

Investigating Purpose and Impact of Professional Development in Response to Shifting Curriculum

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Abstract: Situated in the setting of shifting policy, this qualitative research aimed to reveal the reaction of teachers to respond the shifting policy and the impact of professional development they have participated in. Employing five teachers' categories and classrooms' activities as the data sources and applying observation, interview and document analysis, it was found that teachers participated in professional development to stay abreast with the latest changing of curriculum, to improve their skill and knowledge and to promote students' achievement. In addition, it also indicated that professional development has progressively influenced teachers' performance and changed students' learning behavior. Hence, this research recommends further research that indicates factors influencing teachers' performances and students' learning behavior.

Keywords: Professional Development, Purpose, Impact, Teacher Performance

1. Introduction

English teachers' efficacy remarkably lies on their competence both academically and pedagogically, (efficiency, work load, ability and commitment) (Mahmoudi, 2015). Furthermore, in running their profession, a teacher never stops learning (Dumitru, 2015). Thus, it is considered that teaching English is not an easy task. English teachers are not merely expected to teach their students but they also have to commit performing lifelong-learning as well as an integral part of their task as the main source of students' knowledge and skills.

Besides work load related to classroom ecology, English teachers are pursued to cope with the social changes covering themselves both as a professional and a member of society. English teachers are the heart of classroom instruction (Mahmoudi, 2015). They have to provide for the students' needs and request as they are expected to fulfil school's and parents' demand. In addition, English teachers have to perform their best under any situation. Therefore, it is clear that they are indeed the main actor of education, as they are the "architects" of the next young generation (Sisman, 2012). From the facts, it can be concluded that if a country wants to fasten its essential development in education, it has to properly be initiated by paying extra attention to the quality of the teachers. Furthermore, English is now used in almost all parts of life such as economy, tourism, politics, trading, etc. Teaching English means being involved with complex situations such as people, systems, policies and social norms (Tan, 2015).

In the present time, the ecology becomes more complicated since the shifting of education policy. Thus, as the main part of this complex ecosystem, English teachers have to deal with expectations and demands from many parties such as students, parents, principals, other English teachers, government, English service users, etc. They are responsible for teaching students in a good and effective way, understanding and applying the mandate of the policies, and negotiating with the situation. Further, they have to perform great work and report to parents about their children's progress. These are only a hand of situations faced by English teachers in completing their tasks as a professional. In order to correspond to these very complex responsibilities, English teachers should be receptive to take suggestions to keep upgrading their knowledge and skills.

Thus, to cope with this complex situation, teachers need additional training for the sake of the betterment of education. English teachers can continue their development once their period of formal training is over (Farrel, 2005). It is in line with the statement that English teachers are advised to get additional support (Abali, 2013). Hence, this situation needs to properly solved. In doing their task, teachers grow and become more experienced; hence, their job skills, knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and outlook are continuously needed to be renewed. Therefore, in response to shifting curriculum, and demands from many parties and work load, they are suggested to participate in professional development (hereafter PD) program. This program was designed as an additional training for teachers to fuel themselves to deal with the complex situation they faced. There are about sixty methods to do PD. Among them are workshop, conference, action research, self-monitoring, teacher support group, etc.

Considering the importance of the issue of this situation, this research aimed to investigate the purpose of teachers by participating in PD and whether or not this activity influenced teacher performance and students' learning behavior. However, viewed from the system in developing professionalism, there are two models of PD. They are organizational and individual PD (Villegas, 2003). While, the organizational method includes master degree, workshop, university partnership, conference, etc. individual model covers some methods such as reflective teaching, action research, self-monitoring, etc. Therefore, it can be concluded that the board involved in the process of this development is the point to categorize those methods into organizational and individual model.

Related to the issue of PD, there have been some researches investigating some issues under the same umbrella. Among them are 1) Tan, (2015). This research investigated tensions and dilemmas in teacher PD. It was found that dilemmas happened when the teachers and the institution were not in the same line. PD programs were held during the working hours. This condition forced the teachers to choose whether being there for the students or joining the PD program. This situation could be avoided by adjusting the teachers' needs of PD and the institution's need so that they can stand in the same line for the better situation for students, schools and teachers. 2) Mahmoudi (2015) conducted a research entitled 'Exploring experienced and novice teachers' perceptions about PD activities. The aim of this study is to investigate which PD program (course, workshop, education, conferences or seminars, qualification program) might be much more beneficial for the teacher and to investigate whether there are differences in the perception of PD program from the perspective of novice and experience language teachers. 3) Yumru (2015) conducted research entitled EFL Teachers' preferences for teacher learning activities in a PD course. The aim of this study is to identify EFL teachers' perception of the most influential teacher learning activities. The findings show that 15 teachers found self-monitoring through video recording

