

REGROUPING OF SCHOOLS WITHIN ONE COMPLEX AND TEACHER REDISTRIBUTION TO ATTAIN EQUITABLE MANAGEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS

Teguh Triwiyanto

Department of Educational Management, State University of Malang, Indonesia
teguh.triwiyanto.fip@um.ac.id

Abstract: This research aimed to describe and explore the regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution to attain equitable management and distribution of teachers. The research located in Ngawi Regency, East Java. The data collection was performed through in-depth interview, observation, and documentation. The data analysis was done qualitatively. The results of research pointed out that the regrouping of schools within one complex, and teacher redistribution in elementary schools were done because there was inefficiency in elementary school management. The teacher-student ratio was sufficient, but there were demands for new teachers every year. There was also insufficient small-scale school management, and there were subject teachers who had less teaching hours in junior-high-school level, while there were teachers who had excessive teaching hours in other educational units. Such issues are due to the inadequate management of teacher distribution.

Keywords: regrouping of schools, teacher redistribution, teacher management and distribution

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher management and distribution in Indonesia become essential due to the large population, large area coverage, and distribution of islands. However, the sea should connect the islands despite separating them. The latest policy on teacher management and distribution was established as a Joint Ministerial Decree of 5 Ministries, i.e. Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform governing the civil servant teacher management and distribution. The results of a study conducted by Siswantari (2013) related to the Joint Ministerial Decree showed that teachers could meet their 24-hour teaching requirement and teachers' concentration would not be interrupted if such joint decree was implemented in accordance with the technical guides, and there were numerous schools that did not follow the rules.

Such policy on teacher management and distribution is considered as crucial to improve the quality and access of education in Indonesia, although government officials and the society were skeptical. Such condition became a challenge. Levin (2017) found out that the distribution of education is a moral obligation to the society since it opens the door for life opportunities. However, some parties were skeptical to make an educational investment for the population that needs education the most and on whether or not money can make any difference in students' learning outcome. Duflo, Dupas, and Kremer (2015) mentioned that some educational policy makers focused on declining the teacher ratio, some other thought that human resource would have a small effect without any systematical reform for educational management, incentive, and teacher competence. Wazzan (2017) stated that there is a need for intervention from the planners and the government in supporting schools with shortages to achieve human development. Ferina and Setyowati (2016) said that the implementation of regrouping policy is affected by two main variables, namely the

content and the environment of the policy. Guarino, Brown, and Wyse (2011) pointed out that a policy has a small yet significant influence on mobility decision and seems to worsen the inequitable distribution of teacher qualification.

The elementary teacher management and distribution in Indonesia are executed by the regencies/cities through a regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution, even though other alternatives can still certainly be used. The aims were quite clear, namely to enhance the quality of educational service for students, either in the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning in the classroom. Besides, such school regrouping and teacher redistribution also have an influence on the welfare of teachers who get teacher allowance since they will meet the requirement of 24 teaching hours per week.

The issue of teacher quality in properly planning, implementing, and evaluating students' learning in classroom dynamics becomes stronger and more relevant to human resource development and global competence. The classroom dynamics require a good and quality teacher, and it depends on the educational institution from which he or she graduates. Anthony, Hunter, and Hunter (2015) assumed that learning dynamics are related to the graduation standards for the prospective teachers which reflect the vision for a teacher through the teacher education program, including the opportunity to experiment, occupational risks, and to be involved directly in students' learning outcome. It has to support the development of teacher professionalism that shall be adjusted with his or her adaptive skills after becoming a teacher.

Teacher welfare also became the main consideration in the regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution. Teachers who do not meet the required number of teaching hours per week will have their salary cut. Liao and Yuan (2017) pointed that the orientation of teacher distribution policy is more likely to succeed if the involved teachers

are offered some benefits. Therefore, it would highly require the teachers to work in schools with the most need and provide the necessary administrative rules to ensure teachers' good conduct. Also, Luschei and Chudgar (2017) pointed out that the teachers' age, experience, and gender influence his or her preference and decision of teaching location. Based on the said background, this research aimed to describe and explore the regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution for equitable management and distribution of teachers and the measures taken to realize it.

