

Detecting Teacher Difficulties in Implementing the Local Curriculum Developed by the Local Government

DOI: 10.15804/tner.2018.53.3.21

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to detect teacher difficulties in implementing the local curriculum developed by provinces. This type of research is qualitative research type phenomenology. Data collected through focus group discussion (FGD) involves 16 participants consisting of senior high school teachers in the Riau Province of Indonesia. Data were analyzed using the qualitative approach proposed by Creswell. Results show that teachers have difficulties in understanding local culture lessons, teachers have difficulty implementing the local curriculum, the means/ equipment is inadequate, teachers have difficulty in assessing affective and psychomotor domains and teachers have difficulty in marketing products from practice learning.

Keywords: teachers' difficulties, local curriculum, senior high school

Introduction

The decentralization of education empowers regional governments to develop education in accordance with regional characteristics. This task provides an opportunity for the region to develop the characteristics and culture through the education system that is the regional curriculum developed by the local government. Local governments require schools to implement their developed curriculum. This assignment presents a challenge and difficulty for teachers, as

schools do not have adequate facilities and infrastructure to implement the local curriculum. The authority given by the central government to local governments can result in more effective education (Papadopoulou & Yirci, 2013). The policy of decentralization enables schools to understand and develop the characteristics and quality of education (Qi, 2011). Decentralization makes education more effective, efficient, accountable and regional needs can be developed through the education system (Astiz, Wiseman, & Baker, 2002).

The decentralization of education in Indonesia is manifested by empowering the regions to develop regional curriculum. This policy is regulated by the Minister of Education and Culture regulation no 22 of 2006. The purpose of the developed local curriculum is to preserve and develop the uniqueness and culture of a given region, introducing culture through learning activities in an effective way. In addition, schools that are trusted to manage the curriculum become more confident (Doherty & Shield, 2012). The ability and capacity of teachers are better and able to innovate with the emergence of the local curriculum (Sahasewiyon, 2004). Autonomy of education through a decentralization policy can improve teacher competence. Schools can have an insight by exploring what must be prepared to develop their own characteristics and culture through the education system (Mølstad, 2015). Schools can easily practice cultural characteristics in teaching and learning activities (Johansson, 2009).

Detecting strengths and weaknesses of the local curriculum developed by the government should be undertaken, so that deficiencies or weaknesses of the local curriculum are corrected immediately. The difficulties of schools in implementing the curriculum must be known in full so that the difficulty does not become an obstacle to achieving success in the curriculum. Approaches must be found to improve the curriculum (Adin-Surkis, 2016). Analysis of information is needed to improve the quality of the curriculum (Hakan & Seval, 2011). Problems that cause failure in the implementation of the curriculum should be found (Zedda, Bernardelli, & Maran, 2017).

The local curriculum includes curricular learning and is expected to contribute to the development of self-learners, thus with skills gained through regional cultural learning it is expected to provide stock to students in improving the social economy. The local curriculum should be developed through the knowledge acquired from the environment and social region (Sahasewiyon, 2004). Greater progress will be made by increasing local characteristics so that conditions are favorable for the regional economy. The local curriculum is very important in maintaining the local wisdom of a region. The local curriculum assists the government in realizing the vision of the region and enriches students with the

knowledge of local uniqueness and culture, so students can socialize it to other regions (Prastiwi, 2013).

Research methodology

The type of research used is phenomenology-type qualitative research. Data were collected through FGD with in-depth interviews about teacher difficulties in implementing the local curriculum developed by the local government. Participants included 16 senior high school teachers. At the beginning of the data collection, the researcher led the FGD, then conducted in-depth interviews with all the teachers implementing the local curriculum. Data were analyzed using the approach proposed by Creswell (2014): preparing and defining data, reading the data as a whole, encoding data, defining themes and creating descriptions, linking themes, and interpreting themes.

Finding

Based on the results of the analysis, teachers' difficulties can be categorized in terms of: understanding of subjects to be taught, inadequate learning facilities, difficulties in implementing the local curriculum consisting of regional cultural lessons (theory and practice), difficulties in assessing, and difficulty in marketing products in the form of traditional cuisine and souvenirs.

Teachers' difficulties in terms of understanding

The teachers' difficulties in understanding the subjects of regional culture are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Teachers' difficulties in terms of understanding

Description	Cause	Strategy
Teachers' difficulties in understanding the subjects of regional culture	Teachers who teach regional culture from exact sciences such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology	1. Participation in training held by the local government
	Many teachers do not want to learn from the beginning	2. Training needs to be held periodically

Description	Cause	Strategy
Teachers; difficulties in understanding assessment	Teachers do not understand the local curriculum developed by the region as a whole	3. Training should be provided to all teachers who teach local cultural subjects
	Teacher training is limited	
	Teachers do not understand how to assess the affective and psychomotor domains	4. Training in planning and implementing assessment should be held
Teachers have difficulty combining cognitive, affective and psychomotor assessment		
	Teachers do not understand the holistic way of assessing the learning of regional culture.	