and self-evaluation towards their own lessons as the most influential teacher learning activity. The rest preferred listening to other participants' findings on self-learning monitoring, preparing presentations, reading activities and writing personal teaching philosophies at the beginning and at the end of the program, as the most influencing course. The findings showed that experienced teachers and novice teachers have different view over the most influencing PD program. Experienced teachers prefer mentoring or peer observation and coaching as part of formal school arrangement, reading professional literature, educational conferences or seminars and observations or visits to other schools. On the other hand, novice teachers preferred courses or workshop related to material or method, participation in network of teachers formed specially the PD of teachers, reading professional literature and engaging in formal dialogue with their colleague on how to improve their teaching as the most beneficial course.

Considering the issues of the previous studies, there were no studies yet investigated teachers' purpose of participating in PD. In addition, although there have been some studies investigating the influences of PD towards teachers' performance, those studies merely focused on teachers and did not give proper investigation on students changing of learning behavior. Thus, this research aimed to fill the gap under this theme by investigating the teachers' purpose of participating in PD, the impact of PD towards their performance and students' learning behavior.

2. Research Method

2.1 Research Design

Qualitative research is appropriate to give in depth description of an issue. Qualitative method provides more additional insight (Schunk, 1991). Therefore, this current research employed qualitative research design to investigate the purpose of teachers in participating in PD and whether or not this activity influenced teachers' performance and students' learning behavior. In addition, observation, in depth interview and document analysis was employed to elicit the main issue of this research. By employing more than one data collecting techniques and more than one data sources triangulation was applied. This triangulation aimed to avoid data bias and assure the high level of data trustworthiness.

2.2 Data Sources

To get the data needed in this research, the writer collected them from some sources, they are:

2.3 Informants

The informants were chosen by using purposive sampling technique due to the aim of the research. These research participants included five English teachers in one area in Indonesia that were categorized based on their teaching experiences. the teachers' categories are presented as follow.

2.3.1 Novice Teacher (0-2 years teaching experience)

Her name is AYS, a 22-year-old teacher with 1.5 years teaching experience. She has attended training about TOEFL preparation course, academic writing, and the spirit of enthusiasm. She is now teaching in a Junior high school in a province of Indonesia.

2.3.2 Advanced Beginner Teachers (2–3 years of teaching experience)

Her name is NU, a 23-year-old teacher with 2 years teaching experience. She has attended training about national curriculum. Further, she has been taking her master degree of English education in Lampung university.

2.3.3 Competent Teachers (3–4 years of teaching experience)

Her name is RD, a 38-year-old teacher with more than 4 years teaching experience. She has ever attended any training about English teaching methods and national curriculum.

2.3.4 Proficient Teacher (5 or more years of teaching experience)

His name is AW, he is a male English teacher and 32 years old. He has been teaching English for about 6 years in a Junior high school in a province of Indonesia.

2.3.5 Expert Teachers (more than 10 years teaching experience)

His name is AZ, he has been teaching in a Junior high school in a province of Indonesia for more than ten years. He has attended much training such as Curriculum 2013 training, English Teaching training, etc.

2.4 Event

Besides informants, the writer also collected the data from events of what happens in teaching-learning process in English classes. It was aimed to find out whether or not PD impacted teachers teaching performances and students learning behavior.

2.5 Document

To complete the data needed, the writer also collected the data from documents. Documents in this research were in the form of lesson plans as it was suggested by Creswell (2012).

3. Research Procedures and Data Collection

To get the data needed with good level of trustworthiness, this research employed triangulation method. They are observation, in-dept interview and document analysis. The observation protocol was constructed from the standard process as it was stated in Law No. 22/2016. It aimed to know the impact of PD towards teacher performance and students' learning behavior. Afterwards, document analysis in this case lesson plan and students work was analyzed. Then the interview was conducted to clarify the data from observation. Besides, it also aimed to support the data interpretation. The data were then confronted by using related theories. They are all aimed to get the high quality of data trustworthiness. In addition, this research employed Creswell model of data analysis. See the following picture.

