

TEACHING AND LEARNING INTERNATIONAL SURVEY (TALIS) 2018: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (TPD) IN INDONESIA

Astri Dwi Jayanti Suhandoko¹, Ucu Rahayu², Siti Aisyah³, Andayani⁴, Pamela Mekaresti⁵
Universitas Terbuka¹, Universitas Terbuka², Universitas Terbuka³, Universitas Terbuka⁴, Universitas
Terbuka⁵, Tangerang Selatan, Indonesia

astri.dwi@ecampus.ut.ac.id¹, urahayu@ecampus.ut.ac.id², sitia@ecampus.ut.ac.id³, anda@ecampus.ut.ac.id⁴,
pamela@ecampus.ut.ac.id⁵

Corresponding Author: Astri Dwi Jayanti Suhandoko

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Abstract

The Teacher Professional Development (TPD) program is a crucial strategy for enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills. The program includes activities that go beyond introducing instructional methods in the classroom and focus on improving teachers' abilities to communicate and collaborate with their peers, community of teachers, leaders, and school partners. There is a scarcity of research presenting TPD data from teacher representatives throughout Indonesia, particularly those using the 2018 TALIS questionnaire developed by the OECD. This mixed-method study collected TPD data from a survey of 410 elementary school teachers in Indonesia and interview data through the FGD method from 53 respondents, including teachers, principals, parent committees, and education offices from several cities in Indonesia. The study's results indicate that TPD programs in Indonesia require improvement and equal implementation both teachers in urban and suburban/rural area. The programs primarily focus on enhancing knowledge, instructional and institutional skills, including organic relationships with peers and school partners. Descriptive data analysis reveals that TPD programs should encourage cooperation and collaboration among teachers at local, national, and international levels. Recommendations for future research should analyze the effect of the TPD program integrated with the Merdeka Curriculum on teachers' committees. This will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the program.

Keyword: Teacher Professional Development, Elementary school teacher, mixed-method, Indonesia, TALIS.

Abstrak

Program Pengembangan Profesional Guru (TPD) adalah strategi penting untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan dan keterampilan guru. Program ini mencakup kegiatan yang lebih dari sekadar memperkenalkan metode instruksional di kelas dan berfokus pada peningkatan kemampuan guru untuk berkomunikasi dan berkolaborasi dengan teman sebaya, komunitas guru, pemimpin, dan mitra sekolah mereka. Ada kelangkaan penelitian yang menyajikan data TPD dari perwakilan guru di seluruh Indonesia, terutama yang menggunakan kuesioner TALIS 2018 yang dikembangkan oleh OECD. Studi metode campuran ini mengumpulkan data TPD dari survei terhadap 410 guru SD di Indonesia dan data wawancara melalui metode FGD dari 53 responden, termasuk guru, kepala sekolah, komite orang tua, dan dinas pendidikan dari beberapa kota di Indonesia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program TPD di Indonesia membutuhkan perbaikan dan pelaksanaan yang setara baik guru di perkotaan maupun pinggiran kota/pedesaan. Program-program ini terutama berfokus pada peningkatan pengetahuan, keterampilan instruksional dan kelembagaan, termasuk hubungan organik dengan teman sebaya dan mitra sekolah. Analisis data

deskriptif mengungkapkan bahwa program TPD harus mendorong kerja sama dan kolaborasi antar guru di tingkat lokal, nasional, dan internasional. Rekomendasi untuk penelitian di masa depan harus menganalisis pengaruh program TPD yang terintegrasi dengan Kurikulum Merdeka terhadap Komite Guru. Ini akan memberikan wawasan berharga tentang efektivitas program.

Kata kunci: Pengembangan Profesional Guru, Guru sekolah dasar, metode campuran, Indonesia, TALIS.

INTRODUCTION

Entering the era of disruption, humanity faces challenges on various fronts, including economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects. This is what makes sustainable development a key factor in realizing the society of the 21st century.¹ In this context, UNESCO emphasizes that education plays a crucial role in bridging sustainable development.² Education guided by these principles refers to programs designed to enable everyone to acquire the knowledge, skills, experiences, and values needed to create a sustainable future. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development outlined by UNESCO (2015), three of the nine ideas are related to the role of teachers in education. Teachers, as key drivers of education implementation, are encouraged, supported, and facilitated to master pedagogical and organizational skills. Curriculum and instructional experts acknowledge that teachers hold a crucial position in improving students' academic achievement and the quality of education.³ The process of mastering these skills can take place through lifelong learning that teachers undergo collaboratively, transformingly, and comprehensively, whether in formal or informal education institutions, remote or face-to-face. These stages are understood as efforts to develop the professionalism of teachers.

The development of teachers' professionalism is not limited to the instructional methods they apply in the classroom but also extends to teachers' ability to nurture their relationships with colleagues/community of teachers, leaders, and school partners.⁴ Therefore, it becomes an essential strategy to realize the sustainable implementation of teacher professional development programs. The stages range from planning what new knowledge and skills can be imparted to teachers to providing guidance, evaluation, and improvement to ensure mastery of both aspects. Ultimately, this sustainable program can produce teachers who are adept at determining the best course of action when addressing challenges, expanding and strengthening their professional networks, and fostering the formation of a teacher community as a platform for sharing, collaborating, understanding, and supporting each other. It is not impossible for this program to bring about systemic changes, resulting in positive impacts not only within schools but also on a national scale in education.

When elaborating on the continuous professional development of these teachers, the question arises: how do schools, governments, and relevant parties formulate and implement such programs? Some sources suggest that the best method involves making teachers the primary informants in recommending the necessary points during program development.⁵ Teachers are positioned as active participants, dynamically analyzing and sharing the challenges they directly face in the classroom. They are also directed to see themselves as both educators and learners because at each stage, teachers convey knowledge and skills to students based on what they have learned previously. Simply put, teachers play a role in designing continuous professional development programs.

Up to this point, there has been limited exploration of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) in Indonesia, particularly in incorporating the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) questionnaire developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2018. Although there have been some investigations into TPD in Indonesia, the majority of these studies

¹ United Nation, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.

² S Heleta and T.J.H.E. Bagus, "Sustainable Development Goals and Higher Education: Leaving Many Behind," *Higher Education* 81, no. 1 (2021): 163–177.

³ A Toropova, S Johansson, and E.J.E.I. Myrberg, "The Role of Teacher Characteristics for Student Achievement in Mathematics and Student Perceptions of Instructional Quality," *Education Inquiry* 10, no. 4 (2019): 275–299.

⁴ K Goodington, *Building Community Capacity: A Social Support Ecosystem for Educators* (Northeastern University, 2021).

