the classroom chosen by 18 teachers. Likewise, 17 teachers gave their perspective that student assessment practices and knowledge and understanding of instructional practices (knowledge mediation) in their primary subject field are necessary for their professional development.

Furthermore, knowledge about both student discipline and behavior problems and school management and administration are recognized essential to be given in PD activities by half of the teachers. Then, 13 teachers agreed that content and performance standards in their main subject fields, knowledge, and understanding of their main subject fields and also teaching in a multicultural setting are essential for their teaching development. The last but not least, teaching students with special learning needs and student counseling are considered less important to be learned

when they attend professional development activities than others they mentioned.

The researchers have also investigated the teachers' perception of the urgency of knowing the purpose of PD in this study. Most of the teachers mentioned that knowing the purpose of the TPD activities is important before joining those activities. Thus, the teachers can choose which activities are needed to enrich her knowledge and improve skills regarding teachers' professionalism. Additionally, knowing the aim is necessary and beneficial for them not to waste their time.

However, some teachers stated that it is not necessary to know the purpose of joining the TPD since the teacher attends the activities based on headmaster's instruction. The teacher believes that all activities about TPD will benefit teachers' professional development as long as the participants join them seriously. Also, the teacher said that joining some activities of TPD is actually only based on a school's instruction, so the teacher sometimes joins them without recognizing the expected outcomes after attending the activities. Hence, sometimes, even regular TPD activities sponsored by the government are not applicable to be implemented because aimed for other subject-teachers, not English.

Furthermore, teachers also perceived that the PD activities are mostly held in a concise period that the teachers feel it is not sufficient for them to comprehend all materials taught. Hence, it does not give practical contribution in teaching and learning process since the teachers are not fully able to implement the materials learned. As a result, based on the teacher's opinion, it is essential for the training organizers to give more allocated time and attention to the facilities provided to the participants to motivate them to join the activity.

#### *Teachers' Obstacles in Participating in the Learning Activities for Teacher Professional Development*

Based on the teachers' opinion, it can be seen that almost all teachers (97%) have the willingness to participate more in professional development activities that they have already had while one teacher does not want to have more participation in joining

learning activities of PD. Some reasons or obstacles prevented them from participating in more professional development learning activities. The idea which mostly chosen by the teachers (63%) is the professional development activities conflicted with their work schedule. Seven teachers could not have more opportunities to actively participate in PD because the prices of PD are too high for them to afford and also, they do not have the pre-requisites regarding the qualifications, experiences, or seniority.

The other reasons chosen by the teachers which gave impact to their involvement on PD activities are the inadequate time because of family's responsibilities (20%), a lack of employer support (17%), and followed by unsuitability of professional development offered. Similar other reason is added by two teachers which is the lack of information they got about the availability of professional development learning activities.

A teacher added that the trend nowadays leads the teacher to be independently proactive to search the information about the available seminar, training, or workshop and to register to those activities and not to rely on school's calls like they get used to. Because of their businesses, it seems that the teachers are not fully aware of the updated information regarding the professional development learning activities.

## **Discussion**

In the Indonesian context, teachers are rules through Legislation No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. The article 10 point (1) states that "teachers' competence as revealed in Article 8 includes pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies achieved through the professional education. The article 20 point (2) explains that in carrying out professional duties, the teacher is obliged to continually improve and develop academic qualifications and competencies in line with the development of science, technology, and art. The teachers are required to be the learners as their efforts to increase their capacity as teachers so that they can carry out their duties and responsibilities properly. As graduates of education institution of educational resources (LPTK), they have not regarded as having professional status.

Achieving the status, they must attend teacher professional education (PPG).

