

Happiness eudaimonia honorary teachers who teach in Talango Island

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Abstract

Teacher well-being and happiness play a crucial role in fostering an effective and positive learning environment for students. Educators who experience a strong sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in their professional roles are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and emotionally invested in their students' academic success. This study aims to explore the welfare of honorary teachers in remote areas, focusing on Sekolah Dasar Negeri 1 Talango Sumenep. Employing a phenomenological approach, this research examines the lived experiences of six honorary teachers, providing insights into the challenges and factors influencing their well-being. Eudaimonia and teacher happiness are critical components of job satisfaction and overall well-being in the field of education. Various factors contribute to teacher happiness, including job security, professional recognition, and social relationships. The well-being of teachers, particularly in remote areas, significantly impacts their work performance, commitment, and motivation, ultimately influencing student learning experiences. Teachers in isolated regions often develop close relationships with their students, which can enhance their sense of fulfillment and professional purpose. This study highlights the importance of supporting honorary teachers to ensure their well-being, which in turn fosters a more effective educational environment. Future research should further investigate the empirical link between teacher well-being and student outcomes, contributing to the development of policies aimed at improving teacher welfare in remote areas.

Keywords: Teacher Well-Being, Honorary Teachers, Phenomenological Study, Job Satisfaction, Remote Education, Eudaimonia

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the fundamental pillars of a nation's development. In Indonesia, efforts to enhance the quality of education have been a government priority for decades. Among the key factors influencing educational quality is the welfare of teachers, particularly those in disadvantaged areas. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the learning environment for students (Hornstra et al., 2015). In this context, the well-being of honorary teachers in remote regions becomes a critical issue that requires in-depth examination.

A global shortage of teachers willing to work in disadvantaged areas has led to a crisis in education quality, affecting both developing and developed countries (Azano and Stewart, 2015; LAM and LAM, 2019). The disparity between urban and rural education remains a pressing challenge (Muttaqin et al., 2020). Remote areas, such as Talango Island in Sumenep Regency, East Java, present unique characteristics that influence both the educational landscape and the welfare of teachers. Studies show that remote regions in Indonesia generally face limited access to basic services, high poverty rates, and inadequate educational infrastructure (Riyadi and Ghuzini, 2022). These conditions create a difficult working environment for teachers, particularly honorary teachers, who often lack job security and sufficient benefits.

Rural teachers serve as vital agents in transmitting knowledge and balancing modernization with local culture (Mingren and Shiquan, 2018; Fitriyah, 2019; Fitriyah et al., 2020; Fitriyah et al., 2022; Fitriyah and Djazilan, 2020). Qualified teachers not only contribute to schools (Flores, 2019) but also strengthen rural education systems and communities (Mingren and Shiquan, 2018). Therefore, ensuring teacher welfare is crucial, as it directly impacts broader national educational challenges.

In Indonesia, honorary teachers—also referred to as non-permanent teachers—play a pivotal role in the education system, especially in regions facing shortages of civil servant teachers. Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Pusat Data dan Teknologi Informasi, 2020) indicates that approximately 30% of Indonesia's total teaching workforce consists of honorary teachers. Despite their significant numbers, these teachers often endure suboptimal working conditions, particularly in remote areas where limited resources and infrastructure exacerbate their challenges.

The financial struggles faced by honorary teachers in Sumenep Regency highlight these difficulties. Many non-permanent teachers receive inadequate salaries, which fail to meet basic living needs. Addressing these issues is essential to improving education quality and ensuring that teachers in remote areas receive the support they need to fulfill their roles effectively.

METHOD

This study employs a phenomenological approach, a qualitative research method that seeks to understand individuals' lived experiences (Padilla-Díaz, 2015). Phenomenology is particularly valuable in qualitative research as it captures participants' perceptions, emotions, and experiences in a way that cannot be fully explained through quantitative methods. As emphasized by Husserl, all qualitative research contains phenomenological components; however, the phenomenological approach itself is not universally applicable to all types of qualitative studies. This study utilizes phenomenology to explore the welfare and lived experiences of honorary teachers in remote areas. According to Tisdell et al., 2025, qualitative research is characterized by an inquiry into human experiences, social interactions, and cultural contexts. It allows researchers to understand how individuals make sense of the world around them. In this study, the phenomenological approach enables a deep exploration of the challenges and well-being of honorary teachers at Negeri 1 Talango Sumenep Elementary School, providing insight into their daily struggles, professional challenges, and overall job satisfaction.

