

How Indonesian Elementary Teachers Reflect Their Independent Self-Oriented Learning?

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Abstract: - in the 21st century era of learning requires initiative and self-direction which could direct students to plan and manage their activities to develop solutions and solve problems. The importance of independent learning for students requires the teachers to create and do the same thing to increase their professionalism too. This study used a case study method at public elementary school in Bandung, Indonesia. And it hopes could provide more detail explanation about teacher independent self-oriented learning to improve their professionalism. This study found teacher reflect their independent self-oriented learning by self-reflection and facilitate by others. And they believed independent self-oriented learning is a learning process that could improve their professional development.

Keywords: - independent self-oriented learning, teacher's professional development

I. INTRODUCTION

As a learning agent, the teachers are required to have a professional integrity attitude. Teachers can be said as a professional when they are able to do their task by always adhering to professional ethics, independent, productive, effective, efficient and innovative. One of the competencies that must teacher have is self-development and continuous professional development competency.

Previous research found that teachers in Indonesia felt satisfied of their knowledge that they received from their college and less motivated in self-development which could improve their professionalism (Azmi, 2011). The lack of initiative to conduct independent learning makes teacher in Indonesia miss out new issues about education development and it might impact on the quality of teacher's quality.

UNESCO stated that the teacher's quality in Indonesia got the worst rank on 14 developing countries in the Asia Pasific. This might be caused by the condition of Indonesian teachers who are less able to play their function optimally and lack of their professionalism (Azmi, 2011). Teacher

Professionalism might influence by teacher's self-development. And teacher's self-development might influence by their independent learning in order to increase their professionalism. Teacher's independent self-oriented learning is expected to be one of the keys to improve teacher's professionalism. But, there are still few references about the importance of teacher's independent self-oriented learning.

In addition, independent learning is also a concept in 21st century learning process, because it requires the initiative and self-direction of the students to plan and manage activities to develop solutions and solve the problems. Before transferring that culture, teachers are expected to implement the independent self-oriented learning culture in their daily life which could improve their professionalism first.

The importance of teacher's independent self-oriented learning makes researcher want to delve a deeper explanation and analysis how teachers reflect their independent learning and their perception about the importance of independent learning in improving their professionalism.

II. METHODS

Research was conducting using qualitative method approach with semi-structure interview and observation for the data collection. The participants in this study were homeroom teachers at 1 public elementary school in Bandung, Indonesia. This school is one of model school in Bandung city which could be the example for other school. 4 participants were selected to become the interview respondents with the different attribution. This study used coding analysis method developed by Creswell (VII) to analyze the data.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

A. *Teacher's Perception about the Definition of Independent Self-Oriented Learning in Improving Their Professionalism.*

Based on the interview, there was found several perceptions about the definition of independent self-oriented learning by the teacher. One of the teachers explained the definition of independent self-oriented learning as a learning process that they could do everywhere, and everyone could be the learning resources. As a teacher she could learn from the students, the environment and from the media. The teacher made resources around her as her learning resource. She also believed that the interaction with others could be the media of independent self-oriented learning.

Maximized the learning resources to become the media of independent self-oriented learning was the good practices in self-development. Student could be the learning resource for the teacher because they could give the response for teacher about the teaching learning process. Student also could give some advises for the teacher and it could be the guideline for teacher to improve their teaching learning process.

Moreover, another teacher explained independent self-oriented learning is a learning process by the experience. He implemented teaching theory that he got before to the daily teaching practices. Combine the theory in teaching practice is one of independent

self-oriented learning process which it shows if the theory will proper or not if implement to the classroom. If the theory not proper, the teacher will try to find new theory which could implement in their teaching process.

Experience is the best learning resources for the teachers. They could learn about their shortcoming and try to improve it for the next lesson. And also, they could preserve the advantages of their teaching skill based on the experience. Based on teacher's explanation they mention that they have to maximizing their learning because they did not have so much time to learn formally so they have to learn by their experience to minimize the time.