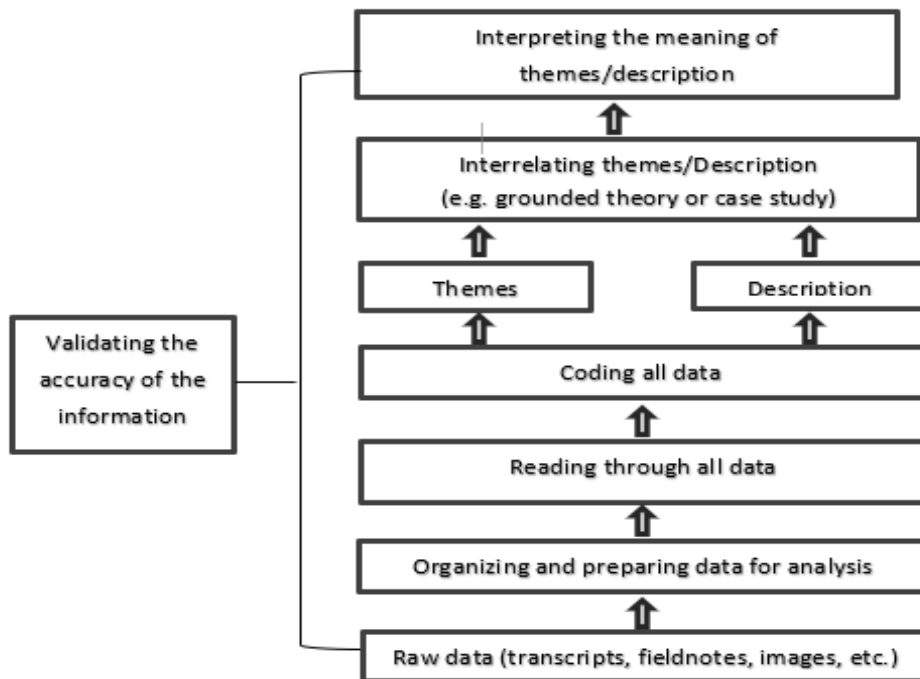


Figure 1: Creswell Model of Qualitative Data Analysis

4. Analysis Result

4.1 The Purpose of Participating in PD

Based on the findings, there were three purposes stated by all the participants, they were to stay abreast with the latest changing in education, to keep up to date their knowledge and to improve students' achievement.

One of the eminent purposes of engaging in PD stated by the participants was to stay abreast with the latest changing of the curriculum. Viewed from the history of the changing of educational policies in Indonesia, this reason was logical. Empirically, the government has changed the curriculum eleven times from curriculum 1974, curriculum 1952, curriculum 1964, curriculum 1968, curriculum 1975, curriculum 1984, curriculum 1994 and supplementary curriculum 1999, competence-based curriculum in 2004, school-based curriculum in 2006, curriculum 2013, and revision of curriculum 2013 in 2015. Each curriculum has certain purpose to achieve. For instance, school-based curriculum allowed the schools to adjust the curriculum based on their uniqueness and curriculum 2013 explicitly required the students to be more independent in developing themselves. These changes required different teaching approach and evaluation system as well. Hence, staying abreast with the latest changing of the educational policy is inevitable and crucial for teachers.

Furthermore, the policy made by the government directly influenced many aspects of education such as the approach, method, and educational system, etc. The newest curriculum applied in Indonesia (Curriculum 2013 revised edition) pursued the teachers to be a facilitator for the students to independently develop their capacity. It explicitly obligated the teachers to apply scientific approach in teaching. Besides, it also asked them to apply multi correct answers viewed from any angles and use multi sources of learning. This mandate straightly changed both the learning activities and the topic of the PD programs planned by many parties such as government and schools in response to this change. Hence, staying abreast both in policy and pedagogical issue benefitted the teachers in accomplishing their task.

The second purpose stated by the teachers was to keep their knowledge up dated. Besides local issues, the teachers were also required to be aware of English subject issues happening in global level. For instance, the shifting paradigm from learning English to be native like has changed to the issue of English as a *lingua franca* (Fang, 2017). This shifting willy-nilly influenced English teaching process around the world including Indonesia. Hence, the awareness of global issue related to teaching English should be well-maintained. The more they are aware of this issue, the better schemata and understanding they have. Hence, it can be assumed that more updated-teacher is better in teaching than those who are not. In addition, as the respond of the ever-changing situation, teachers need to broaden their horizon. It can be done by reading journal related to English subject issues. By doing so, teachers are supposed to be better both in theory and teaching practice. It is in accordance with Tan, (2015) stating that teachers in Singapore had the same reasons in doing PD as those in Indonesia. Some of them stated that they did PD to keep updating knowledge and the rest stated to keep their passion in teaching. Hence, updating knowledge and maintaining passion in teaching were critical for the betterment of the teacher performance.