Participants

The study participants consist of six honorary teachers from Negeri 1 Talango Sumenep Elementary School. To ensure a diverse and comprehensive perspective, participant selection considers several factors, including:

1. Gender representation to capture experiences across different demographics.
2. Ethnic and cultural backgrounds to account for diverse sociocultural influences.
3. Subjects taught to explore potential differences in teaching experiences.
4. Years of experience in the field to understand how tenure influences teachers' well-being.

The selection process follows purposive sampling, a common technique in qualitative research that ensures participants meet specific criteria relevant to the study. The focus of this research is

on the welfare of honorary teachers, examining their financial conditions, job security, and overall work environment. By capturing their lived experiences, this study aims to highlight the unique challenges they face and provide recommendations for policy improvements.

Data Collection Method

To obtain rich and in-depth data, this study utilizes semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. This method allows participants to share their personal experiences freely while enabling the researcher to ask follow-up questions for further clarification. The interviews cover key themes such as:

1. Workload and daily responsibilities.
2. Financial security and economic challenges.
3. Emotional and psychological well-being.
4. Perceptions of professional recognition and support.
5. Future career aspirations and job satisfaction.

All interviews are conducted in person and recorded with participants' consent to ensure accuracy in data transcription. Additionally, field observations are carried out to capture non-verbal cues and contextual factors influencing teachers' experiences.

Data Analysis Method

The data analysis follows thematic analysis, a widely used method in qualitative research for identifying and interpreting patterns within the data. The process consists of the following steps:

1. Data Transcription – All interview recordings are transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy.
2. Familiarization with Data – The researcher carefully reviews the transcripts multiple times to identify key themes.
3. Coding Process – Open coding is applied to label significant statements and categorize recurring patterns.
4. Theme Identification – Codes are grouped into broader themes that reflect the core experiences of the participants.
5. Interpretation and Synthesis – The themes are analyzed in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks to draw meaningful conclusions.
6. Validation – Member checking is conducted, where participants review the findings to ensure accuracy and credibility of the interpretations.

Through this systematic approach, the study ensures rigor, credibility, and trustworthiness in data analysis, providing a well-grounded understanding of the challenges and well-being of honorary teachers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Self Potential

A teacher is a person who has the authority and is responsible for the education of his students. This means that teachers must have basic competencies and abilities that are in accordance with their field of work, namely as a homeroom teacher, as explained by one of the teachers at SDN Talango 1, namely

"For the potential that we have, it can be developed anywhere, we can adjust it to the environmental conditions where we teach. We can adjust it to the students' conditions because each student's ability is different, some are capable and some are not".

From the results of the interview above with one of the teachers, it is explained that the principal as a leader in the school always tries to spur the potential possessed by this teacher to occur in order to improve the student teaching and learning process because the success or failure of the school program is the joint responsibility of all components of the school, especially educators, even though they teach in a remote area. This was stated by one of the teachers, namely MH at SDN Talango 1, that: "Actually if seen from aspect potential a power educator, no so influential, who knows That area left behind or no, the most important thing is to have the most influence from aspect facilities, means and infrastructure available at the school, because we are a power educator sued For always active and creative For to make smart child nation as the generation that will come".

From the two interviews above, it can be concluded that it is an obligation for every educator to develop their potential even if they teach in remote areas.

2. Developing Talents

The role of a teacher as an educator is to educate, teach, direct, train, assess, and evaluate students, therefore teachers must be able to identify the talents of each student in order to provide motivation and develop their talents and interests according to what they have. This is in accordance with what was expressed by the MEF teacher at SDN Talango 1, namely: "I capable see and develop talent the talent that i have have. I am able teach and create atmosphere fun learning. I am able read each one characteristics child educate. In addition I capable collaborate with all students because become a teacher is not only sued Can teaching in class just will but must Can become queen example all child his students. In fact, teachers must be inspired and imitated".

Students are whole human beings who try to hone an ability or potential within themselves to be actual with the help of educators or adults. Meanwhile, the terminology of students means experiencing a change within themselves as stated by one of the MH teachers at SDN Talango 1: "God willing Can while We still have a strong desire For develop creativity and potential as power educator remember with development existing technology now, we Can utilise That all For Can add outlook We".

