

**Reflection on Learning in Teacher Professional Education (PPG) Strategies  
to Enhance the Competence of Novice Teachers at Universitas  
Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang**

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**ABSTRACT**

Reflection on learning is a vital component of the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program, particularly in enhancing the competence of novice teachers. At Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang (UMS Rappang), reflection serves as a mechanism to evaluate and improve teaching practices across pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. This study examines strategies such as daily reflective journals, group discussions, observation and feedback, case studies, and the integration of technology in reflective processes. These strategies aim to develop critical thinking, self-awareness, and innovative teaching approaches among novice teachers. The findings highlight that systematic reflection significantly improves teaching effectiveness, professional development, and student learning outcomes. The structured application of reflective practices empowers novice teachers to become adaptive, professional educators prepared to address the challenges of modern education.

**Keywords:** Teacher Professional Education; Novice Teachers; Teaching Competence

## INTRODUCTION

The quality of education is closely linked to the competence of teachers, as they are pivotal in shaping students' knowledge, skills, and character. To address the increasing demands of modern education, teacher preparation programs must focus not only on the theoretical aspects of teaching but also on practical competencies. The Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program is designed to bridge this gap by providing comprehensive training for novice teachers to develop the skills needed for effective teaching practices.

Reflection on learning plays a critical role in the PPG program as it helps teachers evaluate their teaching experiences, identify areas for improvement, and build strategies for professional growth. This reflective process enables teachers to develop a deeper understanding of their pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies, which are essential for navigating the complexities of the teaching profession.

At Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang (UMS Rappang), reflection has been integrated as a core component of the PPG program. Novice teachers are encouraged to critically analyze their teaching practices through various strategies, such as maintaining reflective journals, engaging in group discussions, receiving feedback from mentors, and utilizing digital tools for systematic reflection. These approaches aim to foster critical thinking, self-awareness, and adaptability in teachers, equipping them to meet the challenges of diverse educational settings.

This paper explores the implementation of reflective practices within the PPG program at UMS Rappang, highlighting the strategies used to enhance the competence of novice teachers. The study examines the effectiveness of these strategies in improving teaching quality and supporting professional development. By understanding the impact of reflective learning, this paper seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on teacher preparation and the role of reflection in fostering professional excellence.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of reflection in education has been extensively explored as a critical component of professional development for teachers. Reflection, as defined by Dewey (1933), involves the active, persistent, and careful consideration of beliefs or practices in light of evidence and consequences. This process helps teachers develop a deeper understanding of their teaching practices, essential for improving effectiveness and adapting to the dynamic demands of education. Schon (1983) introduced the concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, emphasizing the importance of real-time reflection during teaching and post-lesson analysis to refine practices. Both forms of reflection are integral to teacher professional education programs, enabling teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in their instructional methods. Research demonstrates that reflective

practices enhance teachers' decision-making abilities and promote continuous professional growth (Rodgers, 2002). For novice teachers, reflection bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Zeichner and Liston (1996) argue that reflective teaching fosters critical thinking, encouraging teachers to question established norms and adopt innovative, effective strategies.

Teacher competencies are often categorized into four domains: pedagogical, professional, social, and personal (Shulman, 1987). Reflection supports the development of these competencies by enabling teachers to evaluate instructional strategies, understand students' diverse needs, and refine interpersonal and communication skills. Structured reflection methods, such as journals and guided discussions, provide a scaffold for novice teachers to process their experiences systematically, particularly valuable in professional education programs (Jay & Johnson, 2002). For instance, Farrell (2018) highlights that reflective practices help align instructional goals with students' learning objectives, enhancing pedagogical effectiveness.

Several strategies have been identified as effective in fostering reflection in teacher education. Reflective journals encourage teachers to document and critically analyze their daily teaching experiences, promoting self-awareness and improving problem-solving skills (Larrivee, 2000). Mentorship and feedback enable novice teachers to gain insights and constructive input on their teaching practices, enhancing their ability to implement changes effectively (Harrison, Lawson, & Wortley, 2005). Group discussions and peer collaboration foster a community of practice, allowing teachers to share experiences, build mutual support, and gain diverse perspectives (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, digital tools like e-portfolios and video recordings provide detailed documentation of classroom interactions, enabling deeper analysis and reflection (Karsenti & Collins, 2013).

In the Indonesian context, the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program has been developed as a certification process to enhance teacher quality. Reflection is a key component of this program, aligning with the Ministry of Education and Culture's focus on competency-based education. Studies on PPG participants indicate that reflective practices significantly improve their readiness to face classroom challenges, adapt to curriculum changes, and integrate innovative teaching methods (Nasir & Handayani, 2019). At Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang (UMS Rappang), reflective strategies have been adopted to address the unique challenges faced by novice teachers in diverse educational settings. These strategies aim to foster critical thinking, self-awareness, and professional adaptability, which are essential for achieving teaching excellence. This review highlights the central role of reflection in teacher professional development and competency enhancement. By integrating structured reflective practices, teacher education programs like PPG at UMS Rappang can effectively prepare novice teachers for the complexities of modern classrooms. This study builds on existing literature to examine specific strategies

## **METHOD**

### **Design and Sample**

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the implementation of reflective practices in the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang (UMS Rappang). The design was chosen to provide an in-depth analysis of participants' experiences, perceptions, and outcomes related to reflective practices, focusing on how structured reflection methods influence pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies among novice teachers. The sample consisted of 20 novice teachers enrolled in the PPG program, selected through purposive sampling to ensure diversity in teaching subjects and prior experiences. Additionally, four program mentors and two academic supervisors participated, contributing insights into the reflective strategies implemented and their impact.