In addition, one of the ways to maintain passion in teaching can be influenced by external and internal factors. Teachers might be internally influenced to do better performance. To reach this improvement, they need to continually improve their capacity as a teacher. It means that keeping passion in teaching goes in line with the quality of their teaching. It is supported by a longitudinal study (Ramadhani et al., 2012). The findings showed that both students' and teachers' perception towards the teachers' way in running classroom after joining PD changed significantly. It means that PD changed teachers both in theoretical and in practical sides.

The third purpose stated by the participants was to improve students' achievement. It means that all the efforts they made were finally directed to the betterment of the students. As the backbone of education teachers carried great responsibility on their shoulders. Hence, teachers played the biggest part towards the quality of education in the nation. Hence, participating in PD is one of the ways out to respond this situation. In addition, one of the indicators to see the betterment of the quality of education is the improvement of students' achievement. In addition, students' achievement was categorized as the short-term output. Further, it is easier to measure compared to the long-term outcome.

These findings showed that all participants in this research are the teachers who are willing to keep learning to adjust their knowledge to the changing demands or curriculum that happened during their period. Hence, it can be stated that in running their task, teachers need to do some adjustment to respond

the unexpected situations. In addition, the situation might be coming from the policies, demands from parents or institutions, students, etc. These situations then required the teachers to face, solve, or even fix those problems to be a better condition so that they can fulfill the demands, solve the problems, obey the policies, and finally they can serve better quality of education for the country. It is in accordance with Dumitru (2015) stating that in doing the job a teacher never stops learning. Hence, from this result of the research and the statements from Dumitru, it can be seen that teaching English is not an easy task. English teachers are not merely expected to teach their students about linguistics knowledge in a good and effective way but they also have to commit to do a lifelong learning as well as an integral part of their task as a professional teacher. Hence, it can be seen that maintaining passion in teaching and keep updating knowledge is very important for teachers in running their task. It means that losing passion and interest in teaching has become one of the problems faced by the teachers in accomplishing their task.

Furthermore, in the term of English education, the demands of English services become larger by the day. Teaching English means being involved in complex situations, people, systems, policies and social norms (Tan, 2015). As the main actor of this complex ecosystem, English teachers have to deal with expectations and demands from many parties such as students, parents, principles, other English teachers, government, English service users, etc. In addition, they are also responsible for teaching students in a good way, understanding the policies, and reporting the result of students' learning to parents. Besides, there are still many other responsibilities they carried on their shoulders. To respond to these very complex responsibilities, English teachers should be receptive to take suggestions to keep upgrading their skills and maintaining their interest and passion in teaching. In doing their job, teachers' skills, knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and outlook are continuously needed to be renewed (Burden, 1982). Therefore, teachers' ability to keep learning, maintain their passion in teaching and adjust themselves to the change impacted massively on their performance. These three things fueled themselves to face any situations and changing demands from other parties such as parents, schools, government, professional English customers, etc. Hence, participating in PD guided the teachers to properly and adequately respond to any situations that might come from inside and outside their classroom.

Finally, Richards (2009) stated that by knowing their strength and weaknesses, teachers put themselves as an object of the process of critical examination of experiences, a process that can lead to a better understanding of one's teaching practices and routines. It can be stated that the combination between passion in teaching, willingness to keep learning and the ability to adjust themselves to the situation enabled the teachers to do better performance in teaching. Hence, it can be concluded that PD is an inevitable process for teachers in running their task since not all the teachers needed to know are provided during the undergraduate level.

4.2 The Influence of PD on Teacher Performance and Students Learning Behavior

To get more detail about this issue, the discussion was divided into three sections. The first section covered reviewing previous material, stating the learning topic, stating the objective of learning, and stating the benefits of the material. The second phase is the main activity that covered some indicators such as giving clear instructions, explaining the material in a logical order and understandable way, providing chance for students to seek information independently, good time management, adjusting the teaching material and learning topic, conducting formative assessment, treating the student in a good

manner. In addition, the third is the closing phase that included resuming the points of the material, doing reflection, stating the next topic of learning and stating the closing.

