THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL TEACHER ASSOCIATION "MGMP" AS A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN "MERDEKA" CURRICULUM TRANSITION

Muhammad Yasid[1], Ali Muhtadi[2]

[1,2] Department of Instructional Technology, Faculty of Education and Pcychology, Yogyakarta-Indonesia

email correspondence: muhammadyasid.2022@student.uny.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Previous studies mainly associated learning community with teacher professional development in indonesia. The role of teacher association as learning communities in curriculum transition have not been explore yet. In this research i investigates the dynamic involvement of professional learning community (PLC), specifically the professional teachers association (MGMP PAI) in Sleman Yogyakarta, during merdeka curriculum transitions. A case study used to be my research method. Data was collected from interviews and observation with MGMP PAI members, analysis of meeting notes and training materials, as well as observations of MGMP meetings, to understand the effectiveness of MGMP PAI during merdeka curriculum transitions. This study show, MGMP PAI assumes a vital role in assisting PAI teachers through collaborative initiatives, including workshops, seminars, and group discussions. These activities facilitate the planning and implementation of general curriculum preparation (CP, TP, ATP) by developing practical and relevant learning plans. Additionally, MGMP PAI serves as a knowledge-sharing platform where educators exchange best practices, compile teaching modules, and translate training concepts into real classroom practice. In addition, MGMP PAI facilitates discussion forums and workshops that enable teachers to share experiences and utilize Education Reports to develop data-based learning plans, so they can respond to students' specific needs more effectively.
Keywords: Professional Teachers Association; Professional Learning Community; Curriculum Merdeka Transition

INTRODUCTION

Previous studies show mainly associated learning community with teacher professional development in indonesia (Liang et al., 2023; Sari, 2012; Soraya, 2022). Studies on learning communities and teacher professional development in Indonesia have highlighted their importance in improving educational quality. Liang et al., (2023) explore the impact of localizing teacher professional development through Teacher Learning Centers in Indonesia. This study highlights how Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) facilitate large-scale teacher learning and improvement.

Then (Soraya, 2022) investigate the practical implementation of learning communities in the professional development of teachers in Indonesia. Through a detailed case study, the authors illustrate how learning communities contribute to teachers' continuous professional growth. While Sari, (2012) delve deeper into the use of online learning communities for teacher professional development in Indonesia. This study examines the structure and efficacy of online platforms in fostering teacher collaboration and professional growth. These articles collectively underscore the significance of both physical and online learning communities in supporting the professional development of teachers in Indonesia.

Meanwhile studies on the role of MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran) as learning communities in curriculum reform or transition in Indonesia have gained attention in recent years (Soebari & Aldridge, 2015; Suratno, 2010). Soebari & Aldridge, (2015) investigated the effectiveness of MGMP in supporting teachers during the implementation of a new curriculum. Their research revealed that these subject-based teacher associations provided valuable platforms for collaborative learning, sharing of best practices, and addressing challenges in curriculum implementation. The study highlighted the potential of MGMP as a vehicle for bottom-up professional development, allowing teachers to take ownership of their learning process within the context of curriculum reform.

Another significant study by Suratno, (2010) explored how MGMP functions as a professional learning community during curriculum transitions. They found that MGMP meetings facilitated the exchange of ideas, development of teaching materials, and collective problem-solving among teachers. However, the researchers also noted variations in the effectiveness of different MGMP groups, with some being more active and impactful than others. This study emphasized the need for strong leadership within MGMP and support from school administrators to maximize its potential as a learning community.

While these studies have provided valuable insights, there are still several areas that remain underexplored. A significant research gap exists in understanding the dynamics of MGMP in different geographical and cultural contexts within Indonesia. Given the country's diverse educational landscape, exploring how MGMP functions in urban versus rural areas, or in different provinces. It could provide valuable insights for policymakers and educational leaders. Furthermore, there is a need for more in-depth qualitative studies that capture the lived experiences of teachers participating in MGMP during latest merdeka curriculum reforms.

