



Does Certification Program Affect Teacher Performance? Evidence from Sungai Penuh City, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

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Teacher certification is one way to ensure that teachers have the knowledge, skills, and professional competencies necessary to provide quality teaching and achieve optimal learning outcomes. This study aims to describe the performance of certified and non-certified teachers and to compare the performance of teachers in both groups. The study used a survey design. Over a period of two months, 115 teachers from two schools in Sungai Penuh City, Jambi Province, participated in the survey. The data analysis techniques used were descriptive and Mann Whitney U Test. The findings of the study revealed that the performance of both certified and non-certified teachers was in the moderate category, but the average score of the certified group was higher than that of the non-certified group. Furthermore, statistical testing indicated that there was a difference in the performance of certified and non-certified teachers in both schools. The results of this study have important implications for improving teacher performance. Education policymakers at the central and regional levels need to develop strategic efforts to create quality teachers. Material rewards and opportunities for career development should be provided, and certification programs should be accompanied by teacher competence tests with accompanying sanctions and rewards.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are one of the human components in the learning process that play a role in the effort to form potential human resources in the field of development. In this case, teachers are not only educators who transfer knowledge but also educators who transfer values, provide guidance, and guide students in learning. They must base the learning process on basic values of life, not just material values but also transcendent values that can direct the educational process towards ideals that can be meaningful for everyone (Makhmudah, 2016). The quantity and performance of teachers will affect the success of students in learning, which will ultimately lead to an improvement in the quality of education.



Today, the term performance is always the focus of attention for every organization, company, non-governmental organization, educational institution, and even government institutions to measure the level of achievement of a program in accordance with the established objectives (Amtu et al., 2020). Performance evaluation requirements must meet certain measures or standards. In the Minister of National Education Regulation Number 35 of 2010 on Technical Guidelines for the Implementation of Functional Positions for Teachers and their Credit Points, it is stated that teacher performance is the result of an assessment of the process and work results achieved by teachers in carrying out their duties (Permendiknas, 2010). Teacher performance is the ability of a teacher to carry out learning tasks and be responsible for students under his/her guidance by improving their learning achievement (Gichuru & Ongus, 2016). Therefore, teacher performance can be interpreted as a condition that shows the ability of a teacher to carry out his/her duties in the madrasah and describes the teacher's actions during learning activities (Baluyos, Rivera, & Baluyos, 2019).

Teacher performance in Indonesia refers to 4 (four) competencies, including pedagogical competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence (UU Guru dan Dosen, 2005). Pedagogical competence is the ability to manage student learning; personality competence is a firm, noble, wise, and dignified personality that sets an example for students; professional competence is the ability to master subject matter broadly and deeply; and social competence is the teacher's ability to communicate and interact effectively and efficiently with students, fellow teachers, parents/guardians, and the surrounding community (UU Guru dan Dosen, 2005). These four competencies are a unit that must be mastered and implemented by all teachers in Indonesia.

The Indonesian government has made efforts to improve all of these competencies, for example, by providing opportunities to enhance qualifications as stipulated in Article 14 (1) of Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers (UU Guru dan Dosen, 2005). The development of teachers' professions and careers is aimed at enhancing their competence and performance in implementing the process of education and learning in and outside the classroom. According to Danim, efforts to improve competence and professionalism should be aligned with efforts to provide recognition, improve welfare, and protect teachers (Danim, 2010).

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However, in reality, problems regarding teacher performance still persist. According to a research, certification for middle school teachers has a very low correlation with improving professionalism and learning quality (Mukhtar & Luqman, 2020). The results indicate that teacher performance has not yet reached its desired level, particularly in terms of pedagogical skills. This study highlights the need for further improvement in order to enhance overall teacher effectiveness (Mukhtar & Luqman, 2020). Furthermore, a study has shown that despite the overall good performance of teachers, there are still some teachers who are indicated to have low performance (Russamsi, Hadian, & Nurlaeli, 2020). The low performance is also associated with teachers' readiness to conduct online learning, as many of them still lack preparedness (Meditamar, Sujadi, Putra, & Wisnarni, 2022). Teacher performance has also been examined based on their educational background and employment status, where those with a relevant educational background and civil servant status demonstrate better performance, although there are still teachers who perform poorly, particularly those teaching subjects unrelated to their educational background (Hidayat, Badrujaman, & Suryarsi, 2019). Furthermore, based on observations made by the researcher in one junior high school in Sungai Penuh City, Jambi Province, there are still symptoms of low performance among certified teachers, such as teachers who do not create lesson plans, inadequate classroom management, the use of unvaried teaching methods, monotonous use of learning resources and media, and inadequate assessment methods.