⁵ Sam Sims and Harry Fletcher-Wood, "Identifying the Characteristics of Effective Teacher Professional Development: A Critical Review," *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 32, no. 1 (2020): 47–63.

have not made use of the TALIS questionnaire. Previous research may have tended to use different research methods or internal questionnaires that may not be as comprehensive as TALIS. Therefore, there is still a need for broader and more in-depth research that utilizes the TALIS questionnaire to gain a deeper understanding of TPD in Indonesia. This research would bring significant benefits because TALIS has broad coverage and international standards, allowing for cross-country comparisons and analyses. The use of the TALIS questionnaire can provide a more comprehensive overview of the needs and challenges faced by teachers in Indonesia in the context of their professional development. Thus, further investigation using the TALIS questionnaire can make a valuable contribution to our understanding of TPD in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology employed in this study is a mixed-methods approach, as outlined by Creswell⁶ and Clark and Ivankova.⁷ This method combines both survey and interview techniques to comprehensively investigate the professional development of elementary school teachers in Indonesia. The study involves a substantial sample size of 1000 teachers from diverse backgrounds, including variations in age, education level, teaching experience, and areas of expertise. In addition, qualitative data were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) conducted in selected regions, namely Bengkulu, South Tangerang, and Ternate. These discussions included the active participation of teachers, school principals, parent committees, and administrators. The utilization of mixed methods allows for a more nuanced and holistic understanding of the professional development landscape among elementary school teachers in Indonesia.

The questionnaire utilized in this research is adapted from The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018, developed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Comprising 58 questions, the questionnaire aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of teachers' and school leaders' perceptions regarding the values of their profession, well-being and job satisfaction, challenges and working conditions they face in the field, as well as school climate, professional development, and teacher mobility (OECD, 2018). For over a decade, OECD has employed the TALIS questionnaire to understand teacher professional development in 48 countries. The results of this survey, conducted every 5 years, can be utilized by participating countries to guide policy orientation in supporting teachers to enhance their professionalism. However, it is essential to note that TALIS reports cannot be utilized on an individual basis; rather, they are intended for institutions/countries registered with the OECD library.

The analysis to be conducted consists of two stages. The first stage involves statistical analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0. The initial step includes breaking down participant demographics based on gender, age groups, formal education levels, and total years of teaching. The subsequent research entails descriptive analysis for all items in the instrument, encompassing factors and characteristics of teacher professional development in Indonesia. The second stage involves face-to-face interviews with each participant, totaling 10 hours overall. Interview data is then transcribed verbatim and analyzed. The initial analysis stage includes assigning codes to each participant statement based on the proposition theory.⁸

⁶ J W Creswell and J D Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Sage publications, 2017).

⁷ V L P Clark and N V Ivankova, *Mixed Methods Research: A Guide to the Field*, vol. 3 (Sage publications, 2015).

⁸ N. M. Deterding and M. C. Waters, "Flexible Coding of In-Depth Interviews: A Twenty-First-Century Approach," ed. N M Deterding, M.C.J.S.m Waters, and research, *Sociological Methods & Research* 50, no. 2 (2021): 708–739.

Following this, the researcher establishes categories based on the accumulated codes, followed by detailing definitions for each category.⁹

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher will provide an exposition on the results of data processing, both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data were derived from the analysis of 410 questionnaires distributed online through various social media applications, consisting of 50 questions. Meanwhile, the qualitative data were obtained through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) that included teachers, school principals, and supervisors from several regions. These regions include 7 teachers from South Tangerang, 10 teachers from the city of Bengkulu, 10 teachers from the city of Manna (South Bengkulu) in the western part of Indonesia. We also invited representatives from the central part of Indonesia (Sulawesi), including 4 teachers, 2 school principals, and 1 supervisor. Additionally, representatives from the eastern part of Indonesia included 6 teachers from Ternate, 3 teachers from Sofifi (Halmahera), and finally, from Bacan (South Halmahera), there were 8 teachers, 1 school principal, and 1 supervisor.

Quantitative Data

Based on the results of the distributed questionnaire survey, for the gender category, it was found that there were 96 male teachers and 314 female teachers. This indicates that the majority of teachers in Indonesia are women.¹⁰ According to available data, women have dominated the teaching profession in Indonesia in recent years. According to the Indonesian Education Statistics, in 2020, more than 70% of teachers in Indonesia were women. This trend reflects the significant contribution of women in the field of education and learning in the country.

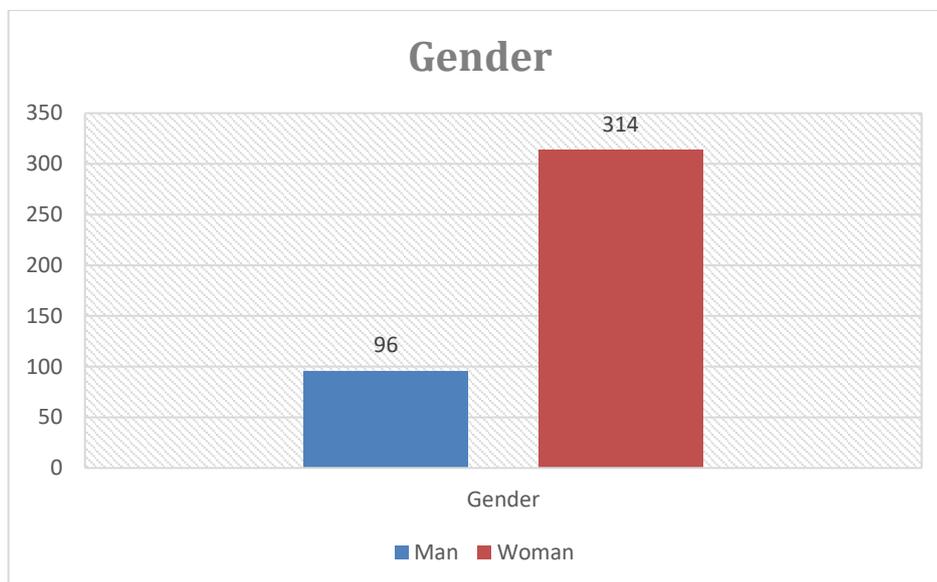


Figure 1. Gender

⁹ G Allan, "Qualitative Research," in *Handbook for Research Students in the Social Sciences* (Routledge, 2020), 177–189.

¹⁰ *Statistik Pendidikan 2021* (Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik, 2021).

