

## THE POLICY OF INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT IN IMPROVING THE TEACHERS' QUALITY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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**Abstract** : Teachers occupy a central position and are essential components in the education system. Thus, the government must pay great attention to the professional qualifications of teachers. This study aims to understand government policies for improving the quality of teachers. This study uses a mixed-method approach by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The population of this study was all teachers in Tanah Datar Regency, West Sumatra. While the samples used were teachers at SDN 001 Lima Kaum District, SD 07 Sungai Jambu Pariangan District, SDN 01 Gurun Sungai Tarab District, and SDN 03 Rambatan, Rambatan District. The research results found that the professional teacher quality level was still quite good. The results also show that the level of professional quality of teachers is still quite good. Efforts made by the government through its policies are carried out through; increasing teacher salaries and welfare, establishing a certification system for educators and education personnel, an education quality assurance system, and establishing professional working groups.

**Keywords** : Government Policy; Teachers' Quality; Elementary School.

**Abstrak** : Guru menempati kedudukan sentral dan sebagai salah satu komponen terpenting dalam sistem pendidikan. Dengan demikian, pemerintah harus memberi perhatian yang tinggi terhadap kualitas profesional guru. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami kebijakan pemerintah dalam meningkatkan mutu guru. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan mixed method dengan menggabungkan pendekatan kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Adapun populasi dari penelitian ini adalah seluruh guru di Kabupaten Tanah Datar Sumatera Barat. Sedangkan sampel yang digunakan adalah guru pada SDN 001 Lima kaum Kecamatan Lima Kaum, SD 07 Sungai Jambu Kecamatan Pariangan, SDN 01 Gurun Kecamatan Sungai Tarab, SDN 03 Rambatan Kecamatan Rambatan. Hasil penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa tingkat kualitas profesional guru masih tergolong cukup baik. Upaya yang dilakukan pemerintah melalui kebijakannya dilakukan melalui; peningkatan gaji dan kesejahteraan guru, membangun sistem sertifikasi pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan, serta sistem penjamin mutu pendidikan dan membentuk kelompok kerja profesional.

**Kata Kunci** : Kebijakan Pemerintah; Mutu Guru; Sekolah Dasar.

## INTRODUCTION

To improve the quality of life of the nation, the quality of human resources is an important aspect that must be considered. Life can be better if quality human resources (Indarti et al., 2021). One of the ways to create quality human resources is through education. Formal educational institutions are the key to the nation's civilization. Therefore, the role of teachers is vital to improving the quality of human resources.

Teachers are professionals who carry out their main tasks and functions to improve students' knowledge and insight, skills, mental and morals as national assets. This is stated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, which states that teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood education through formal education, education elementary, and secondary education (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia, 2005). Teachers design communication methods and activities relevant to the needs, concerns, and abilities of the communities in which they are located (Afriadi & Dahlia, 2020).

To fulfill the rights of citizens, the central government and local governments are obliged to provide services and facilities, as well as ensure the implementation of quality education for every citizen without discrimination. Through the Ministry of National Education, the government has designed various programs that aim to provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their quality. The allocation of education budget funds is expected to improve the quality of teachers. We must understand that the teacher is the heart of education. With the active role of teachers, reform policies on education will produce results. Educators must receive immediate attention as one of the essential components of the education system. Their quality or position must always be promoted. Besides, welfare from the material side must also receive serious attention so that they can work optimally in improving the quality of education without having to think about other things related to their life needs (Jens, 2007).

The government's attention to improving the quality of teachers is a step in realizing good education. The spearhead of the success of education depends on the teacher (Jiang et al., 2021). Therefore, improvement in various competencies must be considered, one of which is professional competence. The government pays attention to welfare in the material sector and improves the quality of teachers in various competencies. However, the quality in the professional field as a teacher has yet to show a reasonable level. It is still in the Good Enough category, this can be seen in a survey conducted in several elementary schools in Tanah Datar Regency that teacher mastery in designing learning is still relatively low, and mastery of teaching materials could be more optimal. The survey was conducted at SDN 001 Lima Kaum District, SD 07 Sungai Jambu Pariangan District, by looking at the teacher's lesson plans to be applied to the learning process in the classroom. This certainly needs to be investigated further to determine the level of professional quality of teachers in Tanah

Datar Regency, considering that the professional quality of teachers is a unique ability and expertise in the field of teaching so that they can carry out their duties and functions as teachers to the fullest (Dakir et al., 2022).