One way the government is addressing the issue is by improving the welfare of teachers through the provision of certification allowances, with the hope that this will lead to an improvement in their competence (Budiman, 2018; Dewanto, Erviantono, & Winaya, 2016; Hernández-Perlines, Ariza-Montes, Han, & Law, 2019; Susilowati, Sutanto, & Daharti, 2013; Zulkifli, Darmawan, & Sutrisno, 2014). A study shows that teacher certification significantly contributes to teacher performance, meaning that the implementation of teacher certification has a tangible role in achieving teacher performance (Budiman, 2018). In line with these findings, a study found that work motivation and certification play an important role in efforts to improve teacher welfare and performance. Teacher performance can be predicted through teacher welfare (Zulkifli et al., 2014). Furthermore, other research shows that there is an influence of certification on work motivation and job satisfaction, and that there is also an influence of work motivation and

job satisfaction on the performance of counselors in specific performance evaluations ((Kanto, 2015).

Teacher certification is a breakthrough in the education sector aimed at improving the quality and professionalism of teachers, so that in the future, all teachers are expected to have a certificate as a license or permit to teach. Through the teacher certification program, the government is making efforts to improve the quality of education. Mulyasa explains that teacher certification aims to obtain good and professional teachers who have the competence to carry out the functions and objectives of the school, especially the educational goals in general, in accordance with the needs of society and the demands of the times (Mulyasa, 2015). Several indicators that can be used to measure the characteristics of a competent professional teacher include: (1) the ability to develop good responsibility; (2) the ability to perform roles and functions accurately; (3) the ability to work towards achieving educational goals in the school; (4) the ability to perform roles and functions in classroom learning (Mulyasa, 2015).

According to Fajar, certification plays a role in helping teachers better understand their rights and obligations under Law No. 14/2005 article 14 paragraph 1, which includes: (1) earning income above the minimum living needs and social welfare guarantee; (2) receiving promotions and rewards in accordance with job duties and performance; (3) obtaining protection in carrying out duties and rights to intellectual property; (4) having opportunities to improve competencies; (5) obtaining and utilizing learning facilities and infrastructure to support professional tasks; (6) having freedom to assess and participate in determining the graduation, awards, and/or sanctions of students in accordance with educational standards, teacher code of ethics, and laws and regulations; (7) obtaining a sense of security and safety in carrying out duties; (8) having freedom to associate in professional organizations; (9) having opportunities to play a role in determining education policies; (10) having opportunities to develop and improve academic qualifications and competencies; and/or (11) receiving professional training and development in their field (Fajar, 2006).

This research aims to describe the performance of certified and non-certified teachers and compare the performance of both groups. This topic is important to study because, thus far, the teacher certification program in Sungai Penuh has not been evaluated, and the impact on teacher performance remains unknown. In fact, as previously

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mentioned, the issue of low performance is even experienced by some certified teachers. This research can provide a strong basis for developing better education policies. The findings can assist the government and educational institutions in designing more effective certification programs, improving evaluation processes, and formulating policies that support the professional development of teachers. The results of this research are also crucial for ensuring the sustainability and relevance of certification in addressing changing educational needs.

METHOD

Research Design and Respondents

We conducted a survey research. Survey research is a form of quantitative research that involves collecting data from a population sample using standardized and structured research instruments such as questionnaires or interviews with the same questions for all respondents. The purpose of survey research is to collect data that can be measured quantitatively and interpreted statistically (Creswell, 2019). The quality of survey research depends greatly on a good research instrument design, representative sample selection, and appropriate data analysis. In addition, researchers should also pay attention to ethical issues in survey research such as respondent privacy and data security (Creswell, 2019). The population of this study consists of 160 teachers from Junior High Schools 1 and 2 in Sungai Penuh. The sample size was determined based on the Kretjie and Morgan table, resulting in a sample of 115 individuals (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Subsequently, using the simple random sampling technique, we selected the participating teachers to take part in the survey. The number of certified and uncertified teachers is described in the Table 1. Data collection for this study was conducted from November to December 2022.

Table 1

Research Population by Category (Certified and Uncertified)

School	Category	Number	Percentage
School-A	Certified	34	29.56
	Non-Certified	29	25.22
School-B	Certified	28	24.35
	Non-Certified	24	20.87
Total		115	100

Research Scale

The researcher developed a teacher performance scale. The stages involved in creating the scale were: first, reviewing theories related to the variable of teacher performance. Second, determining the dimensions and indicators of teacher performance variables. Fourth, compiling question items and determining the measuring scale. The question items were developed from the indicators of each dimension of the research variable. Each statement item was accompanied by its measuring scale. Fifth, conducting validity and reliability tests. Out of 52 statements regarding teacher teaching performance, 18 questions were found to be invalid. Invalid questions were dropped since each valid item represented an indicator. Testing using Cronbach's Alpha resulted in a score of 0.86.