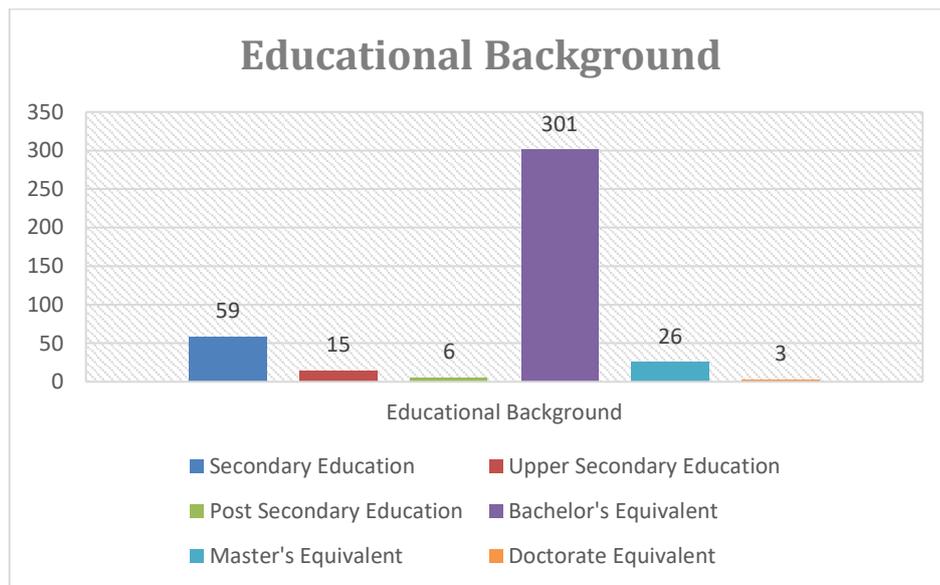


Figure 2. Educational Background

In Indonesia, the formal education of teachers plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of education across the nation. In the data from the next instrument item, it pertains to the educational background of the respondent teachers. In diagram 2, it can be observed that the number of teachers with a Secondary Education degree is 59, Upper Secondary Education is 15, Post-Secondary Education is 6, Bachelor's equivalent is 301, Master's equivalent is 26, and Doctorate equivalent is 3. This data provides a snapshot indicating that the majority of teachers have completed their bachelor's degree. This observation aligns with the findings presented in the research conducted by Kawuryan, Sayuti, and Dwiningrum¹¹. The study, which explores the educational background of teachers in Indonesia, reveals a significant prevalence of bachelor's degree holders among the teaching workforces. This trend underscores the importance of higher education as a common pathway for educators in the country.

Besides education background, the Indonesian government has also emphasized the importance of teacher certification programs as a means to enhance professionalism and competence.¹² These certification programs are designed to ensure that teachers acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to provide effective and quality education. Initiatives led by the Ministry of Education and Culture focus not only on initial teacher education but also on continuous professional development through various training programs. The government's commitment to improving the quality of teachers reflects its broader goal of advancing the overall education system in Indonesia.¹³ For the latest and most accurate information on teacher education in Indonesia, one can refer to official publications and reports provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

¹¹ S P Kawuryan, S A Sayuti, and S.I.A.J.I.J.o I Dwiningrum, "Teachers Quality and Educational Equality Achievements in Indonesia," *International Journal of Instruction* 14, no. 2 (2021): 811–830.

¹² M Sholihah et al., "The Policy of Educators' Certification: An Effort to Improve Quality, Qualification, and Teachers' Competence," in *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 2020, 012130; A Widayati, J MacCallum, and A.J.T.D. Woods-McConney, "Teachers' Perceptions of Continuing Professional Development: A Study of Vocational High School Teachers in Indonesia," *Teacher Development* 25, no. 5 (2021): 604–621.

¹³ Manihar Situmorang et al., "Implementation of Learning Innovations to Improve Teacher Competence in Professional Certificate Programs for In-Service Teacher," *International Journal of Instruction* 15, no. 2 (2022): 675–696.

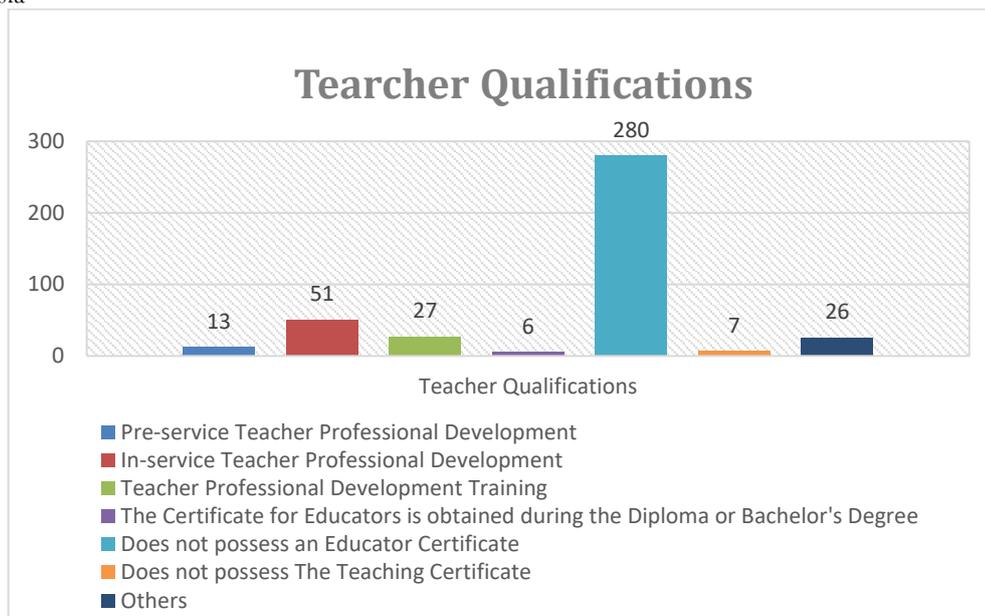


Figure 3. Teacher Qualification

The elementary teacher certification initiative of the government should align with the practical conditions in the field. According to data collected by researchers (refer to diagram 3), out of 410 respondents, it was found that 280 teachers are not yet certified. Indonesia has the shortage of certified teachers remains a pressing concern, reflecting challenges within the education system. According to recent reports, a significant percentage of educators across various regions and subjects in Indonesia lack official certification, contributing to disparities in the quality of education. Factors such as limited access to proper training programs, bureaucratic complexities in the certification process, and inadequate incentives for teachers to pursue certification have been identified as key contributors to this issue.¹⁴ The consequences of this shortage are profound, impacting the effectiveness of instructional practices and potentially hindering student learning outcomes. Addressing this challenge requires concerted efforts from educational authorities, policymakers, and stakeholders to improve teacher certification processes, provide better training opportunities, and implement incentives that encourage teachers to attain and maintain certification.

