The Influence of Welfare on the Performance of Early Childhood Education Teachers

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the relationship between welfare and performance of early childhood education teachers. It employs a qualitative approach, allowing for an in-depth understanding of teachers’ experiences and perceptions regarding welfare and its influence on their performance. Research participants consist of teachers teaching at TK Ar Rahman Tasikmadu, Karanganyar, selected through purposive sampling techniques to obtain variations in their experiences and perspectives. Data are collected through in-depth interviews with teachers, focusing on the aspects of welfare they experience in the workplace and their perceptions of performance as a result of welfare. Data analysis utilizes a thematic analysis approach to identify thematic patterns in the interviews and understand the relationship between welfare and teacher performance. The results of this research indicate that teacher certification serves as an indicator of teacher welfare to enhance their performance in schools. This study provides a better understanding of how teacher welfare affects their performance at TK Ar Rahman Tasikmadu and offers insights for the development of policies and human resource management practices that support welfare and performance of teachers in early childhood education institutions.

Keywords: Welfare, Teacher Performance, Early Childhood Education

INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious effort to prepare future generations through activities, teaching, training, etc (Rusilowati & Wahyudi, 2020). These activities take place within educational institutions. Therefore, schools are institutions tasked with providing education and enhancing its quality. Several factors influence the success of educational goals, including teachers, students, facilities, the academic environment, and the curriculum (Kristianto et al., 2023). Among these factors, teachers play a crucial role in supporting education provision without overlooking other factors.

Teachers are one of the determining factors in the quality of education outcomes, so any effort to improve the quality of education should focus on enhancing teachers' performance (Utama et al., 2023). Teachers are expected to deliver satisfactory performance and realize the hopes and aspirations of the community that trusts schools and teachers in the development of students (Putri, Widyatsih, & Mahasir, 2023). The work performance of teachers greatly influences the achievement of quality education. Teachers
must be equipped with essential pedagogical, personal, professional, and social skills to achieve educational success and fulfill their school roles (Sumardi, Rohman, & Wahyudiati, 2020). All these basic skills are crucial for educators and educational institutions where they teach and educate children (Faiz & Faridah, 2022).

Nevertheless, the lack of school efforts to enhance teachers’ image, integrity, and professionalism is an essential concern in every educational institution (Hastuti & Utomo, 2022). Therefore, welfare motivates or encourages individuals to work well and maximally to achieve higher levels of work and increase employee motivation (E. Mulyasa, 2007). TK Ar Rahman is an early childhood education institution in Tasikmadu, Kalanganyar City. In pursuing the educational institution’s vision, mission, and objectives, Ar Rahman Kindergarten explores various ways to improve the performance of faculty and staff and achieve higher quality.

Teacher performance is the ability and performance of an individual in carrying out their duties and responsibilities (Nobrega, Opice, Lauletta, & Nobrega, 2020). Therefore, it can be said that the personal and professional skills of teachers and their interaction with society and the work environment are forms of teacher performance that must be enhanced to achieve satisfactory results for the educational institution (Cliffe & Solvason, 2022). Efforts to improve teacher performance can be made through various means, including improving teacher welfare in schools (Rusilowati & Wahyudi, 2020). Low levels of teacher welfare result in suboptimal education quality, and hundreds of volunteer teachers still do not receive adequate income according to the required standards. Consequently, the basic needs of teachers are not met, and their performance is suboptimal. There are many government initiatives to improve the image and integrity of teachers, such as professional allowances, the appointment of honorary teachers, and monthly school assistance funds (BOS) (Rochanah, 2021). Through various meetings, personal conversations, and visits, I have obtained different information about TK Ar Rahman Tasikmadu Karanganyar teachers even though many teachers understand educational science, they do not yet know how to become professional teachers.

As a reference material in this research, several studies have similarities in improving teacher performance. Starting from research written by (McTighe, J., Wiggins, G., Warso, A. W. D. D., Zahroh, S. H., Parno, Mufti, N., & Anggraena, 2017) stating that one strategy to improve teacher performance is by improving their welfare. Then (Alfath & Huliatunisa, 2021) mentions that teacher performance can be improved through their professionalism allowances. It is said that certified teachers receive additional income and can relatively improve their welfare. Thus, teacher performance increases, and their enthusiasm for their duties increases. Speaking of improving teacher performance (Sanglah, 2021) states in his research that principal supervision is also important and highly influential in improving teacher performance besides teacher welfare. The principal is considered necessary because they are role models and examples for all elements in the institution, especially for teachers. As motivators and encouragers for teachers to improve their performance at school. Through the above research, similarities in enhancing teacher performance are found. However, some differences also appear in them. The differences lie in several different factors to improve teacher performance. This research focuses on the welfare of its teachers, then how significantly the welfare of teachers affects their performance, and what welfare factors can improve teacher performance. Thus, this research needs to be followed up and needs a deeper analysis of teacher welfare to improve their performance at school.