4.2.1 Opening Phase

Based on the findings aforementioned, it was found that all participants met all the indicators of teaching performance in the opening phase. All the participants did apperception, for instance, participant 5 did the apperception by giving the students a quiz. The correct answer was appreciated by giving plus point that can be used to improve their score at certain numbers. It is in line with Skinner (as cited in Fauziati, 2016) stating that stimulus is good to lead in the students into the expected behavior. This reward technique is aimed not merely to check students' background knowledge about the topic of learning, but it also aimed to motivate the students to independently seek the information about the new topic after the teacher told them in the previous meeting. Hence, it can be concluded that one indicator of the teaching performance in this case stating the next topic of learning in the closing phase combined with the proper technique with the situation empirically proved to induce the expected situation of learning.

In addition, participant 3 provided the students video about the importance of understanding expressions of asking for help in English. The video was about the pilot yelling "May day, may day" but the air traffic controller did not understand, afterwards some students laughed and the rest nodded their head. It can be seen that this opening strategy succeeded not only to attract the students' attention but it also managed to inform the students about the benefits of mastering this expression. Regarding to this issue, participant 4 did the opening phase by grouping the students consisting of 4-5, then he gave students project to present what the groups have already known about the new topic of learning. This grouping was done at the end of the previous meeting. As a result, the students performed cooperation among the members and they independently sought the information related to the upcoming topic. This technique ran well and the students were triggered to learn independently and learned about the importance of cooperation.

Furthermore, the main purpose of the opening phase is to prepare the students' both physically and mentally to be ready to learn the topic of learning. Besides, it also aimed to focus the students' attention to the upcoming knowledge they were going to learn. Finally, based on the findings of the research, it can be said that all the participants managed to achieve the indicators stated in the opening phase. In addition, all the participants conducted the opening phase between five to fifteen minutes.

4.2.2 Main Activity

In this phase, the participants should manage to fulfill some indicators, they are giving clear instructions, explaining the material in logical order and easy to understand, providing students chance to develop themselves independently (by discussing among students, conducting experiments, etc.), managing the class efficiently, using an understandable method, providing suitable materials with the topic of learning, conducting evaluation with measurable instruments, and treating the students in a good manner.

Grounded on the findings, all the participants managed to achieve all the indicators stated aforementioned. They shared different ways in this phase. For instance, participant 2 started the main activity by using problem-based learning. She provided the students formal and informal invitation and asked the students to find the similar and the different things of these invitation letters. She said "Ok

class from these two kinds of invitation letters, please find the similarity and the difference, you may see the format, language, the information stated, etc.” Based on the data from observation, it was found that the students actively participated in the process of finding the information. In addition, they also searched the information from the internet by using their laptop. Hence, it can be concluded that Participant 2 did the main activity smoothly and managed to meet all the indicators. It is in accordance with Fischer et al. (2018) who state that teachers’ classroom instruction can be seen as the most direct teacher-level influence on students learning. Besides, students’ background and the school characteristics also influenced students learning. It means that in giving instruction the teachers should consider the students’ readiness from many angles such as their level of knowledge, the availability of the facilities to accomplish the instruction and students’ physical and mental condition. Hence, in the term of giving instruction, the teachers are required to be wise and consider many aspects for the sake of students’ independent learning.

In addition, Participant 1 started the main activity of learning by reciting the verse of Koran talking about the purpose of human beings creation. It was also stated in her lesson plan as the special feature of the school. Afterwards, she presented the material by modelling self-introduction (the topic was about introduction). She also explained what to do and what not to do in introduction such as asking about age is considered impolite in western culture. From this finding, it can be said that participant 1 managed to run the main activity in a logical order and it was easy to understand. Indeed, the fact that the students enthusiastically participated in this phase was one of the indicators which changed their learning behavior. It is in accordance with Fishman (2016) who state that teachers’ knowledge is often viewed as a crucial predictor for students’ achievement. Hence, it can be concluded that the more knowledge about instruction the teachers have, the better performance the students do. After all, all the participants managed to achieve all the indicators stated in the observation protocol. Therefore, it can be said that their participation in PD has positively influenced their main activity skills.

4.2.3 Closing Phase

In this phase, there are four indicators that should be done by the teachers. They are summarizing the points of the learning topic, conducting reflective teaching, stating the next learning topic and stating the closing. These four indicators are elaborated as follows:

Anchored in the finding of this research, all participants managed to achieve all the indicators aforementioned except participant 1. Based on the result of the observation, she did not do any reflection in this stage. It is supported by the data from interview (I don’t really know how to do reflection in teaching). Then she also stated that during the pre-service training she did not learn about this issue. Related to the finding of this research, it can be said that novice teachers tend to apply what they have got during the pre-service training.