Based on the data obtained by the researcher regarding employment status as teachers in schools, it was found that a total of 161 teachers are honorary teachers appointed by the school through the Headmaster's Decree (SK Kepala Sekolah) or Foundation's Decree (SK Yayasan). Furthermore, 145 respondents are civil servants (Pegawai Negeri Sipil or PNS), while there are 53 individuals with Government Employees with Employment Agreements (Pegawai Pemerintah dengan Perjanjian Kerja or P3K). Additionally, 51 others work as contracted teachers with decrees (SK) obtained from the local government.

¹⁴ Cipta Pramana et al., "Strategies to Improved Education Quality in Indonesia : A Review," *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 3 (2021); Jakhongir Shaturaev, "A Comparative Analysis of Public Education System of Indonesia and Uzbekistan," *Biosc.Biotech.Res.Comm.* 14, no. 5 (2021): 89–92.

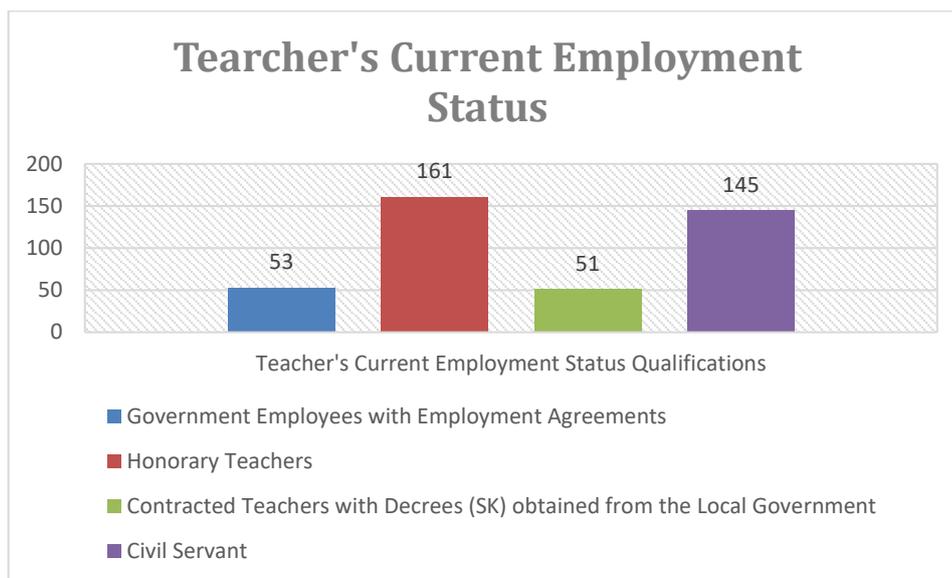


Figure 4. Teacher's Current Employment Status

The portrayal of the teaching profession in Indonesia reflects complexity and challenges within the education sector.¹⁵ The majority of teachers in Indonesia are categorized into three main groups: Civil Servants (Pegawai Negeri Sipil or PNS), Government Employees with Employment Agreements (Pegawai Pemerintah dengan Perjanjian Kerja or P3K), and honorary teachers. While PNS enjoy a more stable status and receive various benefits, the number of PNS in the education sector is sometimes insufficient to meet the evolving educational needs. On the other hand, P3K and honorary teachers often face challenges related to job uncertainty, limited welfare, and a lack of job security. This phenomenon creates inequality in job quality and recognition for educators in Indonesia, necessitating further attention to improve overall teacher conditions and status.

The next data describes the number of hours a teacher spends participating in activities related to professional development (See Diagram 5). This data provides a glimpse into the professional development practices among teachers in Indonesia, revealing that a significant number of educators dedicate limited time to activities aimed at enhancing their professionalism. Specifically, 170 respondents allocate 5-10 hours per week, while 165 respondents spend less than 5 hours on professional development activities. The findings suggest a potential gap in the engagement of teachers in continuous learning and skill-building endeavors. These insights underscore the need for targeted strategies and initiatives to encourage and facilitate increased participation in professional development, ensuring that teachers stay abreast of evolving educational practices and maintain a high standard of teaching. It is imperative for policymakers and education stakeholders to consider these patterns in designing effective professional development programs.

¹⁵ Donatus Wea et al., "Teachers' Working Conditions and Job Performance in the Elementary Schools of Indonesia: A Survey from Southern Papua," *The International Journal of Educational Organization and Leadership* 27, no. 1 (2020).

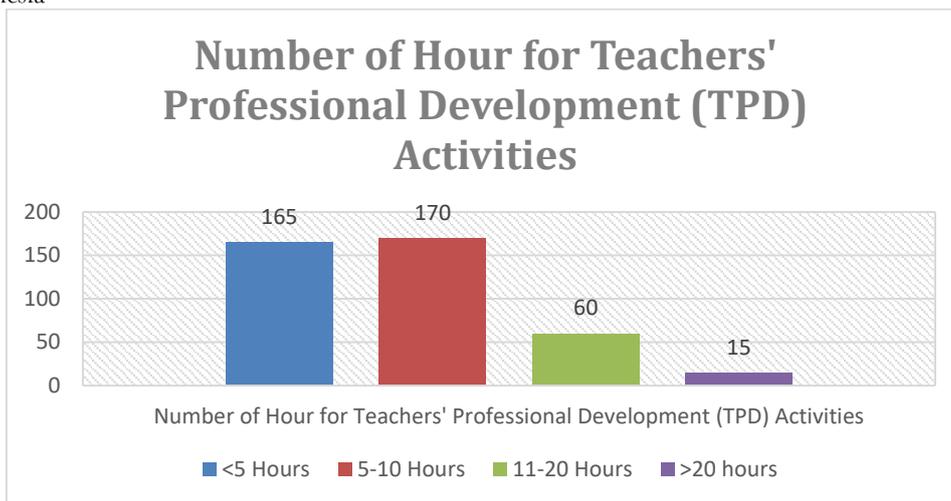


Figure 5. Number of Hours for Teachers' Professional Development (TPD) Activities

The following data pertains to information about induction activities that aim to facilitate the integration of new teachers into the teaching profession and assist experienced educators who are newcomers to a school.¹⁶ From the survey data at diagram 6, the majority of teachers receive induction activities, whether carried out formally or informally. Because induction activities are usually given to new teachers, it is not surprising that 182 respondents stated that they received formal induction activities at their first school. Likewise, 127 respondents admitted that they received informal induction activities at their first school.