The study introduces a novel perspective by examining the dynamic involvement of professional learning community (PLC), specifically the professional teachers association (MGMP PAI) in Sleman Yogyakarta, during merdeka curriculum transitions. This unique focus sheds light on the collaborative efforts of teacher organizations in navigating educational changes. This objective aims to explore and analyze how PTAs actively participate in curriculum changes, including their role in shaping policies, designing instructional materials, and advocating for effective teaching practices during transitions. It also seeks to understand how PTAs contribute to enhancing teaching practices within the context of curriculum shifts.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a case study approach to investigate the active role of the professional teacher association (MGMP), as a professional learning community (PLC) in the curriculum transition. This study focuses on one specific case of MGMP Guru PAI in a Berbah and Kalasan region in Sleman, selected based on its active involvement in the curriculum transition process (Morland et al., 1992). This approach allows researchers to explore in depth the dynamics and collaborative practices that occur in that context. Data was collected through three main methods: in-depth interviews, document analysis, and direct observation, to obtain a comprehensive picture of the role of MGMP in supporting teachers during curriculum transitions (Owen, 2014).

In-depth interviews were conducted with MGMP Guru PAI members, including MGMP teachers, MGMP coordinators, and MGMP organizational leaders, to understand their perspectives on the function and effectiveness of MGMP as a Professional Learning Community. Document analysis includes examining meeting notes, training programs, and supporting materials used by MGMP in the curriculum transition process. Direct observations were carried out during MGMP meetings and activities to observe interactions between members and the real implementation of collaborative strategies. Document analysis includes examination of meeting notes, training programs and supporting materials used by MGMP in the curriculum transition process. Direct observations were carried out during MGMP meetings and activities to observe interactions between members and the real implementation of collaborative strategies.

The data analysis method in this research involves exploring, describing, sorting, explaining, and predicting (Grbich, 2019). Initially, main themes were identified from interviews, documents, and observations. The collected data was then detailed to illustrate collaborative practices in MGMP, sorted into relevant categories, and interpreted to understand the relationship between MGMP's role as a PLC and curriculum transition effectiveness. Finally, the findings were used to predict MGMP's future impact on curriculum transitions, aiming to enhance insights into its contribution to teacher competence and education quality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and Professional Teacher Association MGMP PAI teachers have pivotal role in preparing implementation of new Merdeka curriculum. This Education Authority, as the authority responsible for education management at the regional level, takes a proactive role in coordinating and facilitating outreach activities. They organize various training programs and workshops designed to provide an in-depth understanding of the principles, objectives and structure of the Merdeka Curriculum. Through this approach, the education department seeks to ensure that all PAI teachers have a comprehensive understanding of the new curriculum and are able to integrate its concepts into daily teaching practice.

On the other hand, MGMP PAI acts as a professional forum for PAI teachers to share knowledge, experience and curriculum implementation strategies. Through activities such as workshops, seminars and focus group discussions, MGMP PAI helps facilitate practical and applicable understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum. In these sessions, teachers are given the opportunity to explore various innovative student-centered learning approaches, as well as developing teaching materials that are in line with PAI values and contextual needs in the field. The collaboration between Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI in the socialization of the Merdeka Curriculum not only strengthens the professional capacity of PAI teachers. But also creates

an educational ecosystem that is more adaptive and responsive to curriculum changes, so as to improve the quality of learning and student learning outcomes.