Efforts to improve teacher performance include improving teacher welfare to increase teacher productivity and optimal performance. In line with TK Ar Rahman’s efforts to improve teacher performance, there are still many shortcomings that need to be addressed by educational institutions. This can be seen from the many teachers who are still dissatisfied with school incentives because they do not meet their economic and social
METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative, focusing on a descriptive approach. Conducted at TK Ar Rahman Tasikmadu from November to December 2023, this research aims to understand social phenomena related to the level of teacher welfare and their performance (Maulina et al., 2022). In data collection, the researcher employed direct observation and interviews with 20 teachers from TK Ar Rahman Tasikmadu Karanganyar. The collected data were then analyzed qualitatively, following steps such as transcription, classification, and identifying emerging themes or patterns. This analysis involved matching the data with relevant theories or conceptual frameworks to better understand the phenomena under study. Conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the analysis, taking into account validity through triangulation techniques to strengthen the research results (Samiaji Sraosa, 2021). Thus, this research is expected to provide significant insights into the relationship between the level of teacher welfare and their performance at TK Ar Rahman Tasikmadu Karanganyar.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Teacher Performance

Teachers are the main pillar of the education system; they play a crucial role in shaping the future generation. The quality of teachers' performance significantly influences the effectiveness of learning and students' achievements. A quality teacher can create an inspirational learning environment, motivate students to reach their full potential and guide them through the learning process. Teacher performance is not limited to teaching abilities in the classroom but also includes the ability to design relevant curricula, evaluate students' development holistically, collaborate with colleagues, and communicate effectively with parents. Furthermore, teachers are expected to continuously develop themselves through training and further education to enhance their skills and knowledge (Edi Hendri, 2010).

In today's rapidly evolving era, teacher performance has become increasingly important in facing various educational challenges. Effective and innovative teachers play a crucial role in adapting teaching methods to technological advancements and students' needs. Through a holistic and sustainable approach to teacher performance, it is hoped that an inclusive learning environment responsive to student's needs can be created, producing competent and highly competitive generations to face future global challenges. Therefore, it is important for all stakeholders to provide adequate support and incentives to improve the quality and performance of teachers as agents of change in the education sector. Several aspects of teacher performance need to be considered in educational institutions.

A teacher's performance in teaching ability is one of the critical aspects of education. Evaluating a teacher's performance often considers how well they can deliver lesson materials in an engaging and understandable manner (Sari, Ferdiansyah, Surtiyoni, & Arizona, 2022). The ability to develop structured and relevant lesson plans is essential for a teacher. These plans should include clear objectives, teaching strategies aligned with the curriculum, and appropriate evaluation methods. With a good lesson plan, teachers can ensure that learning time is used efficiently, and the material is effectively conveyed to students.

Additionally, teachers should have the ability to present lesson materials using methods suitable for students' needs and characteristics. This may include using various teaching methods such as lectures, group discussions, demonstrations, visual presentations, or hands-on activities. Choosing the right teaching method will help increase students' interest and understanding of the subject matter. Effective classroom management skills are also crucial. Teachers should be able to create a conducive learning environment so that
students can focus on the material. This includes time management, maintaining discipline, facilitating discussions, handling conflicts, and providing constructive feedback to students (Baniyah, Jannah, & Utama, 2023). A teacher also needs to understand the needs, interests, and learning styles of students in their class. By understanding students individually, teachers can present material in an engaging and relevant way to them, enhancing student involvement in the learning process and strengthening their understanding of the subject matter. Thus, a teacher's performance in teaching ability can be evaluated through various methods, including direct observation by peers or superiors, student assessments, and analysis of student learning outcomes. By improving teaching skills, a teacher can create an effective learning environment and support students' optimal development.

Teacher performance can also be assessed based on their understanding of the subject matter. Teachers with a deep understanding of the subject they teach tend to be more effective in delivering information to students. Understanding the subject matter is an important aspect of a teacher's performance. Teachers with a deep understanding of the subject they teach tend to be more effective in delivering information to students. Here are some things to consider regarding understanding the subject matter. Teachers who have a deep understanding of the subject matter can present information more clearly and structured. They can connect complex concepts in a way that is easily understood by students. Strong understanding also enables teachers to provide relevant and applicable examples so that students can see the connection between the subject matter and the real world. Additionally, a deep understanding of the material allows teachers to respond to student questions accurately and provide adequate explanations. This creates an inclusive learning environment and allows each student to develop their own understanding.