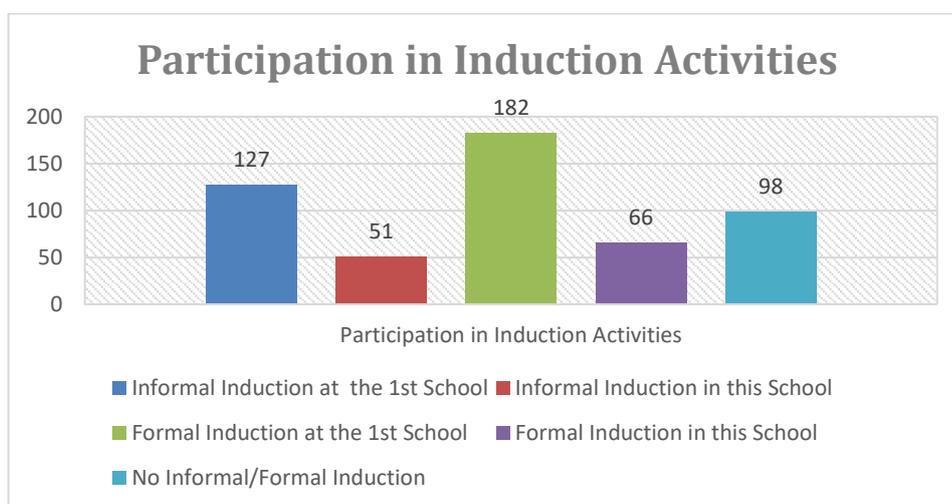


Figure 6. Participation in Induction Activities

Induction activities for teachers in Indonesia play a crucial role in supporting both newcomers to the teaching profession and experienced educators transitioning to new school environments. These activities are designed to facilitate a smooth integration into the educational landscape and foster professional growth. The induction programs may encompass a variety of formal and structured initiatives, as well as informal activities tailored to the unique needs of teachers. These efforts aim to provide guidance, resources, and a supportive community, ultimately contributing to the development

¹⁶ S A Courtney et al., "International Perspectives on Teacher Induction: A Systematic Review," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 125 (2023): 104047.

and retention of skilled educators in the Indonesian education system. In diagram 7 below we can categorize several induction activities participated in by the respondents.

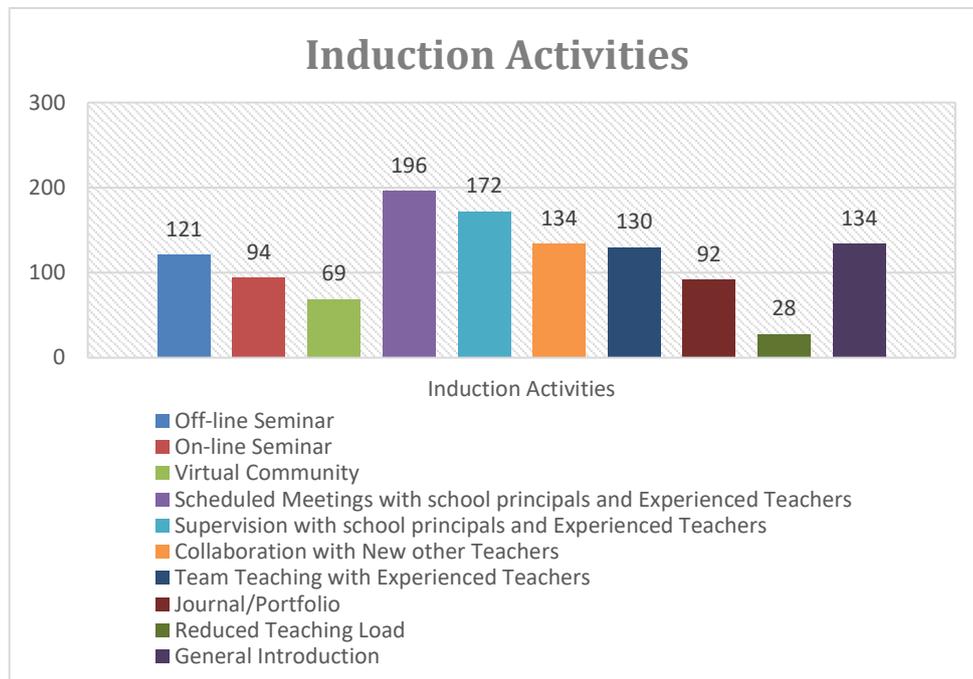


Figure 7. Induction Activities

Teachers have participated in various induction activities as a means of improving their professionalism. According to diagram 7, there are 10 categorizations of activities that teachers participate in parallel or separately, meaning that a teacher can participate in more than one induction activity held by the school. It was recorded that 121 respondents took part in off-line seminar activities, 94 of them took part in on-line seminars, 69 people took part in virtual communities, 196 actively took part in scheduled meetings with either the school principal or experienced teachers, 172 received supervision from the school principal and experienced teachers, 134 of them collaborated with other new teachers, 130 took part in team teaching with experienced teachers, 92 respondents admitted that they compiled journals/portfolios every day/week, and 134 of them received guidance regarding general introductions/administration at school.

The activities most frequently participated in by respondents were planned meetings with school principals and experienced teachers. The scheduled meeting between the new teacher, the principal, and the experienced teacher has been pending due to unforeseen circumstances. The new teacher has encountered unexpected challenges in adapting to the school's systems and curriculum, requiring additional time and attention to address pressing issues in the classroom. As a result, the meeting with the principal and experienced teacher, which was intended to provide guidance and support for the new teacher's integration into the school community, has been temporarily delayed allowing the new teacher to prioritize and resolve immediate concerns.¹⁷ This delay aims to ensure a more productive and focused discussion during the meeting, fostering a collaborative environment for professional development.

¹⁷ M P Steinberg and H.J.J.o R.o E E Yang, "Does Principal Professional Development Improve Schooling Outcomes? Evidence from Pennsylvania's Inspired Leadership Induction Program," *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness* 15, no. 4 (2022): 799–847.

Collaboration with other new teachers is also an activity that is often carried out by 134 respondents. Collaboration with other new teachers in induction activities is crucial for fostering a supportive and enriching environment for educators. These activities provide a platform for sharing experiences, strategies, and insights, creating a sense of community and camaraderie among new teachers. By engaging in collaborative initiatives, educators can tap into a collective pool of knowledge, exchange best practices, and collectively navigate the challenges inherent in the early stages of their careers. This collaborative approach not only accelerates professional development but also promotes a culture of continuous learning and mutual support, ultimately contributing to the overall success and well-being of new teachers within the educational institution.

In addition to the induction activities, 94 participants engaged in the creation of portfolios and journals. This indicates that new teachers recognize the significance of documenting their teaching experiences, hurdles, and achievements. This process facilitates self-awareness and continuous professional growth by encouraging teachers to analyze their practices and consider alternative approaches.¹⁸ Additionally, a well-maintained portfolio serves as a tangible record of accomplishments and evidence of ongoing professional development, which can be particularly valuable during performance evaluations or discussions with mentors. Furthermore, the act of compiling a portfolio or maintaining a daily journal fosters a sense of accountability and intentionality in one's teaching journey, helping new educators establish clear goals and objectives as they navigate the dynamic landscape of education.