Event organiser	Main Activities	Activity Details
Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI	Planning and implementing CP, TP and ATP	First, MGMP PAI plays an important role in supporting PAI teachers in planning and implementing CP, TP and ATP. Through various collaborative activities such as workshops, seminars and group discussions, MGMP PAI helps teachers in preparing effective and relevant learning plans. In these forums, PAI teachers can share best practices, get constructive feedback, and develop teaching strategies that are innovative and appropriate to the local context. MGMP PAI also provides additional resources and teaching materials that support the implementation of CP, TP, and ATP. With close collaboration between the education department and MGMP PAI, PAI teachers receive comprehensive support to plan and implement quality learning, so they are able to achieve optimal learning outcomes for students. Planning Learning Achievements (CP), Learning Objectives (TP), and Learning Objective Flow (ATP) are strategic steps implemented by Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI to support PAI teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. In this planning, the Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan)is responsible for providing guidelines and policies that direct teachers in preparing CP, TP, and ATP. This guide covers the framework and standards that students should achieve at each level of education. Through training and workshops, the Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan)ensures that PAI teachers understand how to formulate CP in accordance with curriculum objectives, determine specific and measurable TP, and develop systematic and structured ATP to achieve the TP. Some teachers assessed that after participating in this training their understanding of learning objectives was better: "This training helped me clearly understand what each subject really wants to achieve. With CP, TP and ATP, I can design learning that is more structured and suited to student needs." (teacher interview, 2023a) Some teachers said that flexibility in learning, including setting learning objectives, is a natural part of this new curriculum:

		"The Merdeka curriculum provides greater flexibility in organizing learning. I feel more free in choosing teaching methods and materials that suit the conditions of my class" (Heru, 2023).
Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI	preparing teaching modules	Second, MGMP PAI plays an active role in supporting this training by providing a platform for teachers to share knowledge and best practices in preparing teaching modules. Through workshops, group discussions and technical guidance, MGMP PAI helps PAI teachers apply the concepts learned during training into real practice. PAI MGMP members, who often consist of experienced teachers, share tips and strategies that have been proven effective in PAI teaching. Apart from that, MGMP PAI also coordinates the creation and distribution of examples of teaching modules that can be used as references by other teachers. Collaboration between the Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI in training to prepare teaching tools not only improves teacher professional competence, but also ensures consistency and uniformity in the quality of learning across educational institutions. Training on the preparation of teaching tools or teaching modules by the Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI teachers is a crucial step in supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The education department took the initiative by organizing a comprehensive training program for PAI teachers, focusing on improving skills and understanding in designing teaching tools that suit the demands of the new curriculum. This program includes theoretical and practical sessions, where participants are given guidance on the structure and important elements in teaching modules, learning material development techniques, as well as effective evaluation methods. By providing access to the latest resources and experienced facilitators, the education department ensures that PAI teachers can produce quality teaching materials that are relevant to students' needs. Some teachers assessed that after participating in this training their Module Preparation Skills had improved: "This training was very useful because I understand better how to create teaching modules that are more structured and in line with students' needs. I am now more confident in preparing teaching tools, especially in applying the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum" (Muhadi, 2023).

		Several other teachers stated that the use of technology in learning is something that is really needed: "I got a lot of ideas about how to use technology to make learning more interesting and interactive. This training provides concrete examples of using technology in compiling and delivering teaching modules" (Heru, 2023)
Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI	best practices in utilizing Education Report Cards	Third, MGMP PAI supports this initiative by providing discussion forums and workshops that enable PAI teachers to share experiences and best practices in utilizing Education Report Cards. MGMP PAI helps teachers develop learning plans that are based on data, so they can respond to students' specific needs more effectively. In these activities, PAI teachers are also encouraged to share case examples and solutions that have been implemented in their classes, which can be an inspiration for colleagues. Through close collaboration between the education department and MGMP PAI, training on the use of Educational Report Cards not only improves teachers' data analysis skills, but also encourages a culture of sustainable data-based planning in the learning process, so that it can significantly improve student learning outcomes. Training on the use of Educational Report Cards as a source of planning data organized by Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and MGMP PAI teachers is a strategic effort to increase teacher capacity in analyzing data and planning more effective learning. The education department played an important role in organizing this training, with a focus on providing an in-depth understanding of how Education Reports can be used as an evaluation and planning tool. Through training sessions, PAI teachers are taught how to interpret the data contained in the Education Report Card, identify student strengths and weaknesses, and formulate more targeted teaching strategies based on the data analysis. In this way, the education department ensures that teachers have the analytical skills necessary to improve the quality of education. Some teachers assessed that after participating in this training, their assessment accuracy had increased: "This training was very helpful in improving the accuracy of my assessment of student learning

