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The analysis of significant differences based on teacher demographic variables in a mandatory teacher professional development program: Implementation in a less privileged region of Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the significant differences based on teacher demographic variables in a mandatory teacher professional development (PD) program. The examined demographic variables are gender, age, academic qualification, years of teaching experience, employment status, and certification status. This information was measured through a well-developed questionnaire named the Targeted Professional Development Program. The study was conducted to 356 primary school teachers in Bima, Indonesia. Results showed that teacher perception of mandatory PD was only differed based on gender with t(354) = -1.87, p=.01. No significant differences were found pertaining teachers' age, academic qualification, years of teaching experience, employment status, and certification status. Non-significant differences in mandatory PD perception based on teacher demography show that Indonesian mandatory PD has achieved its objectives in implementing a large-scale uniformed government PD program to support all Indonesian teachers. The only significant difference is shown through teachers' gender, indicating that any improvement plan on future mandatory PD designs can commence by improving benefits for both male and female teachers.

Keywords: teacher perception, mandatory PD, significant differences, teacher demographic variables

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher PD programs are important system activities that may enhance teacher learning and improvement of educational practice. Almost 90% of teachers around the world have participated in some form of PD program over an 18-month period, including a minimum of one day per month in a PD

program course (OECD, 2011). PD programs have appeared in several categories in the literature, including more common ones being teacher training, professional learning, in-service training, staff development, and teacher learning (Rahman, 2016). Formal PD program activities are commonly delivered through workshops and seminars presented on in-service days, positioning teachers as passive participants with minimal interaction to support their learning (Kensington-Miller, 2004). On the contrary, informal PD program activities are more varied because they engage teachers in different activities that are embedded in their everyday work lives (Avalos, 2010). This view of PD program experiences suggests that there is a dichotomy in teacher PD program activities between formal and informal PD, or mandatory PD and voluntary PD.

However, mandatory PD has long been criticised because of its inability to facilitate teacher learning. It is often associated with conscripted activities that have minimum impact on teacher learning and development (Hunzicker, 2010). This is because it is not built on teacher perceived needs and motivation, thereby reducing their likelihood to implement any new knowledge and skills (Cave & Mulloy, 2010). Even so, the use and implementation of mandatory PD programs is common amongst educational bureaucracies in an effort to ensure uniformity of practices and cost efficiencies. Mandatory PD is still implemented in some regions due to limited resources available for teacher learning and the absence of teacher motivation to be developed independently. An informal, voluntary PD program is not a choice for teachers in many less advantaged contexts where mandatory PD programs predominate. These mandatory programs aim to deepen teachers' content knowledge and develop new skills to ensure they continually meet the teaching standards set by the government.

Moreover, the extant literature has emerged from inconclusive results based on differences in participant demography and study sites. Participant demography in an educationally less privileged area or Asian community has identified specific patterns in their perception of PD program (Roustaee, et al., 2015), utilisation of sources of efficacy information (Klassen, 2004; Klassen, et al., 2011), and teacher self-efficacy beliefs' level (Berger, et al., 2018; Hemmings & Kay, 2009). Analyses generated from participant demography in the present study is expected to advance knowledge in the existing

literature, which is mostly based on Western communities or developed countries.

Demographic characteristics examined in this research are teachers' gender, age, academic qualification, years of teaching experience, employment status, and certification status. The present study aims to find significant differences in teacher perception of the mandatory PD program based on each demographic characteristic.

II. Literature Review

In this study, group differences were examined by teachers' gender, age, academic qualification, years of teaching experience, employment status, and certification status. The *t*-test was performed to examine the differences influenced by participants' gender; and ANOVA was used to identify differences influenced by teachers' age, academic qualification, years of teaching experience, employment status, and certification status. Significant differences found on these demographic variables were measured through a well-established questionnaire named the Targeted Professional Development Scale (TPDS) (Main & Pendergast, 2017). TPDS was used to evaluate the effectiveness of a large-scale mandatory PD program delivered to 258 public schools in Queensland, Australia; it was considered to fit the aim of the present study in investigating nationwide mandatory PD in Indonesia.