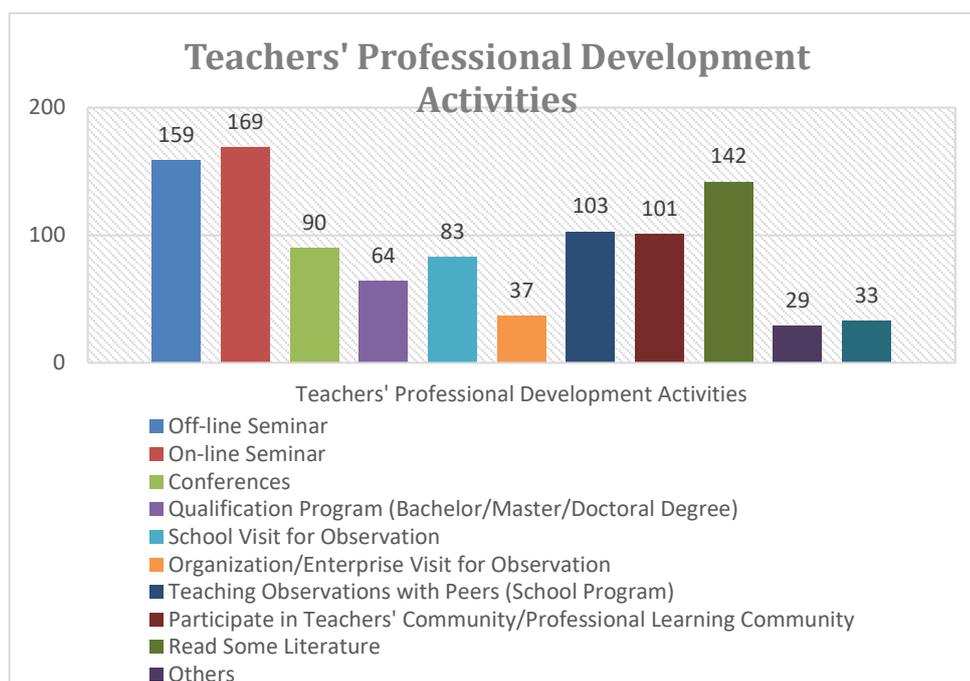


Figure 8. Teachers' Professional Development Activities

Besides the induction activities, the researchers incorporated additional inquiries in the instrument concerning the various activities in which teachers engage to enhance their professionalism. The diagram below depicts these activities undertaken by teachers in the last 12 months. Diagram 8 illustrates that the top three professional development activities extensively engaged in by the participants were seminars,

¹⁸ S.J.T.E. Kearney, "The Challenges of Beginning Teacher Induction: A Collective Case Study," *Teaching Education* 32, no. 2 (2019): 142–158.

encompassing both online (169 individuals) and offline (159 individuals), along with active involvement in Professional Learning Community (101 individuals). Teachers in Indonesia participate in both online and offline seminars driven by diverse motivations. Generally, engaging in these seminars is a proactive step towards enhancing competence and staying abreast of the latest advancements in the education sector. Over the preceding three years, statistical evidence highlights a notable surge in teachers opting for online seminars, particularly coinciding with the widespread expansion of technology and internet accessibility nationwide.¹⁹ Key incentives include the aspiration to acquire fresh knowledge, stay updated on cutting-edge teaching methodologies, and broaden professional connections. Furthermore, educators attending traditional offline seminars often seek opportunities for knowledge exchange with peers, foster collaborative efforts, and deepen their understanding of educational innovations. This data underscores the consciousness and dedication of Indonesian teachers to continually advance their professional growth through active involvement in a spectrum of seminar activities.

Over the past three years, the engagement of teachers in Indonesia within Professional Learning Community commonly known as Teacher Working Groups (KKG) has displayed an encouraging pattern, witnessing a noteworthy number actively taking part.²⁰ KKG serves as a platform facilitating the exchange of experiences, teaching strategies, and educational innovations among teachers. The implications for professional development are highly significant, as participation in KKG allows educators to enhance their grasp of optimal teaching practices, collectively address common challenges, and forge robust professional connections. Through the sharing of knowledge and resources, involvement in KKG positively influences the implementation of effective teaching methodologies, ultimately contributing to the overall enhancement of educational quality.

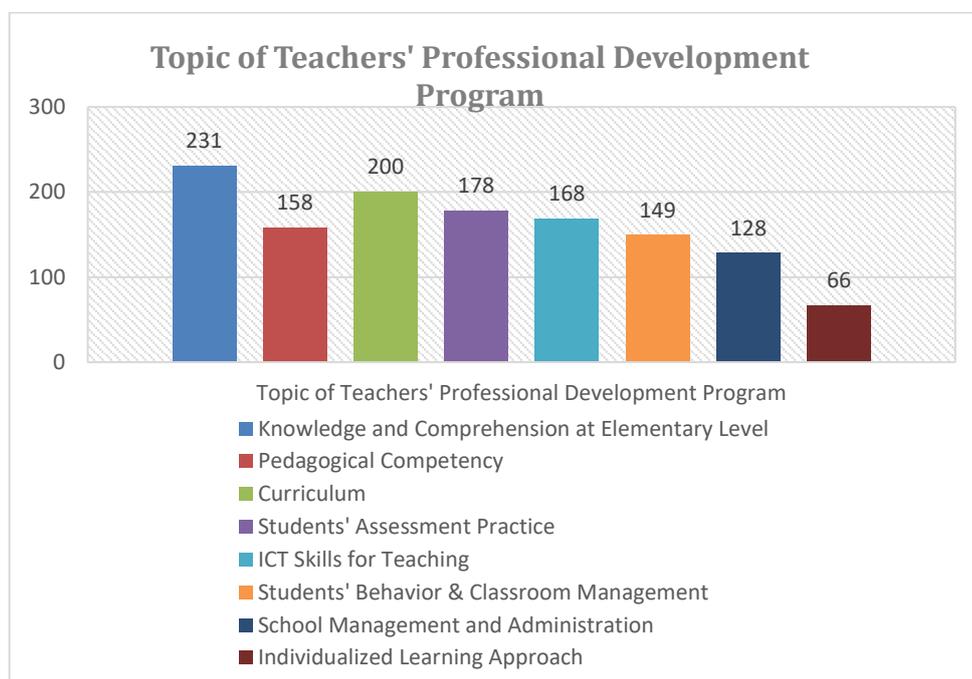


Figure 9. Topic for Teachers' Professional Development Activities

¹⁹ A Imron et al., "Teacher Professional Development to Increase Teacher Commitment in the Era of the Asean Economic Community," in *2nd Early Childhood and Primary Childhood Education* (Atlantis Press, 2020), 339–343; H Taufik, "Motivation and Skills of Science Teachers' Online Teaching through Online Learning Training in the COVID-19 Period in Pekanbaru Indonesia," in *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 2020.

