

## **Elementary School Teacher Cognitive Attitude and the Change of Curriculum of Field Experience Practice Partner of Muhammadiyah University of Makassar**

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**Abstract :** *The changes in curriculum in the world of education constitute a normal thing to occur and a demand for the government in order to execute those, considering the competition which is occurred in the realm of education in this global era. However, the changes in curriculum are not followed by the changes in the attitude of the teacher particularly from the aspect of cognitive so that the changes in curriculum for the teachers remain a controversy in attitude. The research used qualitative descriptive method. The location of the research was conducted and carried out in elementary school in partnership with the field experience practiced students of Muhammadiyah Makassar consisting of two locations i.e. in Makassar and Gowa Regency. Total number of informants in this research comprised 15 people, 10 teachers and 5 principals. Data collection carried out in this research was using 3 techniques namely interview, observation, and documentation. Meanwhile, the data analysis for this research was the deductive analysis. The result of the research concerning about the elementary teachers' cognitive attitude toward the change in curriculum showed that the teachers' cognitive attitude was affected or influenced by the changes in curriculum from KTSP to K13, In addition, there are also some differences in knowledge and understanding. Based on the differences stated earlier, it could stimulate and trigger the difference in the attitude and perception in the school environment, either in Makassar or in Gowa Regency (pro and contra) toward K13. It's proven that, to the teachers who were pro to K13 inasmuch as those teachers were more frequently followed the training, so that they could understand, creative and open internally in each school. While, the teachers who were seldom followed the training K13 were contra toward K13, since they haven't understood the ways to implement K13. Therefore, the success of implementing K13 among elementary teachers is largely relied on training and coaching, which applies as the executor of K13 so that whatever they acquired from the training could be applied and transferred to other teachers in each school.*

**Keywords:** *Teacher's Attitude, Teachers' Cognitive, Curriculum Changes.*

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Date of Submission: 17-03-2018

Date of acceptance: 02-03-2018

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### **I. Introduction**

In this global era, education aspect plays very significant and competitive role in every single part of the world. Therefore, each country in this world should show its competitive advantage in order to yield profits and benefits for the country. According to Muhson, (2004) the issue and phenomenon of competition in education in every single part of the world occurs as a result of the growing and improving quality of education can be categorized as the indicator of advancement of education. Besides, education itself can be seen as the reflection of a nation quality, as well as an element of proving the quality of human resources or man power in order to always ready to undertake or follow through the reformation in education which is based on contemporary issues so that our education could be better off and not left behind from other countries'. In this regard, government, stakeholders, schools, and the society should always get ready and alert on the phenomena and changes occurred in the world.

According to Cunningham, William, & Paula (2003) dan Muhaimin, Sutiah, & Prabowo, (2008) that the accomplishment and improvement in the quality of education is largely affected or influenced by the quality of the teachers since not only play as major part of education, they also contribute a lot to the fulfillment of the education facilities as well as the educating or teaching team. The accomplishment and improvement of the education quality cannot be separated to the existence of the government and the teachers. Government in the realm of education plays as the mediator that facilitates each and every single school needs in particular sector especially in terms of improving the quality of education. While the teachers play as the executors in school areas or environment. Teachers play very significant part and role in the improvement of human resources and the quality of education to be internationally standard. (Nurahimah Mohd Yusoff, 2010).

In accordance with the statement stated earlier, according to Sowell (2005) the accomplishment or achievement in the quality of education is highly related to the curriculum itself. The formulation of curriculum with good basics or foundation including with its implementation, will improve and enhance the quality of the learning and teaching system which based on national, world, and local (McNeil, 2003; Parkay, 2006).

Several previous explanations and clarifications about the significance of the role of teachers and curriculum in education unit have been applied; however, in reality, there are still many critics and complaints in relation to the implementation of this. Just like the result of the research by Sutrisno & Nuryanto (2008) that several elements in curriculum haven't been well applied maximally by the teachers particularly with regard to the aspect of syllabus improvement and arrangement of scoring planning as well as the report of learning process. This is happened as a result of lack of understanding of the teacher toward the content and the curriculum itself.