Data Analysis

We utilized descriptive analysis techniques, including mean, standard deviation, and percentages, to describe the performance of teachers in each group. Hypothesis testing was conducted to examine the difference in performance between certified and uncertified teachers using the Mann-Whitney U test. The null hypothesis of the Mann-Whitney U test (H_0) states that both groups come from the same population. In other words, it is assumed that the two independent groups are homogeneous and have the same distribution. The two variables corresponding to the two groups are represented by two cumulative continuous distributions (Nachar, 2008). The Mann-Whitney U test was employed because the data being tested did not follow a normal distribution, leading us to choose a non-parametric statistical analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the verification of research data, all data obtained from administering the questionnaire to the respondents were deemed suitable for analysis, which amounted to 115 data points. The description of the performance of certified teachers can be seen in the Table 2.

Table 2
Mean and Standard Deviation of Performance of Certified Teachers

N	Score			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD
62	84	138	111.55	10.79

From the Table 2, it can be seen that out of the total sample of 62 teachers, the minimum

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score obtained is 84, and the maximum score is 138. The Table also shows that the mean score is 111.55 and the Standard Deviation (SD) is 10.79. Based on these results, it can be determined that the teaching performance of certified teachers is in the "medium" category. A description of the performance of non-certified teachers can be seen in the Table 3:

Table 3
Mean and Standard Deviation of Performance of Non-Certified Teachers

N	Score			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD
53	86	126	103.87	10.73

From Table 3, it can be seen that out of a total sample of 53 teachers, the minimum score obtained was 86, and the maximum score was 126. The table also shows the mean score of 103.87 and Standard Deviation (SD) of 10.73. Based on these calculations, it can be determined that the teaching performance of uncertified teachers is in the medium category. Descriptive comparison regarding the performance of certified and non-certified teachers can be observed in Figure 1.

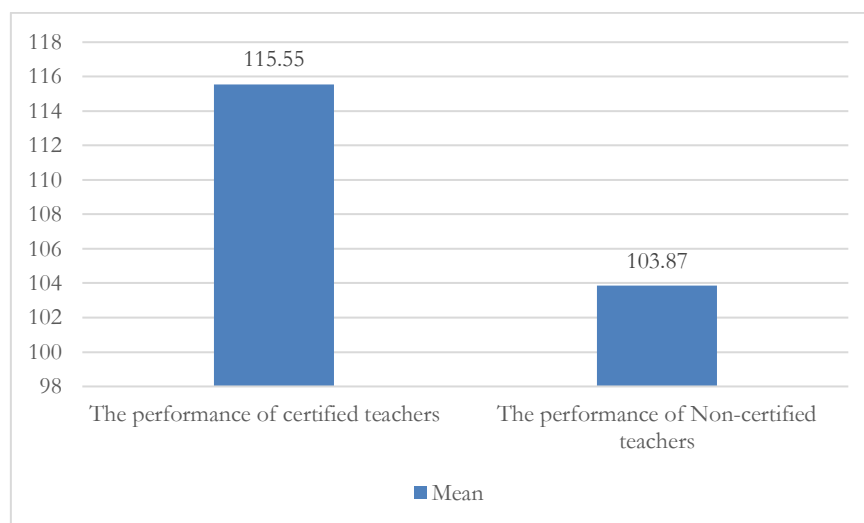


Figure 1. Comparison regarding the performance of certified and non-certified teachers

Hypothesis testing was performed using the Mann-Whitney U data analysis technique. This test was chosen because the requirements for data analysis were not met. The results of the analysis of the data showed that the frequency distribution of the data to be tested was not normal (the teaching performance data of uncertified teachers), but the

data were homogeneous. The hypothesis proposed in this study is that there is a difference in teaching performance between certified and uncertified teachers. The data obtained were tested using the SPSS 25.00 statistical program. The results of the hypothesis testing are shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Difference in Teaching Performance between Certified and Uncertified Teachers

Test	Score
Mann-Whitney U	1004.000
Wilcoxon W	2435.000
Z	-3.587
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Table 4 shows the value of U as 1004 and the value of W as 2435. When converted to the Z value, it is -3.587. The Sig or P Value is $0.000 < 0.05$. If the p value < the critical limit of 0.05, there is a significant difference between the two groups, which means that H1 is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a difference in teaching performance between certified and non-certified teachers.

Based on Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, it is stated that the purpose of national education is to develop the potential of learners to become individuals who have faith and devotion to the One and Only God, noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (Sisdiknas, 2003). This goal is so complex that the human components involved in the education process must have good competence. Teachers, as the spearhead of the learning process, are required to have four competencies as stipulated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. The indicators of each competency are explained in the Minister of National Education Regulation Number 16 of 2007 concerning Academic Qualifications and Competencies of Teachers.