The PPG Program provided the materials for teacher professional development as follows : (1) Theoretical Review on the Education and teachers' Professionalism = 4 credits, (2) Deepening of English language material by Applying the Principle of TPACK = 6 credits, (3) Review and Discussion on the Results of Material Deepening through Online Learning 1 credits, (4) Development of Teaching and Learning Design (Lesson Plan, Teaching Material, and Teaching Media) and Peer-Teaching = 6 credits, (5) Planning of Classroom Action Research (CAR) = 1 credit, and (6) Field Experience Practices = 6 credits. These materials are insufficiently for establishing teacher professionalism. Ideally, according to Selvi K., the professional teachers must have competences in (1) the field of teaching such as the content needed in the learning and teaching process), (2) the research such as competencies in research methodology, and conducting research in language teaching, (3) curriculum such as curriculum development and curriculum implementation, (4) the lifelong learning such as the abilities of learning to learn, and teachers' responsibilities of their own professional development. (5) social-cultural competencies such as the knowledge about social-cultural background of students and teachers, local, national and international values, democracy and human rights issues, team and collaborative work with others, and social studies, (6) emotional affairs such as teachers' and students' values, morals, beliefs, attitudes, anxieties, motivation, empathy and so on. (7) communication such as models of communication and interaction to make the proper social environment and to support the teaching and learning process. (8) information and communication technologies (ICT) for supporting their teaching and learning process, and (9) environmental for ecological and environmental safety (Selvi, K., 2010).

#### *Learning Activities as Parts of Teachers Professional Development*

Based on the findings drawn from the questionnaires and informal interview, some learning activities that teachers attended and whether they gave great impact or not being found out. It is obvious that all of the teachers have already joined some formal

professional development activities. Among all of the activities listed, most of the teachers experienced joining workshops or training, categorized as organizational partnership model and teacher's network, as part of a small group or individual models of professional development (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Looking at the characteristics of activities that most teachers have already joined during the last 18 months, it can be concluded that all the purposes of the professional development activities, proposed by Dunne (2002), are reached. The achievements are constructing knowledge by attending workshops or seminars, translating knowledge into practice by doing mentoring, practicing teaching by coaching and promoting reflection by doing study groups, case discussion, and action research.

Furthermore, most teachers agreed that almost all activities help them to improve their professionalism as a teacher, although very few of them thought that it is not beneficial for them. According to Darling-Hammond, et al. (2017), "structured professional learning" helps teachers to make positive changes in their teaching practices and to improve student learning outcome. It is also in line with some research stating that effective teacher professional development contributes significant improvement to teacher knowledge, skill, and teaching practice (Parise & Spillane, 2010; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007). Especially when joining the formal learning activities such as workshop, training, seminar, or conferences and when participating in a network of teachers formed specifically for the professional development of teachers, it is admitted by the teachers that they get a significant impact from both of the activities. Teachers who engage in sustainable teacher professional development attain better knowledge and skills and should use these to improve their teaching practice if they attempt to affect student learning and achievement positively (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarlos, & Shapley, 2007).

Also, there is one teacher who mentioned other learning activity besides the list given in the questionnaire which gives a significant impact for him or her which is having a university-schools partnership. According to Kedzior and Fifield (2004), the teachers keep themselves informed the latest research and theories in teaching because of their

connections to universities. It gives positive attitude toward the schools and universities.

As the semi-formal PD activities, engaging in informal dialogues with their colleagues talking about how to improve their teaching and reading professional literature such as journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers, etc. related to teaching and learning are also conducted although most of them consider talking with colleagues give more impact than reading.

Since all of the subject-teachers in this study are participants of PPG, they believe that PPG has given significant impact regarding some reasons. It is properly and planned and guided by the experts. Moreover, PPG is a program designed by the government to equip teachers or pre-service teachers' competencies related to their profession so that they become the professional teachers. It helps teachers to improve their professionalism especially related to pedagogic.

Based on the regulation, PPG is conducted in a sustained duration (one year) consisting of workshops on instructional device development including presentation and peer teaching, deepening of subject matter knowledge, professional and pedagogical materials, teaching practice, and classroom action research. According to Guskey (2003) in Kedzior and Fifield (2004), it indicates that PPG has been categorized as a high-quality teacher professional development since it is content-focused. It demonstrates teachers' skills and understandings which are directly related to the degree that professional development experiences focus on subject matter content (Birman, Desimone, Garet, & Porter, 2000). Furthermore, it is extended activity that it allows for more substantive engagement with subject matter, more opportunities for active learning, and the development of coherent connections to teachers' daily work (Birman, Desimone, Garet, & Porter, 2000). It is also collaborative that teacher learning is most likely when teachers collaborate with professional peers, both within and outside of their schools, and when they gain further expertise through access to external researchers and program developers" (King & Newmann, 2000, p. 576). The last but not least, it has the characteristic of



self-evaluation that professional development should include procedures for self-evaluation to guide teachers in their ongoing improvement efforts (Guskey, 2003 in Kedzior & Fifield, 2004).