However, one of the respondents also mentioned that independent self-oriented learning could be done anytime. And it was a process to develop them-selves to become a better person. She felt that independent self-oriented learning is a good learning process to cultivate the teacher in facing the education development in this era. For the example in curriculum development, the teachers have to know and develop new curriculum. They have to learn and master it first independently before they teach the student used that curriculum.

Last teacher explained the definition of independent self-oriented learning is a process to improve their knowledge by reading culture. Have the curiosity about something and try to find it by read some journal or articles is one of the best practices in independent self-oriented learning. By reading, the teacher could improve their knowledge and a critical thinking about something and it believed could give a good impact for themselves and others. Reading is a process of self-development. Teachers in this school were showed their needs to learn in improving their professionalism.

From the teacher's explanation it was show that teachers in this school could describe clearly about the definition of independent self-oriented learning based on their experience. They could explain the definition because they already implemented the

independent self-oriented learning in their daily life to improve their professionalism.

B. Teacher's Perception about the Importance of Independent Self-Oriented Learning in Improving Their Professionalism.

Based on interview result, the respondent said independent self-oriented learning was very important learning process for self-development. Because that learning process could make teacher more discipline and responsible for their job. He also belief independent self-oriented learning could improve his character.

Another respondent also gave the same opinion about the importance of independent self-oriented learning. He said it he could know about his needs and he could plan how to solve the needs. He felt satisfied if he could solve and find out the solution of his needs. Independent self-oriented learning also could motivate him to has a curiosity about something and improve himself.

The teacher said independent self-oriented learning is important to improve his professionalism because he felt the lack of information about educational development to the teacher, so he has to find the information or new knowledge by himself. All teachers in this school felt the independent self-oriented was really important not only for their self-development but also for their professionalism.

Every teacher has their own way to do the independent self-oriented learning. One of the teachers said she learn from her experience or in the other words learning by doing. She got several extra jobs from the principal, in her opinion doing the extra job make her more responsible and try to learn more about that task. It also could increase her new knowledge and skills.

Otherwise another teacher in this school did the independent self-oriented learning by continuing study to doctoral level. She said continuing study was necessity for her, she needs facilitator (lecturer) to teach her and she need to improve her knowledge and professionalism. Based on her opinion, she will

implement the theories that she got in university to her teaching practices in the classroom.

Independent self-oriented learning was really important not only for teacher but also for the students. The teachers in this school who already implemented this learning process shared and tried to influence the students to have independent self-oriented learning culture.

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

A. Discussions

Based on research finding, the definition of independent self-oriented learning is a learning process that could be done anytime and anywhere by maximizing existing resources as learning resources with the aim of self-development to be better person. In the line with the findings of previous resources which define that independent self-oriented learning is an adult learning in emphasizing their sense of personal autonomy in their learning. Which learners take control of the goals, purpose of learning and assume ownership of learning (Garrison, 1997; Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2015; Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007). That statement confirms that teachers in this elementary school have succeeded in defining their independent self-oriented learning which is in accordance with previous research and they also did and believed the independent self-oriented learning could improve and develop themselves.

As an adult, the teacher is expected to be able to manage their learning by them-selves (autonomy). If teachers did the independent self-oriented learning it could be said that they are professional, because they could synchronize teaching experiences and the theories to design and improve their professional learning (Van et al., 2012). The teachers in this school also make their teaching experiences as a source of their learning. According to the teacher's explanation, experience is a valuable learning resource because they were experienced it. However, teachers in this school

also mentioned that every day they have to improve their knowledge and skill better than yesterday. Previous experiences can be used as learning resources for them, so they will not repeat the same mistakes.