ICLC 2024
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON LEARNING COMMUNITY
UNTIRTA-INDONESIA

SUPPORT BY :

		progress. With a better understanding of the Education Report Card, I can provide a more precise and objective assessment" (Muhadi, 2023). Some other teachers said they learned a lot about Using Data to Improve Learning: "I learned how to utilize data from Educational Report Cards to plan more effective learning strategies. This training gave me insight into how to use evaluation results to improve and adapt teaching methods" (Wahyu, 2023).

Discussion

The practice of collaboration between teacher organizations and the ministry of education has significant implications in curriculum transition management, especially in strengthening curriculum policies. This collaboration allows the creation of constructive dialogue between policy makers and education actors, so that the resulting policies are more relevant and contextual. Through this synergy, curriculum strengthening can be carried out more effectively because it involves various parties who have a deep understanding of conditions and needs in the field. This ensures that the policies implemented are able to answer the real challenges faced by teachers and students.

The Contractual Relationship Between Sleman Education Authority and Teachers Association

The Principal-agent Dowrick theory, (1954) helps us explain the contractual relationship between the Ministry of Education and Culture as the party giving the mandate (principal) and the MGMP association as the party implementing the program (agent) in the context of changes to the national curriculum. This theory is relevant for understanding the dynamics between government authorities (as principals) and teacher associations (as agents). Government authorities have the authority to determine educational policies and curricula, while teachers' associations are responsible for implementing these policies in the field. This theory highlights the potential conflicts of interest that can arise when agents do not fully align their actions with the principal's interests.

In changing the national curriculum, government authorities expect teachers' associations to implement the changes in accordance with stated objectives, such as improving the quality of education and conformity with international standards. However, teachers' associations may face practical challenges and concerns in the field that are different from the government's perspective. Misalignment of incentives or mismatch of incentives between principal and agent can result in non-optimal implementation. For example, if the incentives given to teachers are not strong enough or relevant to policy goals, teachers may be less motivated to make necessary changes.

Principal-Agent theory also highlights the importance of governance mechanisms to reduce the risk of agency problems (Dowrick, 1954). Namely situations where agents act more in their own interests than in the interests of the principal. In the context of changes to the national curriculum, good governance from government authorities is necessary to ensure that teachers' associations have clear guidelines, adequate resources and effective oversight mechanisms. This includes appropriate training, support and incentives to ensure that teachers are able and willing to implement curriculum changes effectively. Apart from that, having an evaluation and feedback mechanism is also important to identify and overcome problems that may arise during the implementation process.

The organizational design of teachers' associations also plays an important role in supporting government authority. Teachers' associations must have flexible and adaptive structures to respond to policy changes quickly and efficiently. Strong leadership within teachers' associations can help direct and motivate their members to align their actions with the goals of curriculum change. With the right organizational design, teachers' associations can serve as effective intermediaries between the government and teachers in the field, ensuring that policies set by government authorities can be translated into practices that benefit the education system as a whole.

The Relevance of Eugene Bardach's Theory of Managerial Skills

E. Bardach's, (1999) theory of managerial skills is particularly relevant in the context of interorganizational collaboration in public administration, especially in national curriculum changes involving teachers' associations and government authorities. Managerial Skills emphasizes the importance of the practical skills that public managers possess to manage and facilitate these complex and often challenging collaborations. Changing the national curriculum is a complex process and requires good coordination between various interested parties, including the government that issues the policy and the teacher associations that implement the policy in the field.

In changing the national curriculum, managerial expertise is needed to align the goals and interests of the two main actors: teachers' associations and government authorities. Government authorities may have certain visions and goals related to improving educational standards and adapting to global needs. Meanwhile, teachers' associations have a deeper understanding of daily teaching practices and real needs in the field. Effective managers must be able to bridge these differences, ensuring that policies designed by the government can be implemented practically and effectively by teachers. This requires strong negotiation, problem solving and strategic planning skills.