From decades of research on teacher PD programs, factors have been highlighted on the success of PD designs (Desimone, 2009). A vast array of studies constitutes what is currently referred as the five key features, which are ready to move teacher PD program impact studies from reports about teacher satisfaction to actual results by which they work. The present study uses the proposed consensus, which conveys five critical features of PD program effectiveness, as a stable benchmark to investigate teacher perceptions after completing a mandatory PD program. It aims to advance the current knowledge about the impact of Indonesian teacher participation in a PD program.

TPDS was based on Desimone's (2009) key features of an effective teacher PD program, which included close engagement with specific literature. TPDS consists of five factors termed 'five key features' (Desimone, 2009): (i) content focus; (ii) active learning; (iii) coherence; (iv) duration; and (v) collective participation. The use of consistent terms provides guidance as a 'checking list' to see if a particular PD implementation has incorporated the keys to effectiveness. This can advance the

implementation of a more targeted PD program because any intervention for improvement can follow the guidance (Albers & Pattuwage, 2017). Such consistency suggests that TPDS can be used to study the implementation of any PD program regardless of their type.

To date, there is no known study that has used TPDS to identify teacher perceptions after their completion of a particular PD program. The examined demographic variables are described in the following sections.

A. Gender

Significant differences in teacher perception of PD programs based on their gender is evident and empirically guided by the data. Research have shown that male teachers benefit more than their female counterparts from the PD program experience (Johnson & Johnson, 2002; Li, 2016); males claim to face less barriers when implementing their obtained knowledge (Mahdi & Al-Dera, 2013). Male teachers also showed more confidence in mastering newly obtained knowledge in the PD program compared with female teachers who reported feeling incapable.

However, results from these studies are ambiguous since they do not specify the PD program structure. This deserves attention because the PD program structure partly influences the learning process faced by participants, in which male and female participants have different approaches to learning (Roustaee, et al., 2015). The explicit inclusion of the PD program structure in this study may advance knowledge about the significant different approaches made by each gender on teacher perception of mandatory PD.

In this study, ANOVA was performed on the variables of teacher perception of mandatory PD by teachers' age (older teacher, mid-age teacher, younger teacher). The item of age in the questionnaire was initially open-ended, showing that the participant's age ranged between 22 and 60 years old. The research investigator divided the responses based on two primary laws: (i) Indonesian Law on Teacher Minimum Academic Qualification Number 14 Year 2005 Verse 8; and (ii) Indonesian Law on Civil Servant Number 5 Year 2014 Verse 87 and 90. The first law stipulated that Indonesian primary school teachers must have completed a bachelor degree or four-year diploma, typically achieved at the age of 21 or 22 years old. The second law regulates that the retirement age for Indonesian teachers is 60 years old.

Hence, the responses of teachers' age were divided into three groups with an interval range of 12 years. Younger teachers are placed in Group 1 (22-34 years old), mid-age teachers belong in Group 2 (35-47 years old), and older teacher belong in Group 3 (48-60 years old).

B. Age

A growing body of research has reported that older and younger teachers hold different perceptions about any given PD program. The difference was mostly influenced by contents of the PD program. Older teachers were interested in activities that enhance their ability in coping with technology (Saunders, 2014; Powers, et al., 2016), while younger teachers expected the PD program to add knowledge to their minimal teaching experience (Heyward, et al., 2018; Hursen, 2012).

However, most studies were based on teacher PD program activities, not the overall program design, where teacher participation may have been guided by personal need. There is a call for an investigation into significant differences in teacher perception of mandatory PD based on age since such PD program obligates teacher participation, especially because mandatory PD is not specifically designed to fit a teacher's personal needs.

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C. Academic qualifications

Teacher academic qualifications are shown to be fundamental to teachers' perception towards a PD program. Research shows that teachers of higher academic

qualifications have a better attitude in participating in PD program activities (Alwaleedi, 2017; Tajeddin & Khodaverdi, 2011). Teachers of lower academic qualifications, on the other hand, tend to reluctantly embark on a PD program because of the gap between their existing knowledge and PD program activities (Kruijer, 2010). It is visible that teachers of higher academic qualifications are capable of relating PD program knowledge to their existing knowledge, which increases their enthusiasm.