For all the learning activities of TPD that the teachers have attended during last 18 months, based on the results of the findings, more than half of them paid for themselves to sign up for joining those activities. Meanwhile, others did not pay for the registration fee since the institution or government already funded the learning activity. It is clear that funding is essential in any reform or effective professional development, but at the same time, as reported by Bush (1999) in Villegas-Reimers (2003), funding alone is not enough to provide effective professional development opportunities for teachers. There are some suggestions offered for helping to keep the cost down by Geiger (1996) in Villegas-Reimers (2003). They are (1) developing research teams or study group within the school, (2) having teachers teach an additional class, either in the same or in a different school, (3) having teachers and administrators change places for a limited amount of time, (4) assigning teachers as coaches and having teachers trains other teachers in particular aspects of teaching, and (5) looking for competitive contrasts from consultants or organizations when needed.

### *Teachers' Perceptions on Their Learning Activities for Their Professional Development*

Professional development must be designed and implemented to meet the teachers' needs properly to achieve the greatest impact. One of the characteristics of high-quality teacher professional development is teacher-driven, which means professional development should respond to teachers' self-identified needs and interests to support individual and organizational improvements. Professional development is more meaningful to teachers when they exercise ownership of its content and process than if they do not (King & Newmann, 2000).

Regarding the professional development needs to be investigated to the teachers, there

are some conventional materials that teachers want to acquire when attending the learning activities. ICT skills for teaching are the most significant area of development need followed by the necessity of knowing how to manage the classroom. That school teacher identifies such a high level of demand in the use of ICT for instruction may be a reflection of the speed of technological change which teachers must keep pace. It may signal a continuing challenge for schools and teachers to keep up to speed in a fast-moving area and to fully exploit technology for the benefit of teaching and learning. Besides, it may also confirm studies which indicate a lack of capacity building regarding how best to use ICT in the classroom. Furthermore, there is an indication that teachers also may get difficulty in managing their classroom because of the large class that they might have.

Student assessment practices and knowledge and understanding of instructional practices (knowledge mediation) in their primary subject field are also considered essential for their professional development. Since the curriculum regularly changes especially with the new curriculum, 2013 Curriculum, teachers need to adapt to the new approach in every aspect of teaching both the assessment and the instructional practices. Furthermore, knowledge about both student discipline and behavior problems and school management and administration are recognized essential to be given in PD activities by half of the teachers. It may indicate that teachers are less prepared for their role in school management and administration and also their role as an educator which not only facilitates students to learn but also educates students to be a better individual. Moreover, teaching students with special learning needs and student counseling are considered as less important because it is possible that the school teachers have not yet experienced teaching students with special learning needs and the availability of counseling teacher at the school.

The researchers also investigated the teachers' perception about the urgency of knowing the purpose of PD before attending in this study. Most of the teachers mentioned that understanding the use of the TPD activities is important before joining those activities. It is in line with the statement by Richards and Farrel (2005) that in

implementing professional development, the teacher needs to decide what he or she would like to learn about his or her teaching and the field. If teachers do not find out the purpose of PD before attending, it may be possible that the PD is often perceived by teachers as random, haphazard, and disconnected from what they need.

However, in reality, most of the time, teachers were instructed by the headmaster to attend PD regardless their background of the subject field. It consequently causes the mismatch between what teacher needs and what PD that teacher attends. Furthermore, sometimes, even regular TPD activities sponsored by the government are not applicable to be implemented because it for other subject-teachers, not English.

Furthermore, teachers also perceived that the PD activities are mostly in a concise period that the teachers feel it is not sufficient for them to comprehend all materials taught. It is such a contrary to what Darling-hammond et al. (2017) state that effective professional development includes sustained duration. Professional development programs should be conducted in an adequate time, not in short time programs such as one-day workshops. Continuous duration feature also requires appropriate follow-up toward teacher learning as the integrated part of the professional development programs. Hence, what teachers mostly experienced does not give practical contribution in teaching and learning process since the teachers are not fully able to implement the materials learned. As a result, it is essential for the training organizers to give more allocated time for sustainable professional development.