The research results showed that there were differences in performance between certified and uncertified teachers with a Sig Value or P Value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Based on the mean, it was found that the performance of certified teachers was higher than uncertified teachers, but the achievement of performance between certified and uncertified teachers was in the same category, namely middle range.

Research conducted on teachers in North Sumatra, Indonesia showed that teachers who have an educational certificate have good performance (Sitorus & Jamil, 2015). Another study revealed that certification and work motivation have an impact on

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performance, both partially and jointly (Ristianey, Harapan, & Destiniar, 2021). A study revealed that there is a significant indirect influence between teacher certification and teacher performance in terms of leader-member exchange (Diantoro, Yusuf, & Basrowi, 2022). Furthermore, research results show that the performance of certified teachers is better than uncertified teachers. Other studies also show similar findings (Budiman, 2018; Daud, 2020; Meditamar et al., 2022; E Sujadi, 2017; Eko Sujadi, 2018; Eko Sujadi, Meditamar, Wahab, & Utama, 2019; Susilowati et al., 2013; Zulkifli et al., 2014). Teacher certification can improve the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 1999). In addition, research by Goldhaber et al. showed that teacher certification can affect teacher performance in terms of improving the ability to plan teaching and teach effectively, as well as increasing student participation and parent involvement in education (Goldhaber, Lavery, & Theobald, 2015).

However, it should be noted whether the performance displayed by teachers is due to the incentives/allowances received every month, due to the competencies they possess, or a combination of both. Certainly, this requires further research. The teaching certificate is formal evidence of recognition given to teachers and lecturers as professionals professional (UU Guru dan Dosen, 2005). To obtain this certificate, teachers must attend the Professional Teacher Education (PPG) program organized by the LPTK. However, the problem is that often this program is only used as a formal effort to pass certification without consistent efforts to apply the skills acquired during the education process. There are other studies that reveal that certified teachers have not yet shown expected performance (Kartowagiran, 2011; Koswara, Suryana, & Triatna, 2009).

There needs to be cooperation among all units to improve the quality/performance of teachers in Indonesia. Both the central government and several local governments have actually allocated funds for improving the academic qualifications of teachers, one of which is in the form of scholarships. For example, at the central level, the government provides scholarship assistance to Permanent Teachers at schools within the Ministry of Education and Culture environment who already have a Unique Teacher and Education Personnel Number through the LPDP (NUPTK) (LPDP, 2020). Specifically for Madrasah teachers under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion, there is also an S-2 scholarship program for teachers and prospective madrasah supervisors (Pendis, 2019). This program generally only attracts the interest of young teachers, while

senior teachers are still reluctant to participate in this program due to various factors. In addition to the scholarship mechanism, teacher competency improvement is also carried out through technical guidance patterns conducted by the Center for Teacher and Education Personnel Development and Empowerment (P4TK), the Education Quality Assurance Institute (LPMP), the Subject Teacher Forum (MGMP), and the Teacher Working Group (KKG).

In addition, it is necessary to consistently implement the Indonesian Golden Generation Roadmap 2045. This roadmap aims to provide a future perspective for educational development, which is to realize a high-quality, advanced, independent, and modern Indonesian society, as well as to increase the dignity and honor of the nation (Kemendikbud, 2017). To form this golden generation, it is important to improve the competence of teachers. The roadmap states that policies and regulations for teachers should be in place to ensure that teachers and educators are authorized, recruited, and paid adequately, trained professionally, motivated, employed fairly and efficiently throughout the education system, and supported by good, efficient, and effective resources (Kemendikbud, 2017).

Although this research was conducted without significant obstacles, there are several weaknesses/limitations of this study. First, the study should be carried out on a larger sample size, so that it can be used as an accurate basis for policy-making. Second, the analysis conducted was not in-depth, for example, by performing multivariate analysis based on demographic variables. Third, data collection was limited to the use of the research scale; therefore, this study should be conducted using a mixed method approach, so that the resulting data is more credible.

CONCLUSION

Teacher certification is a policy that can enhance the professionalism and credibility of teachers. It can help teachers to receive recognition, promotion, and acknowledgement from relevant parties in the field of education. This study concludes that the performance of certified and uncertified teachers falls into the moderate category, but the average scores of the certified teacher group are higher than those of the uncertified group. Furthermore, statistical tests show that there are differences in the performance of certified and uncertified teachers in both schools.

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The findings of this study have important implications for improving teacher performance. The government should provide extrinsic rewards in the form of salaries and allowances to teachers who are truly competent and show good performance. Other forms of rewards include opportunities for career development and recognition. There needs to be a larger allocation of budget for teacher education, especially professional education. Competency tests for teachers, accompanied by appropriate sanctions and rewards in accordance with Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, also need to be consistently implemented.

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