However, the previous study was mostly conducted in developed countries that provided systematic teacher education programs to build on teachers' career. Teacher education programs remain a problem in developing countries because they do not offer sufficient useful knowledge (Reid & Kleinhenz, 2015) and are exacerbated by the recruitment process of novice teachers (Bashiruddin, 2018). Due to the shortage of staff, most educationally less privileged regions hire teachers who are often not properly trained to enter the teaching profession (Al-Samarrai, et al., 2013). There is a need to investigate the difference in teacher perception of mandatory PD in a less privileged region based on teacher academic qualifications. In particular, there were cases where people chose teaching as a backup job, which may have differed their perception of the given PD program.

In this study, ANOVA was performed on four groups of teachers based on their academic qualification: (i) Group 1: High school/vocational school graduates; (ii) Group 2: Diploma graduates; (iii) Group 3: Bachelor graduates; and (iv) Group 4: Master graduates. All groups were modified based on participants' reports where none held a doctorate degree, and some reported to hold high school/vocational school certificates.

The group of diploma graduates refer to teachers who graduated from one-year (Diploma I), two-years (Diploma II), three-years (Diploma III), or four-years (Diploma IV) of teaching. Diploma graduates differ from bachelor graduates in Indonesia.

***D.* Years of teaching experience**

Previous studies have emerged from inconclusive results in the difference in teacher perception of the given PD program based on their years of teaching experience. It was shown that teachers demonstrated gradual improvement in their approach toward PD program activities within a five-year interval (Hursen, 2012). There was a significant difference between teachers with more than 21 years of teaching experience

and teachers with 1-5 years. On the one hand, teachers with 6-10, 11-15 and 16-20 years of teaching experience showed gradual improvement, although non-significant. On the other hand, teachers with more than 21 years of teaching experience reported similar enthusiasm with novice teachers (Torff & Sessions, 2008). A decrease was mostly shown during the mid-career phase when teachers were exposed to many PD program activities.

However, these studies did not treat the factor of PD program design in much detail. The specification of a PD program design proposed by the present study might clarify significant differences in teacher perception of mandatory PD based on their years of teaching experience.

In this study, ANOVA was performed on three groups of teachers based on the number of years of teaching experience: (i) Group 1/beginning teacher = 0-8 years; (ii) Group 2/mid-career teacher = 8-23 years; and (iii) Group 3/experienced teacher = >23 years. The classifications are based on Beauchamp and colleagues (2014) who stated that teachers go through different stages throughout their careers that can influence their level of TSE beliefs.

E. **Employment status**

Teachers' employment status is known to change teachers' perception of PD programs. In particular, government teachers offered positive perceptions on the given PD program prior to their job security (Alwaleedi, 2017; Ashadi, 2014). They were able to concentrate on self-development and capability improvement because they were highly-paid with sufficient health access, and they were optimistic about their future career. They were also free to enrol in PD program activities based on their needs. However, none of these studies explicitly drew on the comparison between government and non-government teacher participants in a large-scale PD program. These studies also did not explicitly mention the PD program structure. The specification of a PD program structure is essential because it helps to clarify the influence of a particular PD program design on teacher attitudes (Desimone, 2009). This research attempts to specify the PD program type and gather teachers of different employment status to expand the current literature.

In this study, ANOVA was also performed to determine if significant differences exist in teacher perception of mandatory PD. Teachers were placed into three groups: (i) government teacher (Group

1); (ii) helping teacher (Group 2); and (iii) non-permanent teacher (Group 4). No one reported as a permanent teacher (Group 3) as all participants work in public primary schools.

F. Certification status

Issues pertaining to non-significant differences in teacher perception of PD programs based on their certification status have been extensively studied in Indonesia (Anoraga, 2011; Mawardi, 2012; Raihani & Sumintono, 2010; Zein, 2016). No difference was shown between certified and non-certified teachers in their approach to the given PD program. This issue was attributed to the PD program type, which is mandatory, but did not regard teachers' different needs. It was postulated that certified teachers participated in more PD programs than non-certified teachers, indicating the need for different PD programs to support their development. However, there is a gap in the literature where these studies did not investigate the mandatory PD structure. The present study attempts to close this gap by explicating the PD program design to result in a more targeted future improvement that responds to teacher needs.