Teachers’ difficulties in terms of resources

There are some teacher difficulties in implementing the local curriculum. The teachers’ difficulties in terms of resources are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers’ difficulties in terms of resources

Description	Cause	Strategy
Funds	Schools do not have the funds to implement practical learning every week	1. Make a proposal to the industry to get materials and funds for practice 2. Governments through local parliaments should make local regulations to fund the local curriculum 3. Students can bring practical materials from home
	Funds for school operational costs obtained from the central government cannot be used to implement the local curriculum	
	The local government does not help to fund to implement the local curriculum	
	No industry provides funds to implement the local curriculum	
	Some poor students are not happy if they have to spend money to implement local content	
	No funds from customary institutions who are in charge of preserving the culture	
Books	Textbooks from provincial governments are limited	
	There are no books about culture in the library	
	The government does not supply books on regional culture to the library	

Description	Cause	Strategy
Learning media	Many teachers do not use learning media	4. Every teacher should make materials according to the syllabus developed by the local government 5. Governments should provide tools for carrying out practice on regional cultural lessons 6. The principal should reduce teaching hours for teachers who teach regional culture
	Teachers who use the media are only teachers who teach at a favorite school	
Traditional equipment	Learning media is very limited	
	Teachers use simple tools	
	Equipment for making regional products is limited	
Teacher time	Sophisticated equipment is only owned by schools that have large funds	
	Teachers think that teaching regional culture is not optimal because they have to teach mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology	
	Regional cultural teachers have more teaching hours than general teachers	

Teachers' difficulties in terms of implementation

The teachers' difficulties in implementing the local curriculum are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Teachers' difficulties in terms of implementation

Description	Cause	Strategy
Teachers' difficulties in implementing local cultural learning	Teachers have difficulties in preparing teaching materials such as learning program plans, because there is no guidance from the government	1. Principals should look for teachers who have skills in the field of regional culture
	Teachers' difficulties in finding the right method to teach regional culture	2. The government should prepare guidelines for teachers to develop learning lesson plans
	Teachers have difficulties in making students understand because they are accustomed to teaching the exact sciences such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology	3. The principal should control the implementation and ensure that teachers use varied methods of teaching
	Teachers are still teaching with a teacher-centered approach	

Teachers’ difficulties in terms of assessment

Teachers have difficulties in assessing the cognitive and psychomotor aspects. Their difficulties are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Teachers’ difficulties in terms of assessment

Description	Cause	Strategy
Teachers’ difficulties in assessing affective and psychomotor students	Teachers only assess cognitively, with the use of multiple choice tests	1. The government should create special training for teachers to improve competence in assessment 2. Schools should add special teachers to assess students’ affective and psychomotor aspects 3. Teachers should determine indicators used to assess the practice
	Teachers who teach are not comparable to large student populations	
	Teachers find it difficult to determine the indicators used to assess practice learning	
	There is no rubric to assess affective and psychomotor students in regional culture lessons	

Teachers’ difficulties in terms of product marketing

The teachers’ difficulties in marketing is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Teachers’ difficulties in terms of product marketing

Description	Cause	Strategy
Teachers’ difficulties in marketing the product	Lack of government support to market students’ products from practical learning	1. The government should create a special market for selling local cultural products resulting from practical learning 2. The government should make it legal for to the modern market to sell students’ products 3. There should be a bazaar or exhibition to sell students’ products 4. The government should create an industry that can preserve students’ products
	There is no marketing place that can market students’ products. Product marketing is limited only to the school environment	
	There is no cooperation between entrepreneurs to market students’ products	
Preserving the Product	There is no industry that can preserve traditional food products	

Discussion

Teachers' difficulties in terms of understanding

The policy of decentralizing education through the curriculum has an impact on the new task that the teacher must carry out. This policy forces teachers who do not have the competence to teach the subjects proposed in the curriculum. Teachers of mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology were asked to teach regional cultural subjects. The teacher usually teaches exactly assigned by the principal to teach the subjects of regional culture. This policy can complicate the teacher and hamper the success of the curriculum, therefore teachers who teach in implementing the curriculum must be in accordance with their field (Kunter, Baumert, Voss, Klusmann, Richter, Hachfeld, 2013)

Teachers' understanding of subjects is an important point to consider in the implementation of the curriculum. The facts show that changes of the curriculum, both nationally and regionally, often gets a negative response from the teacher (Retnawati, Munadi, Arlinwibowo, Wulandari, & Sulistyarningsih, 2017). Many teachers reject the renewal of the curriculum because they must learn the subject from the beginning to understand it before teaching it.

A lot of teaching hours affect the quality of teaching. Teachers do not have time to prepare teaching materials because their workload is too large. Teachers do not have the time to deeply understand the local curriculum developed by the local governments. Teachers only understand the local curriculum based on the syllabus that becomes the basic competence in the subjects of regional culture.

Training as an effort to improve the quality of teachers has been organized by the government. The training carried out by the government is limited. Not all teachers can attend training because the government does not have a large budget to create a training program. Yet, teacher training is an important element that needs attention (Seikkula-Leino, Ruskovaara, Hannula, & Saarivirta, 2012).