In addition, based on the result of observation, it can be seen that participating in PD influenced Participant 2 especially in closing stage. She did the summarizing step by asking the students some important points of the learning topic. Then she asked the students “how do you think our class today, is it fun?” it means that she did reflection by giving a question. Then she stated the next learning topic and closed the class. This finding revealed that the closing phase in one meeting influenced the opening stage in the following meeting. When the teacher stated the next learning topic, it is implicitly aimed to tell the

students to learn about that matter independently. Hence, doing the right closing phase is very critical to check students' understanding, to know how they feel during the class and to prepare for the next meeting.

PD is important to maintain creativity, interest, and enthusiasm of experienced English teachers in doing their profession (Farrel, 2005). As a person who is responsible to shape, build and improve the quality of human resource, a teacher needs to keep learning before, while even after finishing the task. In the term of English education, the demands of English services become larger by the time. It is not easy to quantify how enormous English teachers' responsibilities to complete their tasks. Besides teaching under the curriculum that may intermittently change as the result of the dynamics in education-related policies, they have to progressively learn and develop their competence as well. Therefore, language teacher PD functions both to improve English teachers' competencies and to maintain their interest towards their profession. Considering the crucial role of PD, this research served English scholars about the impact of PD towards teachers' teaching performance. Based on the data obtained from various sources and various data collection techniques, it can be concluded that PD has positively impacted teachers' teaching performance. Teachers said that PD did not only renew their teaching paradigm but it also maintained their teaching interest and enthusiasm.

Hence, PD is essential in teachers' betterment process. It is in line with the statement that English teachers are advised to get additional support (Abali, 2013). It means that teachers are advised to learn within their teaching activities. It is also supported by Farrel (2005) stating that English teachers can continue their development once their period of formal training is over. Therefore, it can be seen that PD is a process that cannot be separated from teachers' life since it serves teachers with the competencies needed to accomplish their task. It means that in doing their task, teachers become more experienced, more skillful, more knowledgeable. Hence, their enthusiasm, outlook, and capacity are continuously needed to be renewed.

PD is granted with the effective remark when it is managed to meet the following characteristics, which are active learning, coherence, content focus, collective participation, and duration as the core features (Desimone, 2009). Regarding to the topic of this research, the process of PD done by the participants of the research was categorized as an effective one since it was proved that this betterment process contributed to the knowledge and skills development of the participants. It is supported by the participants' statement that PD influenced their knowledge and skill (data from interview). It can be seen from the fulfillment of the indicators stated in the observation protocol. In addition, the coherence between the focus of PD's issues was closely connected to the existing curriculum implementation.

Based on the findings, there are some key points corresponding to the success of PD; 1) need analysis, this analysis is critical to prepare the proper things needed by students, teachers, schools and government. 2) Teachers' active participation based on the philosophy that teachers develop themselves if they are actively involved in the identification of their own strengths and weaknesses in their teaching practice (Richards & Burns, 2010). In other words, teachers need to systematically observe their teaching, interpret what happens in their classrooms, detect problems, and find solutions (Roux, 2014). Hence, teachers' awareness towards their strength and weaknesses is critical. It is supported by Participant 4 who state that one of the reasons to engage in PD was he needed to learn many things to

improve his quality as a professional. 3) The duration; time allotment took crucial role in the process of PD. It closely related to the sustainable impact of this process. It is supported by Hassel (as cited in Tan, 2015) who defined PD as the process of improving teachers' skill and competencies for producing stellar educational outcomes for students.

To sum up, regarding the issue of the purpose of engaging in PD, teachers shared several aims that were directed to improve students' achievement. In addition, related to the issue of the impact of PD towards teachers' teaching performance, it can be concluded that participating in PD has positively influenced teachers' teaching performance and thus students learning behavior.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings and the discussions of the research, it can be concluded that all participants in this research agreed that PD is important for teachers in accomplishing their tasks. It has been empirically proved that PD is important part of teachers' life. With regards to the influence of PD, it can be concluded that participating in PD is the right and proper action to shift policy and the complex situation teachers have to deal with. Thus, this research suggests that teachers should be aware of participating in PD to better educational purposes.

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