II. METHODS

This research was performed via qualitative design through case study approach. The location of the investigation took place in Ngawi Regency, East Java. The researcher collected the data through observation, documentation, in-depth interview, and forum group discussion on 26 subjects consisted of the employees of Department of Education, Regional Civil Service Agency, superintendents, and school principals.

The data analysis was performed in the process of study, both during and after the field observation, intensively. The final analysis was done after all of the necessary data have been collected or after the end of all field observations. The researcher depicted and interpreted the existing data so that he was responsible for explaining the occurring process, evaluate the process, and explain the superiorities and drawbacks, and the conformity of the process with the prevailing principles. In order to ensure the appropriateness and trustworthiness of the data in this qualitative research, a validity test was done on the data based on some certain criteria suggested by Lincoln and Guba (2002), i.e. credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

III. RESULT

The results of the study showed that the regrouping of schools within one complex, and teacher redistribution were performed for some reasons. First, there was an insufficient management of elementary schools since 25% of them had less than 60 students. Second, there was a sufficient teacher-student ratio (1:18) but with demands for new teachers each year. Next, there was an insufficient management of small-scale schools (less than 60 students), which always demanded rehabilitation funds for new classes to have 6 classrooms. Lastly, some teachers had less than the required teaching hours (<24 hours per week) in junior high school level, and some teachers had excessive teaching hours (>40 hours per week) in other educational units. Such facts were due to the inadequate management of teacher distribution.

Based on the above conditions, teacher management and distribution were then performed by regrouping schools within one complex and teacher redistribution through some stages. First, the socialization of the regrouping program for schools within one complex and teacher redistribution program. Second, the establishment of data acquisition team and

policy expert team. Third, the implementation of workshops for data analysis to achieve the determination of strategic issues. Fourth, follow-up assistance after workshops for data analysis. Fifth, the implementation of workshops for drafting the activities of regrouping schools within one complex and teacher distribution. Then, follow-up assistance after the workshop for policy formulation. Next, an audience with local leaders and public consultation in relation with regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution. Lastly, the implementation plan of the policy.

IV. DISCUSSION

Inefficiency can be a reason for the regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution, which is in line with the findings of this research that showed the inefficient management of elementary schools since around 25% of them had small numbers of students which were less than 60 students. Each school has 6 classes, so there were typically 10 students in each class. However, regardless of the number of students, a teacher should still conduct the lesson, even though students in a small class are more likely to get more optimal attention from the teacher compared with those in a large class. The assessment on efficiency was performed by focusing on the efforts of fulfilling the national standard of education in Indonesia regarding the teacher-student ratio in elementary schools of 1:32. Additionally, the short distance between one school and another also showed inefficiency. Hence, the effort of regrouping mainly focused on schools with such condition. Fieger and Villano (2017) mentioned that assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of an educational institution is very appropriate to be done by the policy makers, regulators, consumers, and the institution itself. Through their research findings, Galton and Pell (2012) stated that reducing the number of students in a classroom would not result in a better situation, although teachers say that a small class allows students to get more attention individually. Jakubowski and Sakowski (2006) stated that the size of a class does not have any influence on students' learning achievement, but it has a small effect.

School fee still becomes the main consideration in elementary education in Indonesia due to a large number of school-age population and their uneven distribution. Lukman (2016) pointed out that Indonesian education faces some issues in its distribution, quality, relevance, management effectiveness, and obstacles in the use of school fund. The success of the government in reducing the population growth through its program, which requires every family to have only two children, also affected the declining number of students in several regencies/cities. In fact, the allocation of 20% national budget for education still has not reached students from low-income families and in remote areas, despite the components of teacher salary, operation, and welfare that should also be covered by such allocation. The results of a study conducted by Fink (2016) showed that most of the policy makers believe that money is a

supporting factor of regrouping. They learned that regrouping could give benefits for academicians and the society.

Such insufficient allocation of the educational fund can be improved by performing an efficient school management through a better teacher management and distribution. Johnes and Johnes (2009) stated that the effects of a better teacher management and distribution on the interagency fund in cost function are different based on the efficiency of the agencies. Educational efficiency shows a close relation between efficiency as a concept of educational economics and educational fee. Educational efficiency depicts the relation between educational input and output. An efficient system of education can be seen if the output is more than the input.