The teachers' understanding of assessment is still relatively low. Assessing the affective and psychomotor aspects is a difficult task for the teacher because the teacher must prepare the instrument. Assessing students' affective and psychomotor aspects becomes a new task for teachers. The task of combining cognitive, affective and psychomotor assessments is a daunting task for teachers. In addition, teachers are also not equipped with workshops or training to assess the affective and psychomotor dimensions.

Teachers' difficulties in terms of resources

One of the most concrete issues in the implementation of the local curriculum is funding. Funds are a key determinant of the success of the local curriculum. Projects and educational programs are influenced by the presence of funds or budgets, without funding educational programs are difficult to implement (Sangiumvibool & Chonglertham, 2017). In general, schools in Indonesia get funding from school operational cost programs created by the central government, but cannot use the funds obtained from the operational costs of schools for practical learning because they are limited by central government regulations.

The industry does not provide funding for the learning of local cultural practices. The industry provides only a small piece of materials for learning local cultural practices. Traditional institutions have difficulties in providing funding to implement the local curriculum since the local government's budget for them is very small. The alternative way to implement the local curriculum is to collect money from students. Some students from very weak economic backgrounds reject the policy. However, schools provide relief by allowing students to bring materials from home, so students feel helped by this policy.

Textbooks for implementing the local curriculum are also very limited. Local governments only provide teachers who teach regional cultural subjects. Students do not get textbooks because the government does not have the budget to print or duplicate books for enormous numbers of students. Students have difficulty finding references or materials to study at home, so they learn through blogs that scientifically cannot be used as a source of learning.

Teachers still use conventional methods with a teacher-centered approach. Teachers still enjoy teaching without using media, because schools do not have media that can be used to implement the local curriculum. Learning is one-way, from teacher to student. In other words, the teacher talks a lot, while the students just listen and record what the teacher explains.

There is relatively little equipment to implement the local curriculum. The equipment used for practical learning does not fulfil quality standards because it is bought at a low price. There is no equipment aid from the government to implement the local curriculum. Schools seek initiatives by purchasing cheap equipment and lending to parents or to community leaders.

Teachers who teach regional culture are teachers of mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology. Scientifically, teachers who teach regional culture have no regional cultural competence, they are assigned by the school principal or vice principal of the curriculum section to teach regional cultural subjects. They

must study hard to understand the culture of the region. As a result, teachers have difficulty managing time because their teaching hours increase.

Teachers' difficulties in terms of implementation

Implementation of the curriculum becomes a challenge for teachers because they have to prepare learning tools to implement the local curriculum. The teacher's heavy duty is to make tools such as lesson plans because the government does not provide guidance for teachers how to develop lesson plans. The learning implementation plans developed between teachers may vary, as teachers do not have time to discuss to develop a standardized learning plan.

Teachers who use conventional methods have difficulties in managing the classroom. Teachers have difficulty in developing learning because they only use teacher-centered methods. A large number of students makes it difficult for teachers to manage classes, so learning is ineffective (Brown, 2003). Teachers find it difficult to apply new teaching methods because it takes a lot of time in terms of design and application. Teachers who are accustomed to teaching exact sciences have difficulties in providing understanding to learners. The method of lecture, which teachers often use in teaching local culture, requires teachers to learn to speak more in front of students.

Teachers' difficulties in terms of assessment

Student competences gained from the learning process are assessed by the teacher with a cognitive approach. Teachers prepare multiple choice tests and give them to students. Teachers do not assess affective and psychomotor aspects. The affective aspect is a difficult aspect to be assessed by the teacher, so there needs to be more training in the assessment of the cognitive aspects (Miller, 2010). Teachers also have difficulty assessing the psychomotor aspects of students both in theory and practice. Teachers' difficulties in assessing affective and psychomotor aspects have an impact on assessment due to lack of information (Bolin, Khramtsova, & Saarnio, 2002).

Teachers are also not provided by the local government with training in designing assessment of affective and psychomotor aspects. One of the factors that make it difficult for the teacher to assess the affective and psychomotor aspects is to determine which indicators are used as a benchmark for assessing affective and psychomotor aspects. The most acceptable reason why teachers do not assess the affective and psychomotor aspects is that teachers do not have rubric assessments. As a result, students' attitudes and skills from practical learning cannot be assessed by the teacher.

Teachers' difficulties in terms of product marketing

The products obtained from students' practice learning are still difficult to market. Teachers and students can only market products at school and they are sold directly to teachers or students. Government support to market student products is weak. Governments should collaborate with entrepreneurs to market products from local cultural training, so schools can make practical learning a source of school economy and even the economic resources of students. Poor students can take advantage of local cultural learning as a source of family economic improvement.

Conclusion

Decentralization of education through the local curriculum does not get a positive response from teachers because the policy is not addressed with adequate resources and training. The teacher is confused about the implementation of the local curriculum developed by the local government. Teachers who should teach exact sciences such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology are assigned by the principal to teach regional culture. The task of teaching local culture multiplies complications and confusion in many aspects, such as the difficulty in understanding the material to be taught, the lack of facilities to apply practical learning, difficulty in implementing the local curriculum, difficulty in assessing affective and psychomotor aspects, and difficulty in marketing products which result from students' practice learning.

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