#### *Teachers' Obstacles in Participating in the Learning Activities for Teacher Professional Development*

According to the findings regarding factors which hindered the teachers in attending PD activities during the last 18 months, 97% of teachers have the willingness to participate more in professional development activities that they have already had. The main reason for unfulfilled demand (according to teachers) is the conflict with their work schedule. Teachers may hesitate to commit time to professional development that extends beyond the regular school day and year. Among these

obstacles is the rigid structure of teachers' work days, which allows too little time for individual and collaborative work toward instructional improvement (Birman, Desimone, Garet, Porter, & Yoon, 2001). Also, teachers who have high teaching burden and high administrative work might also be reluctant and unwilling to commit in professional development (Yuwono, 2005).

Furthermore, the high prices of PD become an obstacle for them to participate more. High quality professional development is expensive, perhaps more than twice the amount that districts typically spend per teacher (Birman et al., 2001). Given the high costs, it may be wise to invest in a core community of teacher leaders who are willing to share their learning with others. The lack of qualifications, experiences, or seniority also prevents them from attending PD activities. It is widely prevalent in Indonesia that teachers who have more experiences and rank will get more chances to participate the PD activities. The other reason deals with unsuitability of professional development offered. Garet, et al. (2001) in Ramamurthy (2015) stated that good professional development needs to foster coherence. Professional development for teachers often appears random, haphazard and disconnected from other professional development opportunities they encounter. If professional development is more coherent and streamlined, it is more likely to be implemented effectively.

Another reason is the lack of information they got about the availability of professional development learning activities. It seems that teachers need to be independently pro-active to search the information about the available seminar, training, or workshop and to register to those activities and not to rely on school's calls like they get used to. Because of their businesses, it seems that the teachers are not fully aware of the updated information regarding the professional development learning activities.

## **Conclusions**

Listing from the most to the least, the professional development activities that the English teachers participate in are teacher professional development, courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences. The topics of these activities vary and are

related to subject matter, methods and/or other education-related topics among which namely 2013 Curriculum, test development, national examination, classroom management, syllabus development, and instructional media. The teachers also have observations visits to other schools and mentoring and/ or peer observation and coaching, individual or collaborative research and qualification programs, reading professional literature such as journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers, as well as references related to the teaching and learning, and having a university-school partnership.

On the concern of teachers' perception toward the learning activities regarding their professional development, there are three points the researchers can state. First, teachers were able to identify their needs to improve their professionalism. They stated that it is necessary for them to improve the skills of using ICT for teaching, managing the classroom, instructional practices, classroom and school management as well as administration, standards of content and performance in English, teaching in a setting of multicultural, special needs, and students counseling. Second, teachers perceived that knowing the professional development purpose is beneficial, but it is not the foremost concern as long as they join the activities seriously. What is more important is the length of professional development activities. It is the third point of the perception in which they believed that the longer the activities are, the more beneficial that they will gain.

The obstacles experienced by the teachers to participate in the professional development activities are the schedule, high payment of some TPD activities, family's responsibilities, employer support, unsuitability of the offered professional development program, and lack of information about the availability of professional development activities. However, despite the obstacles above that hinder them, most of the teachers are willing to develop their professional development because they realize that teachers are learners for the whole of their life and career. Therefore, the researchers can conclude that the English teachers in this context committed themselves to grow through professional learning. Based on these conclusions, further

researchers are expected to study the remain things to explore for instance the underlying theories of these conclusions or to conduct a similar study in a different context to gain comparative perspectives.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Part 1**