The professional quality of this teacher is an essential point in the implementation of learning so that the findings in the field become the basis for researchers to conduct library research related to what efforts have been made by the government to improve the professional quality of these teachers. This is done by analyzing government policies and ideas for improvement contained in government regulations and various other reference sources. Previously, there had been previous research that reviewed earlier efforts to improve teacher quality, such as the research conducted Rosdianasari (2018) with the title *Teacher Quality in Indonesia and Efforts to Improve It*, while the findings state that there are several efforts to improve teacher quality. Improving teacher quality includes teacher certification, teacher competency tests, teacher performance assessments, and continuous teacher professional development. The research conducted by Rosdiana has significant differences from the research that the researcher did, namely, in the type of research method and findings. In this study, the researcher conducted a field study to conduct a deeper analysis of the government's efforts to improve the quality of these teachers. Based on this background, the researchers tried to conduct a study entitled the policy of Indonesian government in improving the teachers' quality of elementary school.

## METHOD

This study uses a mixed-method approach. A mixed approach is used to explain and understand government policies in improving the quality of teachers in primary schools. The type of research approach used is exploratory sequential. Thus, in collecting data, researchers used questionnaires, observations, interviews, and documentation. The data collection technique in field research is to use a questionnaire to measure the professional quality of teachers in Tanah Datar Regency with research samples on teachers at SDN 001 Lima Kaum District, SD 07 Sungai Jambu Pariangan District, SDN 01 Gurun Sungai Tarab District, SDN 03 District propagation. The categories of teacher quality levels are as follows:

**Tabel 1: Teacher Professional Quality Category**

Percentage	Category
86% - 100%	Very Good
76% - 85%	Good
60% - 75%	Sufficient
55% - 59%	Les Sufficient
<54% -	Bad

This study analyzed data from observations, interviews, and documentation using the Miles and Huberman data analysis technique, which consisted of data reduction, data display, and verification. While quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. This section should be clearly and concisely written. It provides practical information concerning the research methods, procedures, tools, materials, or instruments. The method section describes how the study was conducted. Such a description enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of methods and the reliability and validity of the results. Please bear in mind that readers must be able to recreate your study from the level of detail that you give. This section should not exceed 10% (for qualitative research) or 15% (for quantitative research) of the manuscript.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Description of Teacher Professionalism and Quality

Professionalism is the attitude of a professional. This term explains that someone should do every job with expertise in his field or profession (Susanto, 2020). Teacher professional competence is the teacher's ability to master the material widely and in-depth and includes mastery of the curriculum material of subjects in school and the scientific substance that overshadows the material, as well as the teacher's mastery of the structure and scientific methodology. According to Nurutami & Adman (2016), professional competence, which includes the ability to create a conducive learning climate, being able to develop learning strategies and management, being able to provide feedback and reinforcement, and being able to improve themselves, is in the medium category and is a significant determinant factor. Significantly and positively affects students' interest in learning. According to Usman (2011), the indicators of teacher professional competence are as follows:

**Tabel 2: Teacher Professional Competency Indicator**

Aspect	Indicator
Professional Competence	a. Mastering Lesson Materials b. Able to manage teaching and learning programs c. Implementing teaching programs d. Assessing the results of the teaching and learning process e. Mastering the educational foundation

Based on the questionnaire distributed to teachers at SDN 001 Lima Kaum District, SD 07 Sungai Jambu Pariangan District, SDN 01 Gurun Sungai Tarab District, SDN 03 Rambatan Rambatan District, it was found that the level of professional competence of teachers in each aspect can be seen in the table below:

**Tabel 3: The Results of Teacher's Professional Competency Questionnaire Recapitulation**

No	Activity Conducted	Persentase
1.	Mastering Lesson Materials	65%
2.	Able to manage teaching and learning programs	75%
3.	Implementing teaching programs	74,5%
4.	Assessing the results of the teaching and learning process	70%
5.	Mastering the educational foundation	68%

From the results of the questionnaire that has been obtained, it is obtained that the level of professional competence of teachers is, on average, in the "Sufficient" category. This indicates that the competence of this teacher has been seen but has yet to be maximal. Hence, the findings of this field are the basis for conducting a more profound assessment, and it is necessary to review what efforts have been made by the government through policies to improve the teacher's professional competence.