The measurement of educational efficiency can be done based on the class size, the students' achievement, teacher quality, parent involvement, and teacher professionalism. A study conducted by Hanushek and Woessmann (2017) found that there is little confidence that the amount of quantitative expense and the class size are the fundamental supporting factors for students' achievement, that the class size is an important variable only for the educational management that involve low-quality teachers. Jana, Arui, Dutta, and Sar (2016) said that the type of teacher-student ratio assessment is likely to be useful for school planning and management program in the future for schools in villages and to be comprehensive for a quality education. The results of research performed by Rodriguez, and Elbaum (2014) presented that the teacher-student ratio is the strongest predictor of the school effort to involve parents. Liu, Hallinger, and Feng (2016) pointed out that the model of leadership in education that is centered on professional teacher education, teacher beliefs, and teacher educational institution has a significant impact on teacher professional education. Fukumura (2017) stated that the efficiency analysis revealed that changes in educational reference and cost parameter could improve teacher welfare. Ingersoll and Collins (2017) mentioned that low-quality teachers and learning are the essential factors that lead to an insufficient school performance, besides, a lack of school accountability and control also leads to the issues of low-quality teachers and learning. Falch and Strøm (2005) mentioned that the teacher composition and school size would affect the tendency of teachers to stop working.

Based on the results of this research, the teacher-student ratio in most (75%) schools was 1:18, which is already sufficient. However, the principals always found that the schools were a lack of teachers, so they requested for new teachers to the department of education. The reason for such lack of teachers and demand for new teachers was still unclear, but teacher profession has become popular among job seekers since it offers a good prospect. Neugebauer (2014) explained that when the risk of unemployment was still high, the profession as a teacher did not offer many opportunities, especially for people with extrinsic motivations. Such a fact has changed significantly in

the last few years since teaching profession has become favorable.

A poor school planning is reflected when the principal still feels the lack of teachers and almost always request for new teachers, and it needs to be improved. The school planning is expected to be in agreement with the relevant function and level of the school. The purposes should be measurable and consistent with the educational policy. The purposes should meet the criteria to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed. A less comprehensive planning may be led by the internal factors of the school, as stated by Haller, Monk, Bear, Griffith, and Moss (1990) that the request for school renovation has triggered concern about the inability of a small-scale school to offer a comprehensive program.

An in-depth study is needed to assess the reason for regrouping schools within one complex and teacher redistribution, namely the inefficiency caused by small numbers of students, i.e. less than 60, in particular on the aspect of teaching quality of the teachers. Such study can prevent the neglect in educational quality that could happen instead of improving the inefficiency. As a matter of fact, school regrouping should be followed by a larger coverage of teacher redistribution to avoid a learning gap, so that it can lead to a quality teacher education established by the school organization. The results of a study performed by Wang, Wang, Li, and Li (2017) showed that teacher education is mainly constructed by the context of school organization. It indicates that teacher professional development is necessary for an equitable distribution of education and to eliminate learning gap. School organization is crucial, especially in the aspect of teacher distribution since teacher transfer and adaptation to the new workplace are become two determining factors. As revealed by Rust (1994), the urgency of the first teaching year of new teachers is significantly influenced by the workplace condition and climate of acceptance determined by the school principals.

Classroom or small-scale school management always appears to be correlated with inefficiency, as in the results of this study. However, there are some positive sides of small-scale schools or classes, i.e. collegiate teachers, more committed teachers, upholding more academic values, supporting students' individual characteristics, reducing retention rates, and increasing level of graduation (Kahne, Spote, Torre, and Easton, 2008). Small-scale schools in rural areas have a greater commitment of responsibility and respect towards the internal and external parties more than those in the major cities (Hargreaves, 2009). Multi-grade teaching in small-scale schools and as a result of the lack of teachers, if effectively realized, can support students' learning process (Smit, Beihammer, and Raggl, 2015:97). The reduction of the number of students can lead to betterment when some certain conditions have been met (Hattie, 2005).

In consideration of some results of studies mentioned above, it can be seen that the inefficient small-scale school or class management can be minimized through the optimization of collegiate

teachers, a higher commitment, academic focus, greater responsibility, multi-grade teaching, and improvements of certain conditions occurring at the schools. In other words, the teacher-student ratio is not the only contributing factor of the inefficient small-scale school management, other factors can even provide positive results, but unfortunately unnoticed. In the future, such other factors should be considered as comparisons when performing the policy of regrouping schools within one complex and teacher redistribution.

The regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution also showed that the capacity of the principals and teacher competency make greater contributions to the efficiency of small school management. Therefore, preparing competent teachers with an excellent career path, as well as competent principals became essential. Reeves and Lowenhaupt (2016) found that many teachers hope to take leadership roles that keep them in the classrooms, even before they officially work. It implies the need for teacher preparation program and teacher career path. Wallace, Sung, and Williams (2014) stated that the proactive classroom management is achieved through instructional interaction in which teachers function as a self-governing regulator who maintain students' involvement in the classroom activities by supporting the students via learning strategies, transfer of responsibility to students, physically or socially encourage the students as a learning support, and promote proportional behavior. Sedova, Sedlacek, and Svaricek, (2016) pointed out that the practice of dialogic teaching shows improvement in classroom discourse and the amount of students' talk and reasoning, and related to changes in teacher communication behavior.

The findings of this research also supported the facts of teaching hour inefficiency and excess due to the uneven teacher distribution. The fact that teachers more like to be placed in the cities, rather than rural or suburban areas, makes the teacher management and distribution difficult to be implemented since it often receives protests from teachers. Day and Hong, (2016) said that teachers who work in suburban schools need a good 'emotional resilience' since they have to manage themselves, give their students intensive motivation and challenging behavior while facing the challenge to improve their standards of teaching, learning, and learning achievement.

The insufficient number of teachers in schools located in remote areas results in the recruitment of contract teachers. In one side, such recruitments with the terms of honorary teachers, temporary teachers, and *wiyata bhakti* teachers in public schools in Indonesia can meet the needs of teachers but neglect the quality. Nowadays, there are 502, 304 teachers in Indonesia with those statuses. Chudgar, Chandra, and Razaque (2014) revealed that the practice of contract teacher recruitment has resulted in low-level, low-income, and young teacher cadres who are locally employed based on contracts. Such practices are considered as beneficial regarding access, cost efficiency, and local perspective of accountability. However, it has created a concern that such types of teacher recruitments are

likely not to be continuous so that it can have adverse effects on education distribution from the perspective of teacher distribution, moral and teaching professional status. Blazar and Kraft (2016) stated that teachers who can effectively improve students' test scores are not guaranteed to be able also to improve students' attitudes and behaviors as effectively.

Unwell-prepared teachers, especially for small-scale schools, develop sufficient educational quality. Besides the establishment of an effective group, the roles of senior teachers as mentors and facilitators in new teacher development are also important. A finding of Rosenbluh (2016) pointed out that teachers who are assigned as facilitators and to supervise other groups of teachers should maintain the ethical balance between formative and summative evaluations. Erickson, Noonan, Carter, McGurn, and Purifoy (2015) provided that an effective group at school should present the individuality of each member who observes the function of the group and supports the continuous improvement of the group, meaningful communication, and joint decision making.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The conclusions found in this research are that the regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher distribution is performed due to some reasons. First, the insufficient management of elementary education. There is a sufficient teacher-student ratio, but the principals still feel that there is a lack of teachers so that they demand new teachers. Second, the insufficient small-scale school management, some teachers have less teaching hours in junior high school level while there are teachers with excessive teaching hours in other educational units.

For future regrouping of schools within one complex and teacher redistribution, the allocation of educational fund should be developed through school management efficiency by performing better teacher management and distribution. The education efficiency also can be done through the class size, student achievement, teacher quality, parent involvement, and teacher professionalism. The planning of regrouping of schools in one complex and teacher redistribution is determined to be a relevant function and level to be implemented by schools. The purposes need to be measured and inconsistent with the educational policy. The purposes of quality should meet the criteria of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed. A large coverage of teacher redistribution should be performed while regrouping the schools within one complex to avoid learning gap and to facilitate an even distribution of quality teachers that is performed by school organization. The inefficient small-scale school or classroom can be minimized through the optimization of collegiate teachers who have more commitment, academic focus, and responsibility, multi-grade teaching, and improvement of certain conditions at schools. It is necessary to prepare competent teachers with good career paths, and principals with an excellent leadership skill.

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