From the results of interviews, observations and questionnaires, it can be concluded that if teachers can see the potential of their students and achieve achievements, it can support a teacher's career in the future and can also help the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

3. Life Challenges

A teacher likes a challenge that is strong enough and is able to change a difficult situation into a situation that is beneficial for him. Honorary teachers also have challenges that occur in their lives that can be faced even though their income is very insufficient for daily needs. As the researcher conducted an interview with one of the honorary teachers, namely ES at Talango 1 Elementary School, Sumenep, said that: "In the regions, it will feel like the facilities and infrastructure are inadequate, so as teachers and school operators, we have to prepare everything extra in terms of learning and so on.

Each individual has different life challenges in solving each problem, individuals are able to find solutions to problems that are happening by looking for side jobs or looking for other income. This also happens to teachers who teach in the islands with honorary status, namely MEF: 'Really feel the challenge because in terms of geography, being an honorary teacher in a remote area like Talango District, every day there is no word of complaint and surrender when the weather is very hot or heavy rain, wind or waves. Teachers are still called by their conscience to come to school because at school there are already many students who are waiting for their arrival to study".

Honorary teachers experience many difficulties in their lives. Wages that are not yet adequate are the trigger so that they have to find other income. According to the results of interviews, observations and questionnaires that occurred in the field, it can be concluded that honorary teachers also want decent wages so that they can meet their daily needs.

4. Knowledge Development

Teachers have a very important role in the national education system, so it is not surprising that there is an opinion that teachers are the spearhead in educating the nation's children. The quality of teachers is also believed to have a positive relationship to the quality of education in a country as told by one of the MEF teachers at SDN Talango 1: 'Since I become an honorary teacher school base I get Lots invaluable knowledge and experience . I feel like it have family new besides family at home. Can socialize with many good people those are teachers at school , students , even parents with public around".

The results of observations in the field show that a teacher's job has its own special characteristics. Unfortunately, this specialization does not necessarily make teachers free from various crises, especially in terms of knowledge development because the funds available in schools are very limited, especially schools located on the islands. This is as stated by JZ, a teacher at SDN Talango 1: " Get more knowledge Because We face students who do not as smart as student students in the city in general . So more Lots Study again , enriching reference teach.learning again so that students fast understand and be able understand What that we understand".

From the results of interviews, observations and questionnaires conducted with two teachers, namely MEF and JZ, it can be concluded that they obtained knowledge that is very necessary for a teacher to face the challenges of an increasingly advanced era and schools must support their teachers to frequently attend training .

5. Helping Others

From day to day, honorary teachers are still the mainstay in the implementation of education. Honorary teachers are sometimes still trapped in professionalism and quite heavy salaries and workloads. One of the characteristics of honorary teachers that is inherent, namely having an altruistic spirit, willing to sacrifice for others and having a nature of satisfaction from non-material rewards. This fact was revealed by MEF, a teacher at SDN Talango 1: "Becoming an honorary teacher school base I can A little helping others. One of for example when one of them the guardian is complain his son to my teacher , I Can give solution best as well as give act carry on in the form of attention special to child educate the".

Teachers who teach even though they are given very minimal salaries, they are still very loyal to teach. Honorary teachers must be given the opportunity to develop and be adequately trained so that the professional spirit and altruism of helping others are maintained. In addition, the intention to become a teacher is very high even though some assume that teachers in remote areas have low human resources. As stated by MH: "In our opinion , a underdeveloped areas Already Of course identical with human resources are also left behind from that's us as power educators who have objective For to make smart child nation Good from village and also city let education evenly".

Interviews conducted with two MEF and MH teachers can be concluded that even though teachers are or work in remote areas, a teacher's job is to educate the lives of the nation's children wherever they are. Teachers who are in remote areas usually visit many houses around to help children to be able to read, write and count.

6. Helping the Environment

The dedication of many honorary teachers who have reached decades deserves to be appreciated and given the opportunity to be included in taking the test. Not only K2 honorary teachers are given the opportunity to take the Government Employee test with a Work Agreement. Most importantly, honorary teachers who meet the requirements for Government Employees with a Work Agreement can take the test so that they get the same opportunity. This was conveyed in an interview conducted with teacher JZ at SDN Talango 1: "Perhaps not must all There is life We will feel more good . With what is there even now We Can live and stay endure life Far more Good".