The result of the research showed that generally some competences such as professional competence, personal competence, social competence, cognitive competence, etc. must be possessed by the teachers. However, according to the research result by Hasanuddin and Nurmaliah (2011) and Wulandari, Rena Lestari & Dahlia (2015) that cognitive competence constitutes a very substantial and essential thing that ought to be understood by the teachers since generally this is related to all aspects of learning system.

## **II. Literature Review**

### *Education Curriculum*

Curriculum constitutes a very paramount important part of national policy concerning about basic life needs for many people, which lays the groundwork of making fully effort and attempt to build the culture and dignity of a nation. Education curriculum constitutes all activities, experiences, things that contribute to change and affect the character of children; either of the things that happened at school, around the school area, or outside the school area would become the responsibility of the school so that the students could master and cope with the intended competences. This is in line with the opinion and statement Abdul Rahman Hamdan, (2006) that in order to achieve a more systematic teaching learning activities, which is in line with the goal of the planner, then the teachers as the educators should possess holistic understanding on the concept, content and the goal of curriculum.

Curriculum plays very significant and paramount important and strategic position in many aspects of education activities. According to Sukmadinata, (2005) why curriculum is very fundamental is that because the curriculum itself serves as an instrument or set of planning and setting which are related to the goals, contents, and the teaching materials that is used to achieve the goal of certain education. Therefore, in order to be well applied the implementation of the curriculum in each level of education, then it is highly advised that the education they utilized needs to be supervised or evaluated in order to get to know and recognize the progress of what is implemented in the field.

### *Curriculum as a Concept*

In the theory of curriculum, there are 3 sub-systems which serve as the paramount important concept that should be understood by all stakeholders in education i.e. curriculum as substance, system and study program. First: curriculum as a substance since it is considered as a set of planning in order to support the teaching learning process in the class and school. Besides, curriculum serves a system as the documents and things within the curriculum highly related with the goals, teaching materials, teaching learning activities as well as time and model or strategy of evaluation.

Curriculum as a study program is in line with the argument by Beauchamp and Othanel who argued that conceptually curriculum relates highly with other sciences or knowledges so that it takes more effort and attention on the aspect of using accurate and consistent technical terms and consider the goals of education that will be faced in the future. This is in line with what Broudy, Smith, dan Burnett (1964) argued about curriculum in each school as study program which covers teaching, learning and teaching-learning process and activities where curriculum must be seen as broad, huge and holistic aspect in the framework of the education system.

### *Teachers' Attitude and Process of Changing the Teachers.*

According to Uno (2007) that the changes in the attitude and behaviour of the students in terms of education could occur as a result of the background of the teachers. Meaning that, teachers should become the role model toward the students since substantially teachers play significant role and serve as the basic foundation in relation to affect and influence the students' learning outcome. Realising how important the role of the teachers are, therefore, Bafadal (2004) argued that teachers should possess broad knowledge particularly on the education world, possess maturity, independence, commitment and innovative. In order to achieve all that is mentioned earlier, Uno (2007) argued that beside willingness and intention or aspiration to be professional,

teachers as well should always improve their academic knowledge and horizon as well as their practical knowledge through trainings or the like (*in-service*).

According to Guskey (2003) and Marcelo (2009) that in order to achieve such process of changing the teachers, there are 2 fundamental things teachers should possess namely motivation and experiences. Therefore, forming the professionalism of teachers should be started and begin with the changes in the attitude, faith and perception of teachers. In other hand, according to Guskey and Sparks (2002) and Marcelo (2009) the changes in the aspect of faith for teachers not merely with regard to being participate actively in any training to be professional teachers, but also considering and thinking deliberately on how to implement the knowledge, skills and the experiences they acquired.