#### **Background Information**

1. Please state your gender.  
☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Please state your age.

- ☐ <25    ☐ 25-29    ☐ 30-39    ☐ 40-49    ☐ 50-59    ☐ 60+
3. As a teacher, what is your employment status?
- ☐ Full-timer (PNS/Non PNS)  
☐ Part-timer (50-90% of full time hours)
4. Do you teach at other schools?
- ☐ Yes  
☐ No (Proceed to question 6)
5. If your answer to question 4 is 'Yes', please kindly mention the number of schools you are teaching at.
- State in number:
- |    |    |
6. What is the completed highest formal education level of yours?
- ☐ Diploma 2  
☐ Diploma 3  
☐ Bachelor Degree (S1)  
☐ Master (S2)  
☐ Doctor/Ph.D (S3)
7. In the weekdays, please estimate the hours you spend on the following list for the school you are working for.
- The following list is only for the work you do at your primary school, not for any other schools.*
- |    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| a. |  | Teaching students (whole class, group, or individual).                                  |
| b. |  | Creating a plan or preparing the class (including giving a mark on the students' work). |
| c. |  | Doing administrative duties.  |
| d. |  | Other (please specify) : _____  |
8. How long have you been a teacher (in the year)?
- ☐ <1    ☐ 1-2    ☐ 3-5    ☐ 6-10    ☐ 11-15    ☐ 16-20    ☐ >20
9. How long have you been a teacher at this school (in the year)?
- ☐ <1    ☐ 1-2    ☐ 3-5    ☐ 6-10    ☐ 11-15    ☐ 16-20    ☐ >20

## Teacher Professional Development

10. Please kindly state your participation in any of the following events of professional development and their impacts on your teaching development by checking on the boxes.

Participation	Impact				
	Yes	No	No	Small	Moderate

a.	Course/workshops (e.g. on subject matter or methods and/or other education-related topics).						
b.	Education conferences or seminars.						
c.	Qualification program.						
d.	Observation visits to other schools.						
e.	Participation in a teacher network specifically formed for teacher's professional development.						
f.	Personal or group research on a certain topic of interest.						
g.	Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching, as a part of a formal school arrangement.						
h.	Other (please state) _____						

11. In summary, how many hours did you spend to attend professional development events during the last 18 months?  
Write zero (0) if it's none. If your answer is zero (0), please proceed to question 15.

		hours
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12. How much did you have to pay personally for the professional development in the last 18 months?

☐ None    ☐ Some    ☐ All

13. During the last 18 months, did you use to have a schedule of the professional development that took place your regular work hours?

☐ Yes    ☐ No

14. During the last 18 months, did you receive an additional salary for taking the professional development activities?

☐ Yes    ☐ No

15. During the last 18 months, did you participate in less formal developments and how was the impact on your teacher's development?

	Participation		Impact			
	Yes	No	No	Small	Moderate	Large
a.	Reading professional literature (e.g. journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers).					
b.	Engaging in informal discussion with colleagues to improve teaching.					
c.	Other (please state) _____					

16. Personally thinking, how do you indicate the extent to which you are in need of the following list?

	No need	Low need	Moderate need	High need
a.	Content and performance standards in my main subject field(s).			
b.	Student assessment practices.			

c.	Classroom management.					
d.	Knowledge and understanding of my main subject field(s).					
e.	Knowledge and understanding of instructional practices (knowledge mediation) in my main subject field(s).					
f.	ICT skills for teaching.					
g.	Teaching students with special needs.					
h.	Student discipline and behavior problems.					
i.	School management and administration.					
j.	Teaching in a multicultural setting.					
k.	Student counseling					
l.	Other (please state)					

17. In the last 18 months, did you wish to join more professional development than you had done?

☐

Yes

☐

No

18.

If your answer for question number 17 is 'Yes', please choose the following reasons that might be the best explanation for preventing you from joining more professional development than you had done?

☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

I did not have the pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experiences, seniority).

It was too expensive for me to afford to join professional development.

I did not receive enough support from the employer.

The professional development schedule conflicted my regular schedule at work.

I did not have sufficient time as I have responsibilities of my family.

The professional developments offered did not match my field of work.

## Part 2:

Please answer the following open-ended questions regarding your teacher professional development activities.

1. In general, can you tell about TPD activities that you have participated in?

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2. Please pick one type of teacher professional development activity which you think as having large impact in the part 1 of the questionnaire.

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Do you have any reasons of choosing this particular type of teacher professional development activity?

- 
3. Do you think that a particular type of TPD activity is more likely to make/help you to learn? Please give examples based on your experience and tell these types/kinds of TPD activities make/help you to learn.

- 
4. What were the features of teacher development activities that helped you to learn?

5. Are you well informed of the underlying objectives/purposes or assumptions of the teacher professional development activities you were participated? If yes, did it help you in your learning? In what ways? If not, do you think it is helpful or useful to know the underlying objectives/purposes of the activities you were participated in?

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