### **Government Efforts to Improve Teacher Professional Quality**

The efforts made by the government to improve the professional quality of teachers are as follows:

#### **1. Providing Training**

The essential factor in education is the teacher because the quality of the teacher influences the black-and-white process of teaching and learning in the classroom. The teacher is known as a "hidden curriculum" or hidden curriculum. Because of the attitudes and behavior, appearance, professionalism, individual abilities, and whatever is inherent in a teacher. It will be accepted by students as signs to be followed.

In the current era of technology and information, the teacher acts more as a facilitator, motivator, and dynamist for students. To carry out this role effectively in the education process, the quality of educators and education personnel must be improved with explicit scenarios and designs by the government, such as conducting various training. The policy basis for providing training for teachers as teacher self-development is Law No. 14 of 2005 Article 20 that in carrying out their professional duties, teachers are obliged to improve and develop academic qualifications and competencies on an ongoing basis in line with the development of science, technology, and the arts. Based on the policies in this law, there is much room for teachers to take part in various pieces of training that can support their professional improvement in teaching.

In carrying out various professional development activities, a teacher usually carries out various activities that are not uncommon between one activity and that are unrelated or contradict each other. This is normal and cannot be avoided because the organizers of professional development activities are outside the power and control of the teacher. What teachers can do is find what is called an optimal mix of professional development activities for teachers from various contexts (Nuangchalerm, 2021).

## **2. Teacher Equalization Program**

The government forms a program for teachers whose qualifications are Diploma II to Level I. Under the Law on Teachers and Lecturers, the qualifications for teachers must be graduates of Strata I. Therefore, the government makes policies to improve the education of teachers who only graduate with a Diploma II. In supporting the equalization of teachers, it is based on Presidential Regulation Number 12 of 1961 concerning the Provision of Learning Tasks.

## **3. Increase in Teacher Salaries and Welfare**

The primary right of educators that must be considered in government policy is the right to earn income and welfare with a decent wage. The first step to improving the quality of educators and education personnel is to provide teacher welfare with a decent salary for their lives.

A study by Syamra (2016), found that financial compensation influences teacher motivation and performance. Financial compensation given to teachers will significantly affect their work motivation of teachers. When associated with job evaluation, a worker will be more enthusiastic and maximize his work because his work is appreciated.

## **4. Building a Certification System for Educators and Education Personnel, as well as an Education Quality Assurance System**

Teacher legislation lays the groundwork for teachers, improves their skills, and ultimately improves the quality of education. The certification is complemented by a professional allowance that effectively doubles teachers' basic salary, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the teaching profession and providing incentives for teachers to participate in the certification process. In addition, the program also provides certified teachers assigned to remote or disadvantaged areas with additional benefits that effectively triple their base salary. The doubling of teacher salaries is a strong incentive to attract new graduates to serve better as teachers. (Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2017) Based on the study's results, it was stated that teacher certification had a positive effect on increasing teacher competence. (Nawawi, 2022)

Teacher certification is the acknowledgment that a person has the competence to carry out educational services in specific academic units after passing the competency test held by the certification body. (Omar, 2022) In other words, teacher

certification is a competency test process designed to reveal one's mastery of competence as the basis for granting educator certificates.

The teacher law mandates that all teachers and lecturers develop four competency groups: Pedagogic (teaching ability), personality (character and example), professional (coaches and educators), and social (community participation). (Haryanti et al., 2022) These competencies must be developed through a minimum of 4 years of teacher education and classroom teaching performance. To be able to take part in certification, a teacher must meet the main requirements, namely having a diploma or minimum academic qualification of S1 or D4, having accumulated credits from professional teacher training, and having an obligation to teach face-to-face in class at least 24 hours per week. Thus, the certification process becomes a strong incentive for many teachers to improve their academic qualifications to meet the certification requirements. (Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2017) The legal basis for teacher certification is contained in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education system and Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 18 of 2007 concerning certification for teachers in positions that were stipulated on May 4, 2007, as stated in Article 1, certification for teachers. In the office is the process of providing educator certificates for in-service teachers. The certificate, as referred to in paragraph (1), can be followed by teachers in positions who already have undergraduate academic qualifications (S1) or four diplomas (D-IV). As referred to in paragraph (1), certification of in-service teachers is carried out by tertiary institutions that organize the procurement program for educational personnel accredited and determined by the Minister of National Education in the Mendiknas of the Republic of Indonesia No. 18 of 2007.