²⁰ Hikmawati Rahayu et al., "Teacher Professionalism in Asia : Practical Perspectives from Indonesia," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 7, no. 10 (2023): 720–730.

In the survey data that researchers obtained, it was described that in professional teacher development programs, teachers are given knowledge and practice related to various topics, including: 1) general knowledge and understanding of elementary education (231 respondents), 2) elementary education curriculum (200 respondents), and 3) student assessment practices (178 respondents). Boz²¹ stated a solid general knowledge and understanding of elementary education are crucial for elementary school teachers as they form the foundation for effective teaching and learning experiences. Elementary education encompasses a diverse range of subjects and developmental stages, and teachers must be well-versed in various pedagogical approaches to meet the diverse needs of their students. A thorough understanding of subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies enables teachers to design engaging and age-appropriate lesson plans that foster critical thinking and foundational skills. Moreover, a grasp of child development, educational psychology, and classroom management strategies is essential for creating a positive and supportive learning environment. Overall, a well-informed elementary school teacher is better equipped to inspire curiosity, instill a love for learning, and contribute to the holistic development of their students.

The curriculum holds the second-highest level of acceptance as a discussion topic in Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs. This rationale is justifiable given Indonesia's recent adoption of the Kurikulum Merdeka in 2021.²² As this curriculum is relatively novel, its implementation necessitates adaptation from educators. Over the past three years, the government has prioritized programs aimed at familiarizing teachers with the Kurikulum Merdeka and facilitating their comprehension of its implementation.

Teachers commonly acquire additional knowledge during Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs is student assessment practice. Teachers must comprehend student assessment practices, as they serve as a fundamental component in gauging the effectiveness of their teaching methods and the progress of individual students.²³ Understanding assessment techniques allows teachers to accurately evaluate students' grasp of the material, identify areas that require further attention, and tailor instructional strategies to address specific learning needs. Moreover, a nuanced understanding of assessment promotes fairness in evaluating students' performance, ensuring that assessments align with educational objectives and cater to diverse learning styles. By actively engaging with assessment practices, teachers can refine their instructional approaches, provide constructive feedback, and contribute to a supportive learning environment that fosters continuous improvement and academic success for all students.

Qualitative Data

In the ensuing section, the researcher aims to provide a descriptive account of the qualitative data derived from interviews conducted with 37 teachers hailing from Bengkulu, North Sulawesi (Palu), and North Maluku (Ternate), representing the western, central, and eastern regions of Indonesia, respectively. The initial dataset pertains to the gender distribution among informants, comprising 25 females and 8 males. In other words, female teacher informants constitute 67% of the total data, while males account for 23%. Notably, this distribution closely mirrors the gender proportions observed in the survey data, indicating a consistent representation of both female and male teachers in the research sample. The

²¹ Tugba Boz, "Teacher Professional Development for STEM Integration in Elementary/Primary Schools: A Systematic Review," *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education* 15, no. 5 (2023): 371–382.

²² N E Wardani, S Suwandi, and C Ulya, "Feasibility Assessment of Merdeka Curriculum in Bahasa Indonesia Digital Textbooks for Class VII Junior High Schools," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 13, no. 12 (2023): 3268–3278.

²³ Z Abawi, "Decolonizing Educational Assessment: Ontario Elementary Students and the EQAO," *Canadian Journal of Education* 42, no. 4 (2019).

predominance of female teachers in Indonesia can be attributed to various societal and cultural factors. Historically, teaching has been considered a socially acceptable profession for women, aligning with traditional gender roles that emphasize nurturing and caregiving.²⁴ Additionally, economic considerations may play a role, as teaching is seen as a stable and respectable job, attracting more women to pursue careers in education.²⁵ Furthermore, societal expectations and stereotypes may influence career choices, steering women towards professions perceived as more suitable or empathetic. While efforts have been made to encourage gender diversity in various fields, addressing these underlying cultural norms and biases is crucial for achieving a more balanced distribution of male and female educators in Indonesia.

Concerning the educational background information of the participants, 34 individuals held a bachelor's degree, while 3 successfully attained a master's degree. The majority of respondents obtained their degrees from public universities, with only 4 having graduated from private institutions. The predominant trend of new teachers in Indonesia completing their studies with a bachelor's degree in education can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the country's educational system often emphasizes the importance of specialized training in pedagogy and educational methodologies, which is embedded in bachelor's programs in education.²⁶ Additionally, aspiring educators may opt for optional practical training (OPT) for these programs due to the perceived practicality of gaining specific skills and knowledge directly applicable to teaching.²⁷ Moreover, there is a societal inclination towards valuing the teaching profession and recognizing the significance of educational qualifications, particularly at the undergraduate level. The accessibility and prevalence of bachelor's programs in education across various universities in Indonesia also contribute to this pattern, making it a common and accessible route for those aspiring to become educators.

In line with educational background, the number of informants who have educational certification is only 10 out of 37 people. These ten informants were civil servants, who had received educational certificates after several years of serving as teachers. The limited number of certified educators in Indonesia can be attributed to various challenges within the certification system.²⁸ One key factor is the complexity and rigorous requirements of the certification process, which can be daunting for many teachers. Additionally, logistical issues, such as limited access to training programs and assessment centers, pose barriers for teachers seeking certification, especially in remote areas.²⁹ Financial constraints may also impede educators from pursuing certification, as the associated costs for training and examination can be burdensome. Furthermore, a lack of awareness about the benefits of certification and insufficient incentives from educational authorities contribute to a relatively low participation rate. Addressing these multifaceted challenges, including streamlining the certification process, improving accessibility to training, and providing financial support, is crucial to increasing the number of certified teachers in Indonesia and enhancing the overall quality of education.

Upon establishing the informants' educational backgrounds and certification status, the researcher shifted focus to inquire about induction activities. The subsequent passage details the induction activities

²⁴ R W Connell, *Teachers' Work* (work: Routledge, 2020).

²⁵ R Topchyan, C J E Woehler, and U Society, "Do Teacher Status, Gender, and Years of Teaching Experience Impact Job Satisfaction and Work Engagement?," *Education and Urban Society*, 53, no. 2 (2020): 119–145.

²⁶ Kawuryan, Sayuti, and Dwiningrum, "Teachers Quality and Educational Equality Achievements in Indonesia."

²⁷ L Rowan et al., "How Does Initial Teacher Education Research Frame the Challenge of Preparing Future Teachers for Student Diversity in Schools? A Systematic Review of Literature," *Review of Educational Research* 91, no. 1 (2021): 112–158.