The problem of honorary teachers who have graduated immediately being appointed as Government Employees with Work Agreements so that we can get out of the new recruitment process. Teachers said that quality and welfare must go hand in hand. There needs to be a solution to this honorary worker problem. As stated by MEF: "School is family second after home. At school, we can print generation generation child an intelligent, moral nation Karim as well as useful for nation, religion and country Because quality education That Can measured from how much tall quality its human resources".

The dedication carried out by honorary teachers for decades in remote areas can be concluded that their work deserves to be appreciated and besides that, these teachers always help the community around the school sincerely when there are activities.

7. Make a Contribution to Society

The role of teachers in preparing the younger generation as members of society is very important. Teachers are not only teachers, but also facilitators of learning who inspire and guide students in developing lifelong skills. Teachers have a role in creating an adaptive school environment and facilitating opportunities to participate in lifelong learning programs. One of the MH teachers who teaches at Talango 1 Elementary School said: "We can make a contribution to public can felt by the child children in particular Because seen from our profession is a teacher".

In the era of society 5.0, the role of teachers is very important in realizing the necessary educational transformation. Teachers act as facilitators and guides in directing students to develop collaborative intelligence, develop multidisciplinary skills and strengthen the spirit of lifelong learning.

"S donation No must in the form of money. Positive thinking is also donation. We give thinking positive to public For develop source Power nature that exists in the area, so they Can still live in the area without must wander to city".

The role of teachers as expressed by MH and JZ, namely that nowadays, apart from teaching, it can be concluded that they also provide guidance to the surrounding community, such as ideas for village development, ideas for education in the village and so on so that the surrounding community does not become further left behind.

8. Giving Positive Influence to the Surroundings

In their environment (community and school), teachers are role models that should be emulated in their daily lives. This requires social skills of teachers with the community as an effort to realize an effective learning process and will affect the relationship between the school and the community even better. "because in the area The trough take importance principle family meaning with teachers who behave good and moral glorious so will become role model for students and parents which results in condition community / environment school become more good and impactful positive for life public".

The facts that occur in the field are not a few negative stigmas and even greatly weaken the image of teachers both as opinions and news that appear on social media. In conditions like this, a fair attitude is needed, both from teachers and the community in general that shows the identity and character of teachers as professionals and educative members of society.

"Because a teacher feels sued become public figures in the environment around. Well that from appearance, speech and action So A little Lots a teacher for sure can give influence positive to public".

Interviews, Observations and Questionnaires conducted with ES and MEF teachers stated that the presence of teachers in underdeveloped areas is highly anticipated by the communities in underdeveloped areas because the presence of teachers can provide a positive contribution to the progress of underdeveloped areas.

CONCLUSION

Responding to the challenges and problems of education in Indonesia, the status of teachers as teachers in schools has the most important role as an actor. The importance of educating all children must be considered, the costs must be considered continuously and full of education. However, in reality, not all citizens are able to access their right to education. This is due to various factors that hinder the education process, one of which is the equality of education. Ease of access to education, uneven distribution, lack of educators, all become serious problems in the education system in remote areas. Statistics show that there are several groups of children who benefit from poor education in border areas.

Teacher eudaimonia and happiness are two important aspects that influence job satisfaction and overall well-being in education. There are several factors that contribute to teacher happiness. Teacher job happiness is critical to the successful implementation of educational reform and has a significant impact on their work performance, commitment, and motivation. Teachers who are satisfied and happy in their jobs are more likely to create positive and effective learning experiences for their students.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

S.U conducted research, formulated problems, and analyzed the results of interviews with selected sources. S.W assisted in evaluating research methods and evaluating the results that had been carried out. A.P assisted in developing the theoretical framework, determining gaps in the research and helping refine this article. All authors have contributed to writing this article.

DECLARATION

The authors of this study certify that they have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest (such as honoraria; educational grants; participation in speakers' bureaus; membership, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, or other equity interest; and expert testimony or patent-licensing arrangements), or non-financial interest (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge or beliefs) in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The dataset generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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