In line with the statement above, Guskey (1994) argued that there are several process and steps in accordance with tips and ways to enhance and improve the professionalism of the teachers, they are as follows; 1) awareness toward the process of change where teachers are fully responsible to the change of the students and the teachers themselves, 2) possess broad horizon which is began with basic thinking, in other words, the concept of enhancing and improving the professionalism of teachers should be long term oriented so as to create broader horizon and understanding, 3) building and growing the cooperation and partnership in group in order to support each program in order to create the cooperative culture and this is expected to be a supporting tool and instrument to ease them to change for the better and more professional.

### **III. Methodology**

This research used qualitative descriptive method which intended to reveal the meaning behind the attitude of the teachers toward the changes in curriculum. The research was conducted and carried out in elementary school in partnership or in cooperation with the Muhammadiyah University Makassar's field experience practice students. This research took place in 2 areas i.e. in Makassar and in Gowa Regency. The total informants for this research were (15) fifteen people, ten teachers and five principals. Data collection techniques used in this research were interviews, observation, and documentation. While for the data analysis used for this research was deductive analysis.

Focus of the research can be described in the definition of focus as follows:

- a) Input: analyzing the background of the teachers from several aspects such as; cognitive which resulted from the experience in teaching, level of education, discipline of science and knowledge, as well as other skills and experiences required in terms of analyzing the attitude of the teachers toward the changes in curriculum.
- b) Process: analyzing the level of cognitive of the teachers from the changes in curriculum aspect at elementary school in partnership or in cooperation with the Muhammadiyah University Makassar's field experience practice students which located in the city of Kota Makassar and in Gowa Regency.
- c) Output: analyzing the overview or description of the teachers' attitude the changes in curriculum regarding to cognitive aspect, consisting of a) ability, b) understanding, c) tendency and d) pleasure.

### **IV. Result and Discussion**

#### **Results**

*Elementary School Teacher Cognitive Attitude and the Change of Curriculum of Field Experience Practice in Partner with Muhammadiyah University of Makassar*

Elementary school teachers as the executor and controller of the teaching and learning process at school constitute one of the components in education who experiences the greatest impact on the changes in curriculum occurred. This is shown from the lowest level of education comparing to other unit of education levels.

Meanwhile, as the theory by Kurt Levin on the *moving* telling that in order to face a change in a system and method in the world of education, teachers possess different attitudes, depending on the psychological factors. The attitude of welcoming or rejecting a change can be categorized in the aspect of teachers' attitude and personality. According to Surya (2004) a person accepting or rejecting something (a change) in any case is affected by 2 factors i.e. cognitive flexibilities and psychological openness.

An effective teacher possesses flexible cognitive ability and competence. Ryan in Surya (2004) conducted and carried out a study on the characteristics of teachers, suggesting and advising that the patterns of teaching method is assessed by the cognitive competence and its attitude. The cognitive flexibilities of the teachers in teaching learning process can be categorized in 3 dimensions, namely: (1) teachers' personal cognitive characteristics; (2) cognitive attitude of the teachers to other teachers; (3) the cognitive attitude of the teachers toward the subjects and teaching method.

*Pro-Contra of the Perception in the Changes in Curriculum*

The birth of pro and contra in terms of perspective and the changes in curriculum is preceded by misunderstanding of the teachers toward to K13. Why misunderstanding could occur can be assessed from the assessment aspects and ways of executing it.