²⁸ S.A.J.I.J.o I Tjabolo, "The Influence of Teacher Certification on the Performance of Elementary School Teachers in Gorontalo Province Indonesia," *International Journal of Instruction* 13, no. 4 (2020): 347–360.

²⁹ Shintia Revina et al., "Systemic Constraints Facing Teacher Professional Development in a Middle-Income Country: Indonesia's Experience over Four Decades," in *RISe Working Paper 20/054* (Smeru Research Institute, 2020), https://rise.smeru.or.id/sites/default/files/publication/RISE_WP-054_Revinaetal.pdf.

undertaken by educators during their initial tenure at their respective teaching institutions. In Indonesia (3 representative areas has mentioned above), the induction of new teachers, commonly referred to as "kegiatan induksi guru," encompasses a series of experiences aimed at facilitating a smooth transition into the teaching profession. These induction programs typically commence with an orientation phase, where new educators are introduced to the school's ethos, administrative procedures, and educational policies.³⁰ They receive guidance on curriculum frameworks, classroom management techniques, and familiarize themselves with the broader educational landscape. Collaborative workshops and mentorship programs often form an integral part of the induction, allowing new teachers to benefit from the wisdom and experience of seasoned educators. These interactions provide a platform for sharing practical insights, addressing challenges, and fostering a sense of companionship within the teaching community.

Furthermore, many schools and educational institutions in Indonesia organize immersive experiences for novice teachers during their induction. These experiences may include classroom observations, co-teaching opportunities, and hands-on involvement in various school activities. This hands-on approach allows new teachers to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting, refining their teaching skills and gaining confidence in their roles. The induction process is not only instrumental in equipping new teachers with the necessary pedagogical tools but also in nurturing a supportive and collaborative professional environment that contributes to their long-term success in the education sector.

Teacher professionalism activities and programs do not stop when induction activities are completed. In the next session, informants conveyed various comments regarding their experiences participating in programs that helped improve their skills to become professional teachers. Professional development activities for teachers play a crucial role in enhancing their capabilities and improving the overall quality of education.³¹ Firstly, government-led initiatives are integral to the landscape of teacher professional growth. The Ministry of Education and Culture orchestrates diverse programs, including workshops, seminars, and training sessions that focus on pedagogical advancements, curriculum updates, and the integration of technology in teaching. These initiatives are not only designed to elevate the standard of education but also to ensure that teachers are well-equipped to navigate the evolving educational landscape.

Secondly, collaboration with international organizations contributes significantly to the professional development of teachers in Indonesia. Partnerships with global organizations and foreign governments facilitate knowledge exchange, exposure to diverse teaching methodologies, and access to international best practices. Educational exchange programs, conferences, and collaborative research endeavors broaden the perspectives of educators, allowing them to integrate global insights into their local teaching contexts. Moreover, universities and educational institutions within the country actively contribute to ongoing teacher professional development.³² Continuous education programs, specialized courses, and conferences provide opportunities for teachers to deepen their subject matter expertise, engage in academic discourse, and stay abreast of the latest research in education. Additionally, these institutions often serve as hubs for the development of innovative teaching practices, offering platforms

³⁰ Kearney, "The Challenges of Beginning Teacher Induction: A Collective Case Study"; J Keese et al., "A Worthwhile Endeavor? A Meta-Analysis of Research on Formalized Novice Teacher Induction Programs," *Educational Research Review* 38 (2023): 100505.

³¹ J M Fernández-Batanero et al., "Digital Competences for Teacher Professional Development," *Systematic review* 45, no. 4 (2022): 513–531; Raziye Sancar, Deniz Atal, and Deniz Deryakulu, "A New Framework for Teachers Professional Development," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 101 (2021): 103305; Sims and Fletcher-Wood, "Identifying the Characteristics of Effective Teacher Professional Development: A Critical Review."

³² W Admiraal et al., "Schools as Professional Learning Communities: What Can Schools Do to Support Professional Development of Their Teachers?," *Professional Development In Education* 47, no. 4 (2021): 684–698.

for educators to share their experiences, collaborate on research projects, and contribute to the broader educational discourse. However, challenges persist, particularly in remote areas where access to professional development opportunities is limited.³³ Financial constraints and a lack of infrastructure may impede the participation of some teachers in these programs. Thus, efforts are needed to address these disparities and ensure that professional development opportunities are accessible to educators across all regions of Indonesia. In conclusion, the multifaceted approach to teacher professional development in Indonesia involves government-led initiatives, international collaborations, and contributions from educational institutions, with an ongoing need for inclusivity and addressing logistical challenges.

In conclusion, the multifaceted approach to teacher professional development in Indonesia involves government-led initiatives, international collaborations, contributions from educational institutions, and the ongoing challenge of ensuring inclusivity. The continuous evolution of these programs is essential to address the changing needs of educators and to foster a dynamic, knowledgeable, and empowered teaching community throughout the diverse educational landscape of Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Teacher professional development in Indonesia encompasses a broad spectrum of initiatives aimed at enhancing educators' skills and knowledge throughout their careers. This process involves government-led programs, international collaborations, and contributions from local educational institutions. The Ministry of Education and Culture spearheads various activities, including workshops and training sessions addressing pedagogical advancements, curriculum updates, and the integration of technology in teaching. These efforts ensure that teachers stay abreast of evolving educational standards, contributing to the overall improvement of teaching quality across the country. In addition to broader programs, the induction of new teachers is a crucial component of professional development in Indonesia. This phase includes orientation sessions, mentorship programs, and immersive experiences within school communities. These activities are designed to facilitate a seamless transition into the teaching profession, providing new educators with practical insights, guidance on curriculum frameworks, and collaborative opportunities with experienced mentors. The hands-on approach during induction, including classroom observations and co-teaching opportunities, equips novice teachers with the skills and confidence necessary for a successful and impactful career in education.

Despite the commendable efforts, implementing teacher professional development in Indonesia faces both challenges and opportunities. Limited resources, particularly in remote areas, pose a significant obstacle to the accessibility of these programs for all educators. However, the increasing connectivity and technological advancements offer an opportunity to bridge this gap through online and virtual learning platforms. Additionally, the diverse cultural and geographical contexts in Indonesia provide a unique opportunity for tailoring professional development initiatives to meet specific regional needs. Overcoming these challenges and leveraging the available opportunities will be crucial in ensuring the continuous growth and effectiveness of teachers, thereby contributing to the advancement of education throughout Indonesia.

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³³ Anna Popova et al., "Teacher Professional Development around the World: The Gap between Evidence and Practice," 2018, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/63891063-116e-5563-926b-550477ccad82>.

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