In this study, the ANOVA was also performed to examine differences in teacher perception of mandatory PD, sources of efficacy information, and TSE beliefs by certification status. Teachers were categories under three groupings: (i) certified teachers (Group 1); (ii) non-certified teachers (Group 2); and (iii) in the process of certification (Group 3)

III. METHOD

This research took place in Bima, Nusa Tenggara Barat, Eastern Indonesia from September to October 2018. A mandatory PD program was implemented in Bima, which had interesting contexts since its quality in education lagged behind the national education standard. The Regional Department of Education in Bima allocated a lower budget for education (17.2%) than the regulated budget of 20% (MoEC, 2018). This is because the budget to be spent on educational purposes was used for to support other regional needs to compensate for difficulties in economic and health areas.

This research applies quantitative methodology, using a survey design to determine the significance differences based on teacher demographic variables in a mandatory PD program. The target population were primary school teachers (n=1,199) in Bima, Eastern Indonesia. The present study aimed to gain 90% confidence level from the population of 1,200 (Cohen, et

al., 2018) where results were wide-ranging to the population (Bryman, 2016).

Participants were recruited from 23 public primary schools across five districts in Bima: (i) Asakota; (ii) Mpunda; (iii) Raba; (iv) Rasanae Barat; and (v) Rasanae Timur. Four or five schools were selected from each district to achieve fairness in the sample distribution and to obtain an adequate sample for the study. Purposive sampling was applied to access 'knowledgeable people' (Cohen, et al., 2018) who could provide reliable answers in the surveys. The selected participants had all completed the Education and Training for the Teaching Profession course (*Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Profesi Guru* or *PLPG*) following Teacher Regulation Number 18/2007. PLPG is a large-scale Indonesian mandatory PD program where participants provided reliable answers based on their PD program experience. This criterion was suitable for the present study to investigate the impacts of national mandatory PD on TSE beliefs and sources of efficacy information. This resulted in a sample of 356 teachers from 23 primary schools across five districts participating in this study.

The participants were asked about their perception of a mandatory PD program through a structured questionnaire, namely the Targeted Professional Development Scale (TPDS) (Main & Pendergast, 2017). The surveys were initially prepared in English, followed by translation to Indonesian, and finally back to translated into English. The back-translation technique was critical to clarify the wording of survey items, and to ensure accuracy in the labelling of headings and subheadings of the survey (Chen & Boore, 2010).

The *t*-test and ANOVA were used to discover statistically significant differences between groups by comparing the mean scores of sub-groups. The *t*-test was used to compare mean scores between two different groups, while ANOVA was used to compare mean scores of more than two groups.

IV. RESULT

A total of 368 primary school teachers participated in this study. The survey data was collected between 10 September and 20 October 2018. The initial screening of data indicated that 12 participants did not complete the survey, leaving more than 25% of the questions unanswered. Their responses were deleted from the dataset, resulting in 356 responses remaining for the analysis. The demographic information collected in the survey is summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Demographic characteristics of research participants (n=356)

Variable	Count	Percent
Gender		
Male	65	18.26
Female	291	81.74
Age		
22-34 years old	73	20.5
35-47 years old	107	30.1
48-60 years old	176	49.4
Academic qualification		
High school/vocational school	15	4.21
Diploma	29	8.15
Bachelor	309	86.8
Master	3	0.84
Years of teaching experience		
0-8 years	51	14.33
8-23 years	159	44.66
› 23 years	146	41.01
Employment status		
Government teacher	265	74.44
Helping teacher	2	0.57
Permanent teacher	0	0
Non-permanent teacher	89	25
Certification status		
Certified	251	70.51
Non-certified	93	26.12
In the process of certification	12	3.37

The participants were predominantly female (81.74%). Older teachers dominated close to 50% of teacher groups by age, leaving the younger teacher group with approximately 20% and the mid-age teacher group at approximately 30%. The majority of teachers held a bachelor degree, followed by a diploma degree and high school/vocational certificate. Three teachers had attained their master degrees.

In terms of teaching experience, a small percentage of teachers had taught for less than eight years. Most teacher held 8-23 years (44.66%) teaching experience, and for greater than 24 years (41.01%). In addition, most participants are employed in the government education sector (74.44%) and 70.51% are certified teachers. There were less than 100 participants who were non-permanent and non-certified teachers in the study cohort.

The analyses in this section were conducted to test whether teacher perception of mandatory PD differ by gender, age, academic qualification, years of teaching experience, employment status, and certification status. The *t*-test results presented showed statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$ level. From six demographic characteristics of the study participants, four (gender, age, years of teaching experience,

employment status, and certification status) showed significant differences. Analysis of participant academic qualifications indicated no significant difference caused by demographic information to the samples. The *t*-test and ANOVA results were significant at $p \leq .05$ levels.

4.1. t-test on participants' gender

An independent *t*-test sample was performed to examine whether any of the three variables would differ between female and male teachers. ANOVA results are summarised in Table 4.9.

Table 4.2 T-test of variables by gender (n=356)

	Male (n=65) M (SD)	Female (n=291) M (SD)	t-value	p-value
Perception of mandatory PD	154.15 (21.55)	159.33 (12.88)	-1.87	.01*

Note. * means that the relationship was statistically significant at the $p<.05$ level.

It can be seen that there was a significant effect for gender, $t(354) = -1.87$, $p=.01$, with females receiving higher scores than male from the mandatory PD program. No other significant difference by gender was found in the other two variables of this study.

4.2. ANOVA on participants' age, academic qualification, years of teaching experience, employment status, and certification status

Table 4.3 ANOVA results on teacher perception of mandatory PD (n=356)

Predictors	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	Partial η^2 95% CI [LL, UL]
Age	1153.38 78108.43 79261.81	2 353 355	576.69 221.27	2.61	.075	[-9.49, .25]
Academic qualification	24.84 5315.08 5339.92	3 352 355	8.28 15.10	.55	.650	[-22.54, 22.14]
Years of teaching experience	70.07 5269.86 5339.92	2 353 355	35.03 14.93	2.35	.097	[-10.64, .76]
Employment status	4.96 5334.97 5339.92	2 353 355	2.48 15.11	.16	.164	[-29.99, 20.41]
Certification status	43.50 5294.60 5338.10	3 351 354	14.50 15.08	.96	.411	[-34.69, 20.18]

Note: * means that the relationship was statistically significant at the $p<.05$ level; LL

and UL represent the lower-limit and upper-limit of the partial η^2 confidence interval, respectively.

Overall, the findings indicate a clear pattern where the difference between male and female teachers only exists in their experiences in the mandatory PD program in which female teachers reported making the more out of their program experience compared to male teachers. Teachers did not show significant difference on their perception about mandatory PD based on their age, academic qualification, years of teaching experiences, employment status, and certification status. The summary is presented in the table below.

Table 4.4 Summary of t-test and ANOVA results (n=356)

Factors	Gender	Age	Academic Qualification	Years of Teaching Experience	Employment Status	Certification Status
Teacher perception of mandatory PD	✓	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

V. Discussion

This study shows that female teachers have a more positive perception of the effectiveness of mandatory PD activities than their male counterparts. This finding offers new insight into PD program studies in Asian countries where female teachers are claimed to experience difficulty in undertaking PD program activities (Badri, et al., 2016). However, the claims are inconclusive because the study was based on various PD program types and did not investigate a specific program feature. This study, conversely, reveals that specific PD program features influence the teacher's approach during participation. Some key features, such as active learning and collective participation, create collaborative learning environments that allow teachers to communicate knowledge and exchange experiences. This would suggest that female teachers tend to approach collaborative learning activities more skilfully than their male colleagues, by seeking support, agreeing to participate, and asking for suggestions to improve their practice (Johnson & Johnson, 2002).

There was no significant difference pertaining to teacher perception of mandatory PD activities based on age. This evidence is contradictory to existing literature reporting that older and younger teachers tended to approach PD programs differently (Heyward, et al., 2018; Saunders, 2014). However, most previous studies have been based on voluntary activities where

teachers have different end-goals. This may affect their PD program experience as teachers' personal choices affect their feeling of engagement (OECD, 2009). Both younger and older teachers in this study, by contrast, were mandated to join the PD program regardless of their age. They accepted the PD program to fulfil their obligation as government employees and to improve their competency score on the national standard examination for teachers. It could be said that their end-goal in joining the PD program had been already determined. This might lead the perception of teachers of all ages towards a similar level upon approaching mandatory PD. Evidence from this study lends strong support to a claim whereby mandatory PD is commonly designed to target teachers of all ages with uniformed content (Burns & Lawrie, 2015).

Teacher perception of mandatory PD does not differ significantly by their academic qualification. It is contradictory in the literature, as it has been reported that teachers with higher academic qualification possess a higher positive attitude towards PD programs than teachers with lower academic qualification (Akbari & Moradkhani, 2010; Tajeddin & Khodaverdi, 2011). The present study conversely shows that there was no difference between high school, bachelor, and master graduate teachers in their perception of mandatory PD. This discrepancy may be associated with the quality of Indonesian educational institutes that educate teachers. There is a gap between these institutes and real school practices due to institutes rarely updating their curricula in response to the most current condition in education (Leonard, 2015). Teachers are often perplexed about the application of knowledge regardless of their academic qualification. Such dissonance between knowledge and real conditions can affect the teacher's trust in professional learning as he/she cannot perceive how they are coherent with their daily practices. Evidence from this study supports a claim that teacher education in less privileged regions often does not cover adequate knowledge to support future teachers (Hansen-Thomas, et al., 2016).

Teacher perception of mandatory PD has not differed significantly based on years of teaching experience. It contradicts the existing literature that reports teachers normally show gradual improvement in their perception of PD programs at five-year intervals (Hursen, 2012), which is when veteran teachers enjoy greater enthusiasm than novice teachers (Torff & Sessions, 2008). In the present study, the result can be

attributed to the mandatory PD design that did not purposefully gather participants at similar stages of their teaching experience. The study does not appear to take into consideration the differences in number of years of teaching experience that contributes to the expansion of teachers' existing knowledge. Empirical evidence from this study implies that the uniformed characteristics of Indonesian mandatory PD are designed to target teachers with varying years of teaching experience (Chang, et al., 2013).

No significant difference was identified in teacher perception of the given mandatory PD program based on their employment status as government, non-permanent or helping teachers. This finding contradicts previous research where government teachers have claimed to embrace PD programs more positively than other employment groups (Alwaleedi, 2016; Shaukat, et al., 2019). What differs when comparing this finding with previous studies is the specification of the PD program type. The present study focused on a large-scale mandatory PD targeting all teachers in one-off events. The government, non-permanent, and helping teachers were grouped based on their competency test scores. Findings from this study reflect on strong support to the principle of Indonesian mandatory PD that was suitable for all teachers regardless of their employment status (MoEC, 2017).

No significant difference was shown in the teacher perception of mandatory PD based on certification status. This finding contradicts the assumption that certified Indonesian teachers approach the given PD program differently because of their extensive training (MoEC, 2010). Certified teachers often participated in extra professional training and workshops, and are expected to have better perception on the mandatory PD program compared to non-certified groups. Results from the present study may partly be due to the mandatory PD activities that were designed to accommodate all Indonesian teachers regardless of their certification status. It reflects the objectives of the mandatory PD program to gather both certified and non-certified teachers in a large-scale group to provide equal knowledge and information that is coherent with national education goals. Empirical evidence from this study lends strong support to the notion that Indonesian teacher certification does not affect their approach towards a given mandatory PD program (Mawardi, 2012; Raihani & Sumintono, 2010; World Bank, 2011).

VI. CONCLUSION

Non-significant differences in mandatory PD perception based on teacher demography show that Indonesian mandatory PD has achieved its objectives in implementing a large-scale uniformed government PD program to support all Indonesian teachers. The only significant difference is shown through teachers' gender, indicating that any improvement plan on future mandatory PD designs can commence by improving benefits for both male and female teachers.

VII. REFERENCES

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