

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to answer the research question: *How does teaching in a rural context shape the teachers' professional identity?* On the basis of what has been found and discussed in the previous chapters, this chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions for the stakeholders in teachers' professional identity and rural school context, as well as for future research.

5.1 Conclusion

This study indicated that rural schools as a teaching context, including the teachers' experiences, beliefs, emotions, and knowledge, shape a teacher's identity and develop professionalism. A teacher's professional identity development depends on how the teacher's experiences with the school's condition affect and develop his or her affective and cognitive. This study showed that teaching in the rural school transformed the two teachers' professional identities through their experiences of teaching the rural students, creating a longstanding engagement. The engagement then touched their emotions and created great affection, which also expanded their beliefs, influenced their practices, and enriched their knowledge. The processes have transformed both teachers into persevering teachers who keep doing their duties as rural teachers despite the challenges.

Thus, teaching in the rural school has transformed both teachers' professional identities into persevering teachers by reflecting teachers' professional identity components that include experiences, emotions, beliefs, and knowledge. However, although the rural school has positively transformed both teachers, they have different ways of teaching the students based on their beliefs, knowledge, and emotions. Ayu tended to be a lenient and lovable teacher who concerns more about personal relationships with students. It made her become a teacher who understands the students well. However, Ayu was less competent than Haryo in terms of speaking fluency and choosing learning material. Also, her lenient personality made her subjective in assessing the students.

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*AN INQUIRY INTO THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES OF TWO ENGLISH TEACHERS IN AN
INDONESIAN RURAL SCHOOL*

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On the other hand, Haryo tended to be a firm and driven teacher who concern more with students' motivation to learn the subject. He has become more creative than Ayu in providing learning materials for the students. Their differences showed that every teacher is unique, although they might share similar emotions and engagement with students in the same context.

Therefore, this study found that a teacher's professional identity transformation might be contextual, meaning that the context could influence it. However, it also depends on how a teacher reacts to their experience in the teaching context and how the experience influences their emotions that later affect their beliefs and knowledge. In other words, the rural context was not the only factor defining a teacher's professional identity or performance. The teaching context cannot generalize a teacher's identity, performance, and professionalism. Each teacher is a different individual with different emotions, beliefs, knowledge, and experiences, whether placed in rural or urban schools. Not all rural teachers are less competent or otherwise. It depends on how the knowledge, beliefs, experiences, and emotion synergize with the teaching context. In addition, how those components shape a teacher's identity and how they adjust their identity to the context also influence what kind of a rural teacher will be.

Furthermore, this study indicated that the two rural teachers are professional teachers who persist and do their jobs despite the many challenges they faced in the rural school. Although the rural schools and the students have limitations and issues, both teachers are professionals in their jobs. They are not inferior to nor less professional than teachers in cities.

5.2 Implications of Study

This study offers some implications for teachers in rural schools. The study's results emphasize the significance of teachers' teaching context, experiences, beliefs, knowledge and emotions in shaping teachers' professional identity. The development of teachers' professional identity entails reflecting on how all components are synergized in situated contexts and

how the teachers respond to the context. In so doing, the teachers are also required to invest their time in professional developments and community of practice.

This study also has an implication for a teacher education program to purposefully help pre-service teachers to adapt and prepare upon starting their profession as teachers and be ready to face different school conditions, including the conditions of rural schools. Last, it is important for local government and school administrators to develop the teachers' professional identity with all employment status, both as honorarium and *PNS* teachers, by giving sufficient support for them to join several professional development programs. They also need to provide additional support that is required by the teachers such as providing extra costs that the teacher may need to spend to conduct their teaching and deal with the teaching workload to advance the education in rural areas.

5.3 Limitations of Study

This study has limitations regarding the scale, scope, methodology, and the extent of data collection and analysis. First, this study only investigated two English teachers from a school in a rural area. It is because finding a rural school with reachable road access and rural teachers who are easy to catch up with is quite difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the findings might be less varied since the participants were only two teachers. More participants would have added further breadth to the results of this study.

Second, the teachers' knowledge as one of teachers' professional identity components investigated in this study was only content knowledge, pedagogic knowledge, and pedagogic content knowledge. Other dimensions of a teacher's knowledge base were not covered in this study. Moreover, the teachers' knowledge were investigated only based on observations and interviews. Perhaps an appropriate test to measure the teachers' knowledge would be more convincing.

Third, the classroom observations were only once for each teacher considering the regulations during the pandemic. The school was not allowed to operate during usual teaching hours, so any activities in the school were very limited. Therefore,

each teacher's action and emotion in classroom was only investigated in one observation.

Last, this study only examined the school's condition from the teachers' perspectives. It might be better if students or any other school community were involved as participants.

5.4 Recommendations of Study

This study investigated how rural school contexts shape teachers' professional identities. Several things have become the focus of this study, such as the conditions of rural schools, rural teacher identity, and the components of teachers' professional identity. In evaluating the findings of this study, there were some limitations. This study's limitations can be a reference or even a starting point for further research.

A further researcher can research the same topic with a more significant number of participants. It would be more interesting to inquire into various rural teachers in every Indonesian province. Each province in Indonesia might have different rural schools with different cultures, challenges, and conditions. The data could be more diverse, varied, and generalizable.

Investigating other aspects of rural schools or teachers is also suggested to enrich the literature on Indonesian rural education. The socio-cultural and political issues between rural and urban schools are also deemed worthy. Other dimension of teachers' identity in rural context can also be considered. Moreover, this study found the inequality of teachers' status in Indonesia, which is also worthwhile to be investigated further.

In addition, using different instruments and method is also worth to be considered. Using other instruments like questionnaire or other research design like mixed method design to measure the rural teachers' skills and competencies is also applicable.

Conducting further research on many aspects of rural teachers or schools especially in Indonesian context is worthy. Rural teachers are rarely being noticed although they had work harder to educate the nation's children specifically in rural areas. Therefore, any aspects of rural teachers' professional development is highly recommended to be investigated. Furthermore, the concept of teacher identity is needed to be considered as one of teacher competencies because it is related to teachers' passion, dedication, and commitment.