Experience-based learning is a cycle that will keep spinning. Kolb (1999) described the cycle as follows:

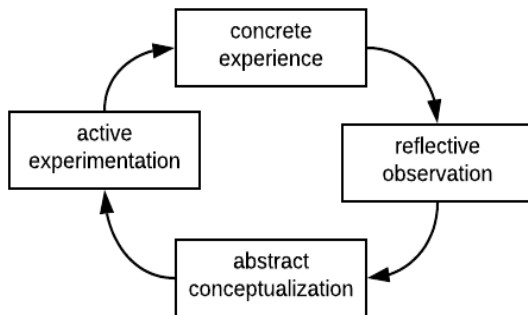


Figure 5.1 Experience-based learning

Concrete experience is an experience that has been passed by the teachers. And it will continue to the reflection and observation phase which the teacher will pay attention to their learning though treating other teachers and link to their experience and translated to abstract conceptualization stage. At this stage the teacher will form a conclusion and understanding of what has been passed and considered during the learning process. All conclusions and understanding will be tested at the phase of the active experiment which the teacher will try to apply based on conclusions and understanding as a reference or guideline.

Every teacher has their own techniques to implement their independent-self oriented learning because they have their own autonomy. They implemented their independent self-oriented learning because they felt this learning was really important for their self-development in improving their professionalism. Independent self-oriented learning provides a sense of responsibility and discipline for the teacher. And with this learning teacher will better understand about their needs and design their learning based on their needs.

Knowles (1975) also mentioned that independent self-oriented learning provided foundational definitions and assumptions liked: (a) self-directed learning assumes that humans grow in capacity and need to be self-directing, (b) learners' experiences are rich resources for learning, (c) individual learn what is required to perform their evolving life task, (d) an adult's natural orientation is task or problem-centered learning, (e) self-directed learners are motivated by various internal incentives, such as need for self-esteem, curiosity, desire to achieve and satisfaction of accomplishment.

The study also found that independent self-oriented learning is beneficial to solve problems that occur by finding out by them-selves and solved the problem based on their needs. Other studies conducted by Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) also explained that independent self-directed learning as an instructional process centering on such activities as assessing needs, securing learning resources, implementing learning activities, and evaluating learning.

As the statement mentioned before the teachers in this school had implemented the independent self-oriented learning as a process to plan their learning activities that could face their necessity, implemented their own learning activities and evaluated their learning based on reflection. However, the teachers also mentioned this learning could motivate them to improve themselves. Knowles (1975) mentioned the same things which independent self-oriented learning could motivate the individual to improve their curiosity to achieve the job goals. The teachers mentioned the aimed of this learning not only to improve they professionalism, but also to make them become better person in their daily life.

On the other hand, the teacher also mentioned the independent self-oriented learning also could be the right way of teacher's learning because the condition of the teacher which lack of information about educational development. This condition required the teachers to find out their needs and solved the education demands properly.

Independent self-oriented learning is a concept present in many of the current frameworks on 21st Century Learning and has often been regarded as critical individualizing learning experience (Caffarella, 1993). The P21 Framework Life and Career Skills (2010) included “Initiative and Self-Direction” which students could plan and manage activities to develop a solution and solve problems. The importance of independent self-oriented learning for students requires the teacher also to create and do the same thing. Independent self-oriented learning should be implemented by teacher first to improve their professionalism and teacher will transfer the independent culture to the students.

B. Conclusion

Independent self-oriented learning by the teacher is a learning process that could be done anytime and anywhere by maximizing existing resources as learning resources with the aim of self-development to be better person. This learning is important because as an adult, the teacher is expected to be able to manage their learning by them-selves (autonomy).

Independent self-oriented learning might be the right way of learning for teacher to face the problem in 21st Century Learning. Because this learning process require the teacher to more independent and active in manage and implement the learning. And this learning does not need big amount of funding because teachers could maximize any resources around them to become their learning resources. Independent self-oriented learning will be a good learning strategy to teacher in developing country because they could improve their professionalism with a minimum budget.

V. REFERENCES

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