Teachers who understand the subject matter also tend to be more flexible in adapting their teaching approach to the needs and levels of understanding of students. They can present material in various ways, including using technology or other creative approaches, to strengthen students' understanding. The ability of teachers to continuously update and deepen their understanding of the subject matter is also important (Setiyadi & Rosalina, 2021). This can be done through self-learning, training, or collaboration with peers. By continuously improving their understanding, teachers can remain relevant and effective in teaching constantly evolving material. In evaluating teacher performance, understanding the subject matter can be assessed through various means, including knowledge tests, teaching observations, and student learning assessments. By ensuring that teachers have a strong understanding of the subject matter, schools can ensure that students receive quality and satisfactory education.

In addition to understanding the subject matter, Evaluation and Feedback are also crucial aspects of a teacher's performance. The ability of teachers to periodically evaluate students' understanding and provide constructive feedback plays a crucial role in the learning process. Teachers who can identify students' learning difficulties and provide guidance and additional support have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. By providing timely and relevant feedback, teachers can help students improve their understanding and achieve their maximum learning potential. Professional Development is also an integral part of a teacher's performance. Teachers who continuously strive to improve their skills and knowledge through training, workshops, and self-learning tend to have better performance in addressing new challenges in the education field. By engaging in professional development, teachers can keep up with the latest developments in the field of education and implement best practices in their classrooms. Measurement and Evaluation of Performance are crucial steps in improving the quality of education and providing constructive feedback to teachers. Through performance measurement and evaluation, schools can identify areas that need improvement and provide appropriate support to teachers to enhance their performance. Thus, performance measurement and
evaluation help ensure that educational quality standards are maintained and teachers have the opportunity to continue to develop professionally.

**Improving Teacher Performance through Certification as an Indicator of Welfare**

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by the researcher, teacher welfare is interpreted as the provision of enrichment, whether financial or non-financial, to those working in the educational environment. Thus, they receive compensation or rewards for the responsibilities they undertake. Ensuring appropriate welfare for teachers will enhance their enthusiasm for work and improve the quality of the resources they possess. If teachers fulfill their responsibilities effectively, quality education can be easily achieved. Indicators of teacher welfare include a) fixed income, b) allowances, and c) bonuses.

Certification, which is included in the indicators of teacher welfare, is the process of awarding recognition to teachers who meet competency qualification criteria for improving teacher performance. Teacher certification is a formal process where teachers are evaluated based on specific criteria to determine whether they have the qualifications and competencies needed to perform teaching duties well. This certification process for teachers includes the evaluation of formal education, work experience, professional training, and teaching abilities. Indicators of teacher welfare involve factors that affect the physical, emotional, and professional well-being of teachers in their work environment. An important aspect of the indicators of teacher welfare is the recognition and appreciation of the quality of work and competencies possessed by teachers.

The teacher certification process is included in the indicators of teacher welfare because it is a form of recognition given to teachers who have met certain qualification and competency standards. Teacher certification demonstrates recognition of teachers' dedication and commitment to enhancing their professionalism and ensuring that they have the necessary qualifications to provide quality education to students. With teacher certification, teachers can feel recognized and appreciated for their efforts in improving the quality of teaching. This also provides motivation for teachers to continue improving their skills and knowledge through ongoing training and professional development. Overall, teacher certification is one form of recognition of the quality of work and competencies of a teacher, which directly contributes to the welfare of teachers in their work environment. Thus, the teacher certification process is an integral part of the indicators of teacher welfare, focusing on recognition of teacher competence and dedication in teaching.

Teacher certification has several fundamental benefits in the context of education. Firstly, teacher certification establishes standards of professionalism that must be met by every teacher in carrying out teaching duties. These standards include the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to be an effective and high-quality teacher. With these standards in place, teachers can have clear guidelines on what is expected of them in carrying out teaching duties. Secondly, teacher certification provides assurance of the quality of education to schools and the community. Through the certification process, parents and the community can be confident that teachers who teach have met certain criteria for providing quality education to students. This helps increase public confidence in the education system and ensures that every student receives the best education. Furthermore, teacher certification encourages professionalism in the teaching profession. The certification process encourages teachers to continue improving their skills and knowledge through ongoing training and professional development. This helps teachers stay relevant to the latest developments in the field of education and enhances their ability to face new challenges in the world of education.

Teacher certification is also a form of recognition and appreciation of teachers' dedication and commitment to enhancing their professionalism. It provides motivation for teachers to continue improving their performance and feel appreciated for their efforts in
educating future generations. Teacher certification helps protect the interests of students by ensuring that teachers have adequate qualifications and competencies to teach. This helps prevent low-quality teaching practices or failure to meet established educational standards. Overall, teacher certification plays a vital role in ensuring the quality of education, enhancing teacher professionalism, providing recognition and appreciation for teacher performance, and protecting the interests of students. Therefore, it is important to maintain the integrity and relevance of the teacher certification process to continue supporting the improvement of teacher performance.