The teacher certification program is awarded to teachers who meet professional standards because this is an absolute requirement for achieving quality education systems and practices. The main objectives of teacher certification are; 1) determining the feasibility of teachers in carrying out their duties as learning agents and realizing national education goals; 2) improving the process and quality of educational outcomes; 3) increase the dignity of teachers; 4) improve teacher professionalism, and 5) stimulate teachers to compete and improve skills so that they become quality teachers.

##### **5. Form a Professional Working Group**

Professional working groups are forums to share information and professional development among teachers in a particular area (usual clusters of schools). Currently, there are two professional working groups for teachers: the Teacher Working Group (KKG) for elementary school teachers and the Subject Teacher Consultation (MGMP) for secondary school teachers. Through the Education Quality



Guarantee Agency (LPMP), the government provides block grants to KKG and MGMP. The funds are mainly used for curriculum development, preparation and development of teaching materials, preparation of learning aids, scientific writing, classroom action research, and professional development programs. (Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2017)

Ranti (2021) stated that to help improve teacher professionalism, a teacher professional organization was formed, namely the KKG (Teacher Working Group). Teachers must be equipped with a variety of teacher knowledge as a basis, accompanied by a set of teacher training skills where these exercises can be obtained from peer tutors in the KKG (Teacher Working Group).

Some of these policies must be supported by teacher quality standards so that existing policies align with teacher quality. The teaching profession is a formal profession with clear qualifications and precise requirements. (Dakir et al., 2022) If the quality of teachers and policies issued by the government also vary, then slowly, the quality of teachers can improve and show quality results in producing a quality generation. More details can be seen in the following image:



**Figure 1: Government Efforts to Improve Teacher Professional Quality**

## 6. The Policy of Quality Standards for Educators/Teachers

In PP no. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, chapter VI states that educators, in general, must have academic qualifications and competencies as learning agents, be physically and mentally healthy, and can realize national education goals. (Undang-Undang SISDIKNAS, 2008).

According to Putri Nazidah (2021), academic qualifications are the minimum level of education teachers must possess. The Qualification Standards are academic qualifications or the minimum level of education that an educator must meet by providing evidence in the form of a diploma or certificate of educator expertise. Not only that, qualifications for educators are also seen in physical and spiritual health.



This is stated in the Law on Teachers and Lecturers Chapter IV Article 8, teachers are required to have academic qualifications, competencies, and educator certificates, be physically and mentally healthy, and can realize national education goals. Furthermore, in Article 9, the academic qualifications, as referred to in Article 8, are obtained through higher education for a bachelor's or four-diploma program. (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia, 2005)

At this time, teacher qualifications do not allow teaching staff who do not have a bachelor's degree (S1) or four diplomas. This is because an educator must have educational knowledge, class management, design learning, and many other tasks when dealing with students. Therefore, the qualifications of teachers must be seen from their academic, physical, and spiritual health. (Lafendry, 2020) The key to improving teacher professionalism is increasing academic qualifications because, without qualifications, it is possible to realize a minimal increase in professional competence.

The term teacher competence has many meanings, Broke, and Stone argues that teacher competence is a qualitative description of the nature of meaningful teacher behavior. Meanwhile, in PP RI No. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, chapter VI article 28 paragraph (3) states that competence as a learning agent at the primary and secondary education levels and early childhood education includes: pedagogic competence, personality competence, professional competence, and competence.

#### 1) Pedagogic Competence

In the National Education Standards, the explanation of article 28, paragraph (3) states that pedagogic competence is the ability to manage student learning, including understanding students, designing and implementing learning, evaluating learning outcomes, and developing students to actualize their various potentials. Furthermore, in the lesson plans for teachers, it is stated that "pedagogic competence is the ability of teachers to manage student learning which at least includes the following; understanding insight or educational foundation, understanding of students, curriculum/syllabus development, lesson planning, implementation of educational and dialogical learning, utilization of learning technology, evaluation of learning outcomes, and development of students to actualize their various potentials.

