

Implementation of Field Experience Practice Activities in Shaping the Professionalism of Prospective Teachers at Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu Vocational School

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Field Experience Practice (PPL) activities in developing the professionalism of prospective teachers at SMK Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu. This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive-reflective design. The subjects were eight students from the English Language Education, Science Education, Islamic Religious Education, and Islamic Education Management study programs who participated in the PPL and acted as reflective researchers. Data were obtained through participant observation, learning tool documentation, reflective journals, and group discussions. Then, they were analyzed qualitatively based on indicators of pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies. The results indicate that the implementation of PPL significantly contributed to improving students' abilities to systematically design, implement, and evaluate learning. Furthermore, the PPL activities strengthened mastery of teaching materials, developed communication and collaboration skills, and fostered a sense of responsibility, discipline, and professional ethics as prospective educators. The ongoing reflection process also deepened students' understanding of the meaning of teacher professionalism. Thus, PPL can be viewed as a strategic tool in preparing prospective teachers who are competent, professional, and possess integrity.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a key pillar in building civilization and the progress of a nation (Tilaar, 2012). Through education, the quality of human resources can be improved, enabling them to compete and contribute positively to the life of society, the nation, and the state (Sari, 2022). In the educational process, teachers play a very strategic role as they spearhead the implementation of learning in schools (Sardiman, 2018). Teachers are not only tasked with delivering material, but also with guiding, directing, developing character, and serving as role models for students.

To become a professional teacher, mastering the theory learned in lectures is not sufficient. Prospective teachers need real-world experience in real-life learning situations. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, practice is the actual implementation of what is stated in theory (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 2016). Similarly, Komaruddin states that practice is a way of implementing what is stated in theory in real-life situations (Komaruddin, 2010). From these two definitions, it can be understood that practice is the direct implementation of concepts or theories in real-life situations.

In the context of teacher education, the implementation of theory into practice is realized through Field Experience Practice (PPL). This program is designed as a training and development tool so that students can integrate knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes into direct educational practice in schools (Wulandari, 2023).

Normatively, the demands for teacher professionalism are stipulated in Minister of National Education Regulation Number 16 of 2007, which states that teachers are required to possess four basic competencies (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional, 2007): pedagogical, personality, social, and professional competencies. Pedagogical competency relates to the ability to manage student learning. Personality competency reflects a firm, stable, mature, wise, and authoritative attitude and personality. Social competency relates to the ability to communicate and interact effectively. Meanwhile, professional competency requires teachers to master learning materials broadly and in-depth according to their field of expertise.

Professional competency is a crucial aspect because it requires teachers not only to understand theoretical concepts but also to be able to implement them in effective and meaningful learning. Professional teachers are required to be able to deliver material in their field of expertise accurately, systematically, and relevant to students' needs.

In line with this, Mulyasa mentioned several indicators of teachers who are considered professionally competent (Mulyasa, 2013), namely: (1) able to develop responsibilities well, (2) able to carry out their roles and functions appropriately, (3) able to work to realize educational goals in schools, and (4) able to carry out their roles and functions in classroom learning. These indicators show that teacher professionalism is not only measured by mastery of material, but also by commitment, responsibility, and the ability to carry out tasks optimally.

Field Experience Practice is a crucial stage in the process of developing these competencies. Through Field Experience Practice, students learn to develop learning tools, such as Lesson Plans (RPPs), teaching materials, and learning media tailored to student needs. Furthermore, students practice classroom management, selecting appropriate learning methods, evaluating learning outcomes, and establishing effective communication with students and teachers.

The implementation of Field Experience Practice in Vocational High Schools (SMK) has its own characteristics because SMKs are oriented towards developing students' skills and work readiness (Sudira, 2016). Therefore, learning in SMKs requires a contextual, applicable, and relevant approach to the world of work. Field Experience Practice students are required to adapt learning strategies to the diverse characteristics of their students, including academic abilities, interests, and social backgrounds.

The group Field Experience Practice activity, conducted by eight students from the departments of English Language Education, Science Education, Islamic Religious Education, and Islamic Education Management, provided a valuable platform for collaboration. This diversity of academic backgrounds provided an opportunity to share experiences, discuss, and collaborate on various educational tasks. This collaboration not only improves academic competency but also trains communication, leadership, and teamwork skills.

During the internship program at SMK Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu, students are directly involved in various school activities, both in the learning process and administrative activities. Interactions with mentor teachers and students provide experiences that cannot be gained solely through theoretical learning on campus. Students learn to understand the realities of education in the field, including challenges in classroom management, student motivation, and the application of discipline and professional ethics.

Thus, the implementation of the Field Experience Practice program at SMK Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu is a concrete step in shaping the professionalism of prospective teachers. The experience gained during this activity is expected to foster a sense of responsibility, enhance pedagogical,

professional, social, and personal competencies, and prepare students to become competent educators with integrity and prepared to face the dynamics of the future world of education.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-reflective design. The aim is to analyze the implementation of Field Experience Practice (PPL) activities in developing the professionalism of prospective teachers. The research was conducted at SMK Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu, the location for the PPL. In line with the research background, which emphasizes the importance of developing pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies, this study focuses on how the PPL implementation process contributes to strengthening these four competencies through real-life experiences in the school environment.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in the concept of teacher professionalism as stipulated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers (Undang-Undang RI, 2005), which emphasizes that professional teachers must possess pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies. These four competencies serve as indicators for analysis in this study. Furthermore, this study also refers to the theory of teacher professionalism proposed by (Kunandar, 2014), which states that professionalism is formed through the integration of material mastery, pedagogical skills, personality maturity, and the ability to interact socially in the educational environment.

The reflective approach in this research aligns with Kolb's Experiential Learning theory (Kolb, 1984), which asserts that effective learning occurs through a cycle of concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation. In the context of PPL, students gain direct teaching experience (concrete experience), reflect through journals and discussions (reflective observation), relate experiences to learned theory (abstract conceptualization), and make improvements in subsequent teaching practices (active experimentation). Thus, PPL is understood as an experiential learning process that contributes to the development of prospective teachers' professionalism.

In this study, eight PPL students acted as both researchers and implementers of the practical activities. Students were not positioned as research objects, but rather as subjects who actively observed, reflected, and analyzed the implementation of their PPL program. The reflective approach was chosen because the development of teacher professionalism cannot only be measured quantitatively but must be understood through direct experience, social interactions, and the dynamics of classroom learning.

The research was conducted during the PPL implementation period, starting with initial observations of school conditions, developing learning materials, and practicing teaching in the classroom according to each subject area (English Language Education, Science Education, Islamic Religious Education, and Islamic Education Management), through to the final evaluation and reflection stage. The research setting included the classroom as the center of learning activities, the teachers' lounge as a space for professional interaction, and school administration activities involving students. The school environment is viewed as an integral space for professional character formation, as teacher professionalism is formed not only through teaching activities but also through discipline, responsibility, communication, and work ethics.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through direct observation of learning implementation, interactions with students, and reflections on experiences recorded in each student's daily journal. Secondary data were obtained from supporting documents such as Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP), teaching modules, evaluation sheets from mentor teachers, and documentation of school activities.

Data collection techniques included participant observation, documentation, and reflective group discussions. Participant observation allowed students as researchers to directly observe classroom dynamics, student responses, and the effectiveness of the learning methods used. Documentation was used to strengthen empirical data obtained in the field, while reflective group discussions were conducted periodically to evaluate shared experiences and identify effective learning patterns.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, presentation of data in descriptive narrative form, and drawing conclusions. The collected data were grouped based on indicators of teacher professionalism, which refer to the four core teacher competencies. Next, the data were analyzed to examine the relationship between the implementation of PPL activities and the development of these competencies. The analysis process was conducted collaboratively to ensure comprehensive interpretation and reduce individual subjectivity.

To ensure data validity, this study employed technical triangulation and source triangulation. Technical triangulation was conducted by comparing observation results, written reflections, and learning documentation, while source triangulation was conducted through confirmation with the supervising teacher as the field supervisor. These steps ensure that the research results have credibility and validity that can be scientifically justified.

With this research design, the implementation of Field Experience Practice activities is analyzed systematically as a strategic means of shaping the professionalism of prospective teachers, as well as a form of implementation of experience-based learning that strengthens pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research results indicate that the implementation of PPL plays a strategic role in shaping the professionalism of prospective teachers (Hidayah, 2022). This finding aligns with the concept of teacher professionalism as stipulated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, which states that professional teachers must possess pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies. Professionalism is not formed instantly, but rather through a continuous learning process and direct experience in the field. In this context, PPL serves as a space for the integrated actualization of these four competencies.

The Role of PPL Participants

PPL participants play the role of primary implementers of the learning process and reflective subjects in the development of professionalism. Students not only teach but also develop learning materials, manage classes, conduct evaluations, and reflect on the learning outcomes. This role aligns with Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning theory, which emphasizes that effective learning occurs through concrete experiences that are systematically reflected upon.

From a pedagogical competency perspective, students demonstrated improvement in designing and implementing learning that is appropriate to the characteristics of their students. Experience in dealing with diverse classroom conditions trains students to choose varied and adaptive learning strategies. This reinforces Mulyasa's opinion that pedagogical competence develops through hands-on practice in managing learning.

In terms of professional competence, students increasingly understand the importance of in-depth mastery of the material before engaging in learning. Challenges in the form of critical questions from students encourage students to expand their references and improve their intellectual readiness. Kunandar emphasized that professional teachers must possess a broad and in-depth mastery of the material as a basis for academic credibility.

The Role of the Supervisor Teacher

Supervisor teachers play a strategic role as mentors and field supervisors. Supervisor teachers guide students in developing lesson plans, selecting learning methods, managing classes, and evaluating learning. Through constructive supervision, students receive feedback that fosters continuous improvement.

Theoretically, the role of the supervising teacher aligns with the concept of academic supervision, which aims to improve the quality of learning through professional development. Hidayat stated that systematic guidance from senior teachers can accelerate the development of prospective teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies. Thus, the supervising teacher functions as a facilitator in the development of professionalism in the field (Hidayat, 2022).

The Role of the Supervising Lecturer

The supervising lecturer plays a role in providing academic guidance and ensuring that the implementation of the PPL aligns with the objectives of the teacher education curriculum. The lecturer helps students connect practical experiences with the theory learned in lectures, thus integrating concepts and practice.

From a teacher education perspective, collaboration between the supervising lecturer and the supervising teacher creates a comprehensive development system. The supervising lecturer plays a role in strengthening the conceptual and reflective aspects, while the supervising teacher strengthens the practical and technical aspects in the field. The synergy between the two strengthens the development of holistic competencies.

PPL Implementation Activities

PPL implementation activities at SMK Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu include several stages, namely:

1. Initial observation, to understand student characteristics, school culture, and learning systems.
2. Preparation of learning materials, such as lesson plans, teaching modules, and learning media.
3. Teaching practice, in accordance with each student's field of expertise.
4. Learning evaluation, through assessment of learning outcomes and reflection on the learning process.
5. Involvement in school activities, both administrative and non-academic.
6. Reflection and group discussions, as a means of self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

These stages demonstrate that PPL is not simply teaching practice, but a structured and systematic professional learning process.

Author's Analysis

Based on research findings, the author analyzes that the implementation of PPL at SMK Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu effectively integrates theory and practice in developing the professionalism of prospective teachers. Direct classroom experience strengthens students' understanding of the meaning of teacher competency as stipulated in Law Number 14 of 2005.

Furthermore, individual reflection and group discussions demonstrate that teacher professionalism is formed through a cycle of experience, evaluation, and continuous improvement, as explained in Experiential Learning theory. Students not only learn to teach but also learn to become responsible, disciplined, communicative, and ethical educators.

Social competence develops through active interactions with students, mentor teachers, and other educational staff. Meanwhile, personal competence is reflected in an increased sense of responsibility and professional awareness. Thus, PPL serves as a real-world laboratory for developing teacher character and competency.

Overall, the implementation of PPL demonstrates that field practice experiences play a central role in developing prospective teachers who are professional, competent, and possess integrity. PPL is not only an academic obligation, but also a means of self-transformation into a teacher who is ready to face challenges.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of Field Experience Practice (PPL) activities at SMK Muhammadiyah 14 Siabu plays a significant role in shaping the professionalism of prospective teachers. PPL serves not only as a teaching practice activity but also as a comprehensive learning process that integrates lecture theory with real-life experiences in the school environment.

Through PPL activities, students experience significant development in four core teacher competencies: pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies. Pedagogical competency develops through the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning systematically and adaptively. Professional competency is strengthened through increased mastery of teaching

materials and academic readiness to face classroom dynamics. Social competency is reflected in the ability to communicate and interact effectively with students, mentor teachers, and other school members. Meanwhile, personality competency is evident in attitudes of responsibility, discipline, work ethic, and awareness of one's role as an educator.

The ongoing process of individual reflection and group discussions during PPL contributes to the development of students' character and professional identity as prospective teachers. Thus, PPL can be seen as a strategic stage in an effective teacher education system in preparing prospective teachers who are competent, professional, and ready to face the challenges of the world of education.

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