### **Instrument and Procedures**

Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, document analysis, and focus group discussions (FGDs). Interviews with novice teachers, mentors, and supervisors gathered detailed information about their experiences with reflective practices, focusing on activities used, perceived benefits, and challenges. Classroom observations examined how reflective strategies influenced teaching practices, such as teaching methods, classroom management, and student engagement. Documents like reflective journals, lesson plans, and feedback reports were analyzed to identify patterns in reflective practices and their alignment with PPG objectives. FGDs provided collaborative evaluations of strategies and additional participant perspectives.

### **Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis was employed, involving familiarization with the data, coding key segments, grouping codes into themes, and validating themes by cross-referencing data from multiple sources. This approach ensured reliability and consistency in findings. Ethical approval was obtained from UMS Rappang's research ethics committee, with informed consent from participants ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. Limitations include the study's focus on the PPG program at UMS Rappang, potentially limiting generalizability, and the qualitative methods' reliance on subjective interpretations. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the role of reflection in enhancing novice teachers' competencies.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The study revealed the substantial impact of reflective practices on enhancing novice teachers' competencies in the Teacher Professional Education (PPG)

program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang (UMS Rappang). Through data obtained from interviews, observations, document analysis, and focus group discussions, the study identified that reflective strategies positively influenced participants' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies.

### **Pedagogical Competence**

Reflective journals enabled participants to critically analyze their teaching practices, identify areas for improvement, and implement more effective strategies. Many participants reported improved lesson planning and adaptability to students' diverse needs, demonstrating growth in their pedagogical skills. Furthermore, reflective practices helped participants to align their teaching methods with contemporary educational frameworks, ensuring lessons were student-centered and relevant. Classroom observations reinforced these improvements, as participants demonstrated enhanced instructional techniques, such as differentiated instruction and creative use of teaching aids to engage diverse learners.

### **Professional Competence**

Mentorship and feedback sessions were instrumental in enhancing professional competence. Constructive input from mentors helped participants refine classroom management and instructional methods, aligning their practices with professional standards. Participants noted that regular feedback allowed them to address specific teaching challenges, such as managing disruptive behaviors or incorporating inclusive practices. In addition, mentors guided novice teachers in setting measurable learning objectives and evaluating student progress, further developing their professional expertise. Structured peer observations also provided opportunities for participants to learn from each other, fostering a culture of continuous professional growth.

### **Social Competence**

Group discussions played a crucial role in fostering collaboration and mutual support among peers. These interactions significantly improved participants' ability to work effectively within professional learning communities. Participants found that sharing experiences and discussing challenges during focus group discussions not only built a sense of camaraderie but also generated innovative solutions to common teaching problems. This collaborative environment encouraged novice teachers to develop empathy, adaptability, and a team-oriented mindset, which are essential for their social competence in educational settings.

### **Personal Competence**

Continuous reflection encouraged greater self-awareness and confidence among participants. This process strengthened their personal development and resilience

as novice teachers, equipping them to navigate challenges in their teaching careers. Reflective practices also empowered participants to embrace a growth mindset, recognizing mistakes as learning opportunities. Many participants reported feeling more capable of managing stress and maintaining a positive attitude toward their professional responsibilities. Additionally, the practice of setting personal goals through reflection fostered a sense of purpose and motivation, enhancing their overall effectiveness as educators.

### **Effectiveness of Specific Reflective Strategies**

Reflective journals provided a structured platform for documenting teaching experiences, promoting critical self-assessment and continuous improvement. Group discussions and focus group sessions facilitated peer-to-peer learning and broadened perspectives, enhancing problem-solving abilities. Observations and feedback from mentors played a pivotal role in aligning teaching practices with professional standards. Additionally, the integration of digital tools, such as e-portfolios, amplified the impact of reflective practices by enabling systematic documentation and analysis of teaching methods.

### **Challenges Identified**

Several challenges emerged during the implementation of reflective practices. Time constraints were a significant issue, as participants struggled to balance teaching responsibilities with reflective activities. Some participants faced difficulties maintaining consistency in journaling and articulating their reflections clearly. Limited access to digital tools hindered the effective application of technology-based reflective practices, particularly for participants in resource-limited settings. Furthermore, the quality of mentorship varied, with some mentors lacking the time or skills to provide consistent guidance, disrupting the reflective process for some participants.

The findings align with existing literature on the value of reflection in professional development. Reflective practices encouraged participants to critically evaluate and refine their teaching methods, consistent with Schon's (1983) concept of reflection-on-action. The use of technology in reflective practices further highlights its potential to enhance teacher development. Addressing challenges such as time management, mentorship quality, and resource availability is crucial for maximizing the benefits of reflective practices. These findings underscore the importance of structured and supported reflection in teacher education programs, providing actionable insights for improving the PPG curriculum at UMS Rappang and similar contexts.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study highlights the crucial role of reflective practices in enhancing the competencies of novice teachers within the Teacher Professional Education (PPG)

program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang (UMS Rappang). Reflective strategies, such as journaling, group discussions, mentorship feedback, and the integration of digital tools, have proven effective in fostering improvements across pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. These practices enable novice teachers to critically evaluate their teaching methods, adapt to diverse student needs, and build confidence in their professional abilities. Despite the challenges faced, including time constraints, inconsistent mentorship quality, and limited access to digital resources, the findings underscore the value of structured and well-supported reflective activities in teacher education. Addressing these challenges by enhancing program support, providing mentorship training, and ensuring access to digital tools will further strengthen the impact of reflective practices on teacher development. Integrating reflection as a core component of the PPG program is essential for preparing novice teachers to meet the dynamic demands of modern classrooms. This study contributes to the growing body of evidence that reflection not only improves teaching effectiveness but also supports lifelong professional growth. Future research should explore broader applications of reflective practices and examine their impact across diverse educational settings to further enrich teacher preparation programs.

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