#### 2) Personal Competence

PP RI No. 74 of 2008 article 3 paragraph (5) explains that the competence of the teacher's personality includes at least: faith and piety, noble character, wise and wise, democratic, steady, authoritative, stable, mature, honest, sportsmanship, being an example for students and the community, objectively evaluate self-

performance, and develop themselves independently and sustainably. (Usman, 2011) explained that this personal ability includes the following):

- a. Develop a personality that includes; being devoted to God Almighty, playing a role in society as citizens with the spirit of Pancasila, develop the commendable qualities required for a teacher position.
- b. Interact and communicate, which includes; interacting with colleagues to improve professional skills; interact with the community to fulfill the mission of education.
- c. Implement guidance and counseling, which includes; examining students with learning difficulties; guiding students with disabilities and unique talents.
- d. Carry out school administration, which includes; knowing the administration of school activities; and carrying out school administration activities.
- e. Carry out simple research, which includes; examining the basic concepts of scientific research, and carry out simple research.

### 3) Professional Competence

According to Laili & Maulidiyah (2021), professional competence is an educator's ability to master the learning material by not forgetting to always pay attention to every characteristic of children's development. The teacher is a professional position that requires various special skills. (Uzlah & Suryana, 2022). Teacher professional competence is related to deepening mastery of the material. Besides that, knowledge-ability is also related to professional competence, which is used as a reference for educators in the application of learning (University of New England et al., 2018). Thus, teachers must understand the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. As a profession, it must meet the professional criteria as follows:

- a. Physical: physically and mentally healthy, does not have a physical disability that can cause ridicule or pity from students.
- b. Mental/personality: having a Pancasila spirit, able to live the GBHN, loving the nation and fellow human beings and a sense of affection for students, noble character, creative spirit, ability to take full advantage of the existing sense of education, able to foster a democratic attitude and full of tolerance sense, able to develop creativity and significant responsibility for their duties, able to develop high intelligence, being open, sensitive, and innovative, showing love for their profession, obedience to discipline, and having a sense of humor.
- c. Scientific/knowledge: understanding the science that can underlie self-formation, understanding education and teacher training and being able to apply it in their duties as educators, understanding, mastering, and loving the science to be taught, having sufficient knowledge about other fields, happy read

scientific books, be able to solve problems systematically, especially those related to subjects, and understand the principles of learning activities.

- d. Skills: able to act as the organizer of the learning process, able to compile learning materials based on structural, interdisciplinary, functional, behavioral, and technological approaches, able to draw up outlines of learning programs, able to solve and implement good teaching techniques in achieving educational goals, able to plan and carry out educational evaluations, and understand and be able to carry out activities and education outside of school

#### 4) Social Competence

Social competence is the ability of teachers as part of the community to communicate and interact effectively with students, fellow educators, education staff, parents/guardians of students, and the surrounding community orally, in writing, and through gestures. (Kementerian Agama RI, 2010) Social competence is one of the competencies that teachers must possess. Social competence is one of the competencies that a teacher must possess through the ability to communicate and socialize with students, education staff, parents/guardians of students, and the wider community. (Hartini et al., 2021) Teachers are social beings, not only faced with students but also with parents, guardians of students, fellow teachers, and even the people who are around. Therefore, a teacher must have the ability and skills to get along and interact.

## CONCLUSION

The professional potential of teachers in Tanah Datar Regency, West Sumatra, with the samples used being teachers at SDN 001 Lima, Lima Kaum Subdistrict, SD 07 Sungai Jambu, Pariangan District, SDN 01 Gurun Sungai Tarab District, SDN 03 Rambatan, Rambatan District. . The results of the research found that the level of professional teacher quality was still quite good. The aspect of mastery of teaching materials is at 65%, aspects of processing teaching and learning programs are at 75%, aspects of implementing teaching programs are at 74.5%, aspects of assessment of learning outcomes are at 70%, and aspects of mastery of educational foundations are at 68% figure. The results of this study also show that the efforts made by the government in improving the quality of teachers are carried out by; providing training, a teacher equalization program, increase in teacher salaries and welfare, building a certification system for educators and education personnel, form a professional working group, the policy of quality standards for educators/teachers.

Teacher quality is something that must be done well by an educator. At this time, teacher qualifications do not allow teaching staff who do not have a bachelor's degree (S1) or four diplomas. For the competency standards of educators stated in PP RI No. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, chapter VI article 28 paragraph (3) states that

competencies as learning agents at primary and secondary education levels and early childhood education include: pedagogic competencies, personality competencies, professional competence, and social competence. The decline in teacher quality occurs due to several factors, namely the government's lack of concern for the fate of teachers, the number of teachers who are not familiar with technology, low teacher income or salaries, the many personal problems experienced by teachers, the obstacles experienced by the government in improving the quality of teachers.

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