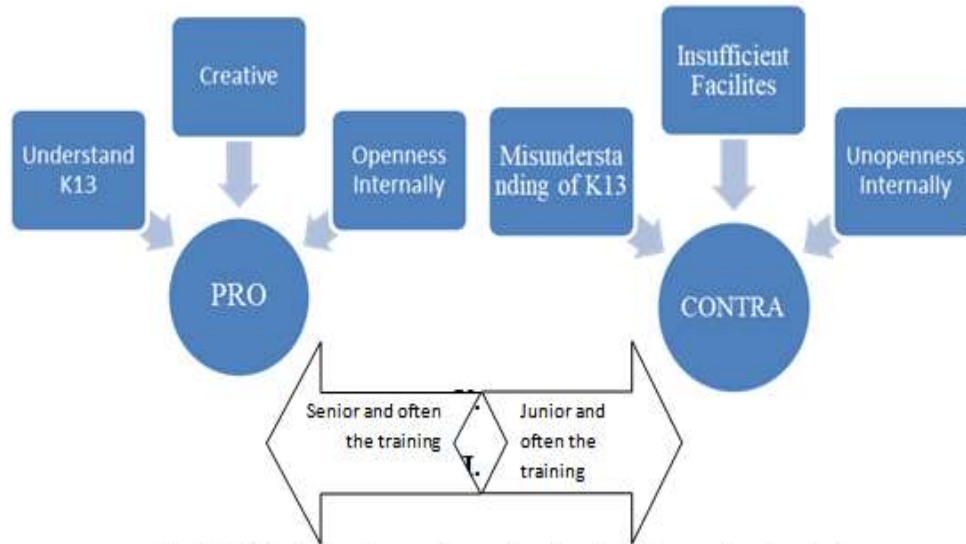


Fig 1. Model Pro-Contra Perception in the Changes in Curriculum

*Understanding the Changes in Curriculum*

The emergence of pro-teacher perception existed in Makassar and Gowa Regency particularly in cooperation with the field experience practiced students of Muhammadiyah University Makassar toward the change in curriculum since the teachers have known and understood the content of the changes in curriculum. The manifestation of the teachers' understanding is shown from the result of the informants' explanation and clarification when interviewed. Their ability to explain and clarify is not only based on theoretic aspect but also capable of explaining the ways to implement it and how to implement it. This is in line with the overview or argument by Sugihartono, et all (2007) who argued that perception constitutes an ability of the brain to interpret or translate the stimulus or process in order to translate the incoming stimulus to the five senses of human. Human perception possesses differences in the perspective in the senses of human. Some perceive that this perception seems to be positive and also negative affecting the action of human which seems real or tangible.

The attitude of pro-teacher toward the curriculum could exist according to him, as a result of many new innovations which are included in K13 which possess the concept to be more welcoming, possess some elements giving stimulation to the students and the ability to explore. Pro-perception of each teacher which serves as the source of this research referred to the changes in curriculum possessing some strengths such as children becoming more active in the learning process, stressing and emphasizing the character to the children so that each child's ability is appreciated.

This is in line with Goleman, D. (1998) about the dimension of interpersonal intelligence. The main point or the bottom line of the intelligence, according to Goleman covering the ability to recognize and identify self-feeling, able to read and to deal with other people's feeling effectively possess some competitive advantages in every walk of life. According to Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2013) emotional factors play great deal and very important and crucial part in someone's intelligence and contribute to the ability to deal with other people's personality. There are 5 areas in personal intelligence that contribute to the emotional intelligence covering the ability to recognize and identify the self-ability, managing emotion, motivating oneself, identifying other people emotion, and maintaining the existing relationship.

The admission and acknowledgment to the students toward the students are emerged variously and this is shown from the expression of interest and enthusiasm from the participants. Based on these factors, either in elementary school in the city of Makassar or Gowa Regency particularly in relation to the field experience practiced students who are pro to the changes in curriculum K13. Based on the basics and fundamentals mentioned, the changes in curriculum can be categorized as a space that can trigger or stimulus the progress and growth of the students' potentials which are hoped and expected to possess and bring the expected changes in relation to the students' habits and attitude.