Additionally, Bardach's managerial skills emphasizes the importance of building strong, trust-based relationships between various stakeholders E. Bardach's, (1999). In changing the national curriculum, teachers' associations and government authorities need to work together closely and trust each other to achieve the desired results. Public managers must be able to build open and transparent communication, manage expectations, and handle conflicts that may arise. These interpersonal skills are critical to creating a collaborative environment where all parties feel heard and valued.

Finally, this theory also underscores the importance of understanding the broader context in which this collaboration occurs. Changes to the national curriculum not only involve technical and administrative aspects, but are also influenced by political, social and economic factors. Public managers must have deep insight into these dynamics and be able to navigate possible policy changes. With strong contextual understanding, managers can anticipate challenges and opportunities, and adapt their strategies to ensure collaboration remains effective and aligned with stated goals. This ensures that changes to the national curriculum can run smoothly and provide maximum benefits for the education system.

In terms of resource management and optimization, collaboration between teacher organizations and the ministry of education allows for more efficient and targeted use of resources. Both parties can share information and resources, both in the form of teaching materials, facilities and funding. This collaboration also helps in identifying and overcoming existing gaps, so that resource distribution can be carried out more evenly and fairly. In this way, the curriculum transition can be better managed, ensuring that all schools and teachers have equal access to the resources needed to successfully implement the new curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS

Collaborative practices between Sleman Education Authority (Dinas Pendidikan) and Professional Teacher Association MGMP PAI have significant implications in managing curriculum transitions and strengthening curriculum policies. This collaboration enables constructive dialogue between policy makers and education actors, producing policies that are more relevant and contextual, and ensuring policies are able to answer the real challenges faced by teachers and students. Research shows that schools that foster collaboration between teachers tend to have better academic results. Although collaboration involves vulnerability and difficult discussions, it has a positive impact on student achievement. Collaboration also increases teacher professionalism through ongoing and needs-based training programs.

REFERENCES

Dowrick, F. E. (1954). The Relationship Of Principal And Agent. The Modern Law Review, 17(1), 24–40. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2230.1954.tb02143.x

E. Bardach. (1999). Getting agencies to work together: the practice and theory of managerial craftsmanship. Choice Reviews Online, 37(02), 37-1167-37–1167. https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.37-1167

Grbich, C. (2019). Qualitative Data Analysis and the Use of Theory. In Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.554

Heru. (2023). Personal Interview with PAI Teacher.

Liang, M., Juliana, Mendoza, N. B., & Lim, C. P. (2023). Localizing Teacher Professional Development at Scale Enabled by Professional Learning Communities: A Study of Teacher Learning Centers in Indonesia. In International Handbook on Education Development in the Asia-Pacific (pp. 1107–1123). Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6887-7_136

Morland, J. K., Feagin, J. R., Orum, A. M., & Sjoberg, G. (1992). A Case for the Case Study. Social Forces, 71(1), 240. https://doi.org/10.2307/2579984

Muhadi. (2023). Personal Interview with PAI Teacher.

Owen, G. (2014). Qualitative Methods in Higher Education Policy Analysis: Using Interviews and Document Analysis. The Qualitative Report. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2014.1211

Sari, E. R. (2012). Online learning community: a case study of teacher professional development in Indonesia. Intercultural Education, 23(1), 63–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2012.664755

Soebari, T. S., & Aldridge, J. M. (2015). Using student perceptions of the learning environment to evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher professional development programme. Learning Environments Research, 18(2), 163–178. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-015-9175-4

Soraya, E. , & S. S. (2022). The Practice of Learning Community on Teachers' Development: A Case of Indonesia. AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan, 14(4), 6965-6972.

Suratno, T. , & I. S. (2010). Teacher Reflection in Indonesia: Lessons Learnt from a Lesson Study Program. Online Submission, 7(12), 39-48.

Wahyu, H. (2023). Personal Interview with MGMP Coordinator.