The requirements and qualifications for TK teacher certification may vary depending on the country or jurisdiction where the teacher will work. However, generally, here are some common requirements and qualifications:

1. **Formal Education:** Prospective TK teachers usually must have a bachelor’s degree or diploma in early childhood education, early childhood education, or other related fields. This degree is typically obtained from recognized institutions of higher education.

2. **Specialized Training:** Some jurisdictions may require special training in early childhood education or teaching methods appropriate for child development.

3. **Certification or License:** Prospective TK teachers typically need to obtain certification or a license issued by the local education authority or relevant body. The certification process may involve knowledge and skills tests, as well as background and work experience verification.

4. **Work Experience:** Some jurisdictions may require work experience or internships in the early childhood education environment as part of the TK teacher qualification.

5. **Skills and Competencies:** TK teachers must have the skills and competencies required to work with preschool children, including good communication skills, a deep understanding of child development, as well as creativity and patience.

6. **Continuing Education:** After obtaining certification, TK teachers may be expected to continue participating in advanced training and professional development to improve their teaching and childcare skills.

7. **Additional Certification:** Some jurisdictions may offer additional certification in specific areas, such as inclusive education or teaching second languages, which can enhance the qualifications of TK teachers.

It is important to note that certification requirements and procedures may vary between countries, regions, and educational institutions. Prospective TK teachers are advised to contact local education authorities or certification bodies for more information on specific requirements for becoming a qualified TK teacher.

Teacher performance is understood as the ability of teachers to carry out their duties as educators, which involves monitoring students based on skills and the ability to achieve learning objectives (Permendiknas, 2012), including:

1. Teachers are able to formulate learning objectives in Lesson Plans in accordance with the curriculum.

2. Teachers are able to organize teaching materials in a sequential, logical, contextual, and up-to-date manner.

3. Teachers are able to plan effective learning activities.

4. Teachers master the learning material.

5. Teachers apply effective teaching approaches and strategies.

6. Teachers utilize learning resources or media in teaching.

7. Teachers design assessment tools to measure student progress and learning success.

8. Teachers use assessment strategies and methods to monitor the progress and learning outcomes of students in achieving specific competencies.
9. Teachers utilize various assessment results to provide feedback to students about their learning progress and to design subsequent learning plans. Referring to several teacher performances above, it can be concluded that teacher performance is their ability to plan, organize, implement learning, and evaluate the process and learning outcomes effectively and in accordance with the needs of students and the applicable curriculum.

Based on the results of observations and interviews regarding teacher welfare at TK Ar Rahman, it can be interpreted as the provision of enrichment in both financial and non-financial terms. This is a form of reciprocity or compensation for the responsibilities they bear. The existence of strong welfare for teachers is expected to increase their enthusiasm for work and ultimately improve the quality of resources they possess. In this context, indicators of teacher welfare include fixed income, allowances, and bonuses (Daryanto, 1988). Certification is part of the indicators of teacher welfare, as recognition for those who meet the criteria of competency qualifications for improving teacher performance at TK Ar Rahman.

Teacher performance is understood as the ability to perform coaching tasks focusing on student supervision and achieving learning objectives, measured by several criteria, including formulating learning objectives, organizing teaching materials, planning learning activities, mastering the material, applying teaching approaches and strategies, utilizing learning resources, using assessment tools, and utilizing assessment results to provide feedback to learners.

CONCLUSION

Through the discussion of the research above, teacher performance is the core of the education system, determining the quality of learning and student achievement. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the future generation, creating an inspiring learning environment, and guiding students to reach their fullest potential. In addition to teaching in the classroom, teachers must be able to design relevant curricula, evaluate students' development holistically, collaborate with colleagues, and communicate effectively with parents. Teacher performance includes a deep understanding of the learning material, the ability to provide evaluation and constructive feedback on student progress, and ongoing professional development. Teacher certification becomes a crucial indicator in demonstrating the quality of work and competency of a teacher. It provides motivation for teachers to improve their performance and feel appreciated for their efforts in educating the future generation. Teacher performance and certification are not only about ensuring the quality of teaching but also about providing adequate support and incentives for teachers. This helps create a conducive work environment for professional growth and teacher welfare. Teacher performance is the main pillar in the success of the education system. With good performance, teachers can create an engaging learning environment, motivate students, and make a significant contribution to building a quality generation. Therefore, efforts to improve the quality and performance of teachers should be a priority in any educational improvement efforts. Research on teacher welfare in early childhood education institutions offers important insights into the challenges faced by educators in such environments. For further research, there are several suggestions that can be considered to enhance teacher performance. Firstly, focus on factors affecting teacher welfare, such as human resource management policies, work environment, and organizational support. Further analysis of how these factors interact and influence teacher performance can provide a more comprehensive understanding. Additionally, research can explore the impact of teacher welfare on the quality of teaching and learning outcomes in early childhood education. By exploring these aspects, further research in teacher welfare can provide valuable insights to enhance the overall quality of early childhood education.
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