*Teachers' Creativity toward the Changes in Curriculum*

One of the things that trigger the birth of pro-attitude teachers especially in relation to the changes in curriculum particularly in elementary school teachers in cooperation with the field experience practiced students of Muhammadiyah University Makassar in the city of Makassar and Gowa Regency as a result of the ability of the teachers to always become creative. Manifestation of being creative teachers is shown or described in continuous effort in order to learn more independently and ask question creatively in searching and looking for the materials and new learning pattern for students based on the recommendation of curriculum. The process of creative thinking by the teachers who are pro-attitude toward the changes in curriculum is in line with what is argued by Tilaar (2012), that creative thinking can be manifested into two forms, namely low level thinking cap and high level thinking cap.

The importance or significance of becoming creative teachers in the changes in curriculum as what is argued by Resnick, L. B. (1987) that thinking is a process which involves mental operation such as classification, induction, deduction, and reasoning. This means that in understanding the process of making the new curriculum, teachers should prepare themselves either mental or physical as well as mindset to be more creative in conducting some mapping and reducing it from the content of curriculum changes. Through some preparation for teachers or by preparing things in advance, teachers' creativity could be automatically improved and enhanced in carrying out any activity. This perspective is in line with what is believed and argued by Resnick, L. B. (1987) that creative thinking constitutes a way of becoming more active to analyze and criticize in order to achieve proper conclusion based on inferences or deliberate consideration.

Just like the argument by Mush'ab Abdurrahman, M., & Budiarto, M. T. (2016) who gave description that thinking process constitutes a process to acquire the information (from external resources or from the teachers themselves), to manage, to store and to recall the information from the teachers' memory. Therefore, it can be said that principally thinking process covers 3 basic steps, namely forming a definition, shaping an opinion, and drawing a conclusion.

Thinking process toward the change of curriculum is largely related to the teachers' creativity. The term of being creative teacher colors the changes in curriculum, meaning that this will lead to the meaning that the ability or strength of a person particularly related to the characteristics of the meaning of K13 curriculum. When viewed from the depth of complexity of activity of K13 curriculum, the strength of K13 curriculum can be categorized into 2 kinds namely thinking in low level (lower-order thinking) thinking in high level (higher-order thinking).

Thinking creative about the changes in curriculum is also fundamental. This is in line with what is argued by Ruseffendi (1991) that by being creative, teachers will trigger and nurture the interest particularly in the realm of cognitive of the teachers themselves especially on the analysis aspects, synthesis and evaluation including in the thinking aspects. Creativities constitute power or resource to create things as the ability to make or create new things or almost unlikely, therefore, creativities constitute collaboration (combination) from the existing things to the things that hasn't been existed before.

*Teachers' Openness Internally and Externally to the Changes in Curriculum*

The perception of teachers toward the changes in curriculum is fully fulfilled with some awareness and openness if the changes possess the goals to set the system of education to better off. The openness of the teachers internally or externally will lead to the guidance to face and handle any complaint for the elementary schools in cooperation with the field experience practiced students of Muhammadiyah University Makassar in the city of Makassar and Gowa Regency. Teachers and changes in curriculum are highly related to the achievement of the curriculum execution and the quality of education, just like the statement or argument by Kwartolo, (2002) that curriculum is not the only factors to affect the quality of education.

Through openness of the teachers toward attitude and perception as well as communicating the changes in curriculum then, it would ease the teachers to understand the content and goals in curriculum K13. The statement above is in line with the argument by Altman, I., & Taylor, D. A. (1973) who stated that they are self-disclosure people besides they possess capability to reveal the information about themselves to other people in order to build and maintain good relationship as the ways to build or to cooperate, to exchange the ability relating to the changes in curriculum. According to Person (in Karina & Suryanto, 2012), self-openness of the teachers as the action of a person in giving the information of teachers' misunderstanding which is personal toward other people voluntarily and purposively in order to get the knowledge from other people especially for the things that they haven't understood well.

*The Attitude of Being Contradictive Teachers toward the Changes in Curriculum*

Relational dialectics theory by Rondowunu, R. R. (2012) argued that a concept in theory of attitude toward an object. This concept can be translated or interpreted as "a node of contradictive in personal relationship or continuous interacts between inverse and tendency to oppose against the objects." Griffin, Emory

et al (2011) argued that this theory, firstly proposed by Baxter, L. A. (1988), Rawlins, William K. (1988), which defined the relationship pattern among many objects as a result of tension in endemic dialectic where the attitude of being contradictive stated that live together is characterized with some tension or conflict among individuals as a result of having certain objects. Just like curriculum K13 which gave birth to somekind of contradictive attitude among teachers, whereas in fact, the success or satisfaction in avoiding some contradiction is largely related to the changes in curriculum as well as constant attention from government.

#### *Teachers' Misunderstanding toward the Curriculum*

The birth of contra attitude with the changes in curriculum for some teachers in elementary school particularly happened as a result of misunderstanding or misapprehension with the changes in curriculum itself. The concrete proof of how weak or poor the knowledge of certain teacher can be seen from the way they transfer their knowledge they acquire from the training.

Inability to comprehend or understand the changes in curriculum properly and accurately and inability to present the lesson properly show that the teacher is in critical zone in the area of education and its growth. The lack of teachers' understanding and comprehension affects and influences the ability to apply or implement what he or she has already known and mastered and use or elaborate the materials and lessons to be more real life – oriented. Besides inability to apply and implement the materials received from the training, the teachers are, by all means, unable to analyze the changes in content of curriculum. Ability to analyze is an ability to break down the materials or objects or components into smaller parts of the components, yet still within one structure of organization and still connect and relevant to each other. Afterwards, the inability to make synthesis is as well affecting to any contradictive opinion that can deplete and decrease the pro-attitude toward the changes in curriculum.

The issue stated above is in line with the theory of knowledge by Arifin, M., Dardiri, A., & Handayani, A. N. (2016) who argued that human knowledge on certain object is never final and total, there is always something that is never. With the limitation of the human knowledge, then it can be concluded that the knowledge or science resulted systematically from human is also limited and full of limitation.

#### *Insufficient Facilities*

The insufficient facilities of education particularly with regard to the changes in curriculum of elementary school have created many contra perception and perspective among teachers i.e. between one teachers to the other. Since facilities constitute very vital supporting elements in curriculum, therefore, without sufficient facilities then the intention and willingness and experience and skills of the teachers that is formularized into planning will not be maximally applied. And this will lead to inability to shape and form the character, competence, and productivity as well as the personality of the students to be better off. Besides, the synergy between the teachers and the goals of K13 curriculum will not be achievable.

### **V. Conclusion**

Cognitive attitude of the elementary school teachers toward the changes in curriculum in partnership or cooperation with field experience practiced students of Muhammadiyah University in Makassar and Gowa Regency possess different understanding, comprehension and knowledge particularly related to the changes in curriculum from KTSP to K13. The differences in understanding, comprehension and knowledge of the teachers will lead to different attitude and perception of their as well that will trigger the pro and contra attitude toward the changes in curriculum K13. Pro and contra is occurred especially to the teachers who frequently follow and join the training compared to those who are seldom.

To the teachers who frequently follow the training, they are usually pro to K13 since they acquire better understanding on K13, they become more creative and open internally to other teachers in each school. While for those who seldom follow and join the training tend to show more contradictive attitude as they haven't completely understood what K13 is all about, not creative, learning facilities are deemed to be the obstacles in implementing K13 curriculum and eventually being unopened teacher internally. Therefore, in order to shape and form the cognitive attitude internally in response to the changes in curriculum then, the teachers themselves should become more knowledgeable and make the knowledge they possess to be the foundation and the basics of their attitude, make the training as the instrument to change the attitude of the teachers and eventually the teachers are not only expected to be more professional in general but also capable of becoming the tutors to other teachers within each school they work for.

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Rosleny Babo "Elementary School Teacher Cognitive Attitude and the Change of Curriculum of Field Experience Practice Partner of Muhammadiyah University of Makassar." *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)* , vol. 8, no. 